

Plateau Fence Lizard - *Sceloporus tristichus*

Abundance: Rare

Status: NSS4 (Bc)

NatureServe: G5 S1

Population Status: Vulnerable due to restricted distribution, but extirpation is not eminent.

Limiting Factor: Habitat: limited habitat. Degree of habitat loss is moderate, but may be increasing.

Comment: Updated to an SGCN species. NSS status changed from NSSU to NSS4(Bc).

Introduction

In Wyoming, Plateau Fence Lizards occur at low elevations in the lower Green River valley in Sweetwater County and along a narrow corridor (hogback) at the east edge of the Laramie Mountains in Laramie, Platte, and Converse Counties. Plateau Fence Lizards feed on flies, grasshoppers, crickets, leaf hoppers, ants, moths and other insects, as well as spiders, ticks, millipedes, and snails (Baxter and Stone 1985, Hammerson 1999, Stebbins 2003). In Wyoming, they are usually active from May to early October (Baxter and Stone 1985). Plateau Fence Lizards seek sunny, open areas during cooler temperatures and shady areas during warmer temperatures. Females lay one to three clutches of eggs, with four to 17 eggs per clutch in June or July (Hammerson 1999, Stebbins 2003). Hatchlings usually appear in August (Hammerson 1999). This species was previously classified as two subspecies in Wyoming, the Red-lipped Plateau Lizard, *Sceloporus undulatus erythrocheilus*, and the Northern Plateau Lizard, *Sceloporus undulatus elongates*.

Habitat

Plateau Fence Lizards inhabit sunny rock outcrops, boulders, sandstone cliffs, hogbacks, and canyon walls in sagebrush and shrubland communities (Baxter and Stone 1985, Hammerson 1999). They may sometimes be found near abandoned buildings (Baxter and Stone 1985).

Problems

- h Lack of basic information on the species presence, distribution, and ecology in Wyoming.
- h Increased oil and gas development will likely lead to habitat alteration or loss.
- h This species has restricted habitats in the state, therefore disturbance to these areas may affect the range of the species in Wyoming.

Conservation Actions

- h Survey and monitor population distribution, status, and habitat associations.
- h Develop management recommendations based on resulting data.

Monitoring/Research

Conduct baseline surveys to gain a better understanding of Plateau Fence Lizard distribution in Wyoming.

Recent Developments

Baseline reptile and amphibian surveys were conducted in southwest Wyoming in 2009 and 2010 (Snoberger and Walker 2012) and in southeast Wyoming in 2011 and 2012 (Snoberger and Walker 2013, 2014). Several Plateau Fence Lizards were documented during these surveys and detailed habitat data was collected at these locations (Snoberger and Walker 2012, 2013, 2014). During these surveys, a range expansion was documented for Plateau Fence Lizards in Natrona County, in the North Laramie Mountains (Weber and Leuenberger 2012). Reptiles have received increased attention in Wyoming. Incidental observations are encouraged to be reported to the herpetology program.

References

Hammerson, G.A. 1999. Amphibians and Reptiles in Colorado: A Colorado Field Guide, Second Edition. University Press of Colorado and Colorado Division of Wildlife. 484 pp.

Stebbins, R.C. 2003. A Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians. Third Edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. 336 pp.

Baxter, G.T. and M.D. Stone. 1985. Amphibians and Reptiles of Wyoming. Second Edition. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cheyenne. 137pp.

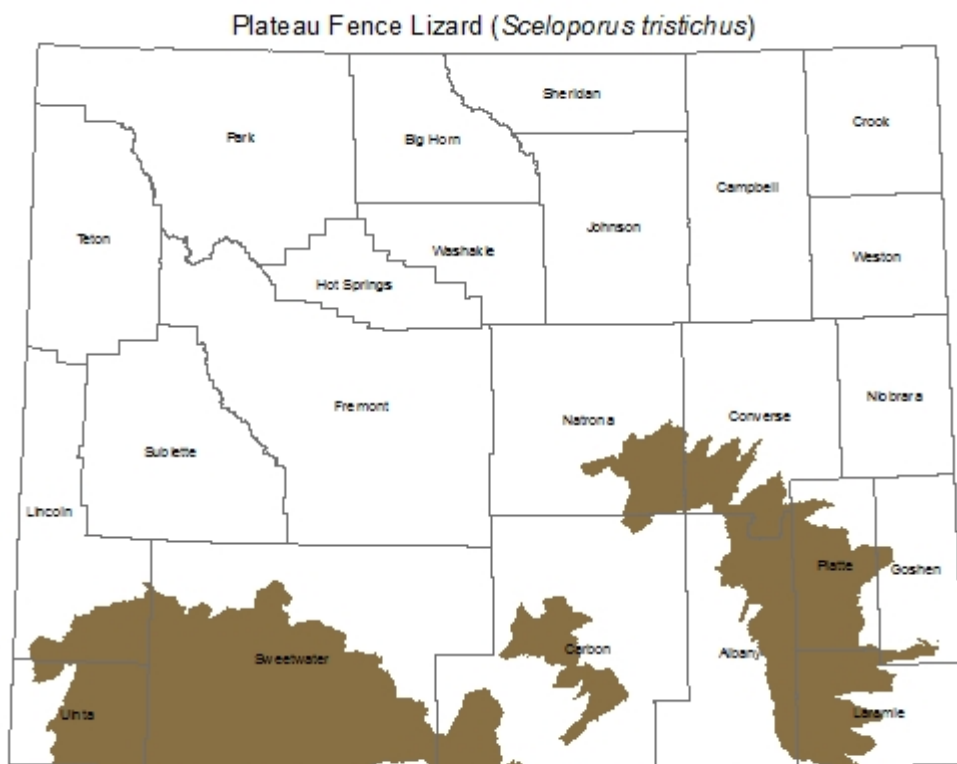
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Weber, K.J. and K.P. Leuenberger. 2012. *Sceloporus tristichus* (Plateau Fence Lizard) geographic distribution. Herpetological Review 43:104.



SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: February 2016. Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Note that brown indicates the current known range of the species.