

## Northern Tree Lizard - *Urosaurus ornatus wrighti*

Abundance: Extremely rare

Status: NSS1 (Aa)

NatureServe: G5TNR S2

Population Status: Imperiled due to greatly restricted numbers and distribution, extirpation is possible.

Limiting Factor: Habitat: species is only found in the Flaming Gorge region. Habitat has undergone significant loss. Additional habitat loss is ongoing due to energy development.

Comment: None.

### Introduction

In Wyoming, Northern Tree Lizards occur only in southwestern Sweetwater County near the state line (Baxter and Stone 1985). Their diet consists of spiders and a variety of insects, including aphids, beetles, flies, ants, termites, and grasshoppers (Stebbins 2003). Northern Tree Lizards are active from April through October. They bask in the sun throughout most of the day. However, shaded perches are used during the hottest parts of the afternoon. Females lay 1 to 2 clutches of 2 to 16 eggs in July; hatchlings emerge in August (Hammerson 1999, Stebbins 2003). Winters are presumably spent underground and may be spent with aggregations of tree lizards (Hammerson 1999).

### Habitat

Northern Tree Lizards inhabit rocky cliffs, canyon walls, steep exposures of bedrock, and large boulders in sagebrush and juniper habitats (Baxter and Stone 1985, Hammerson 1999).

### Problems

- h Increased oil and gas development will likely lead to habitat alteration or loss.
- h Lack of basic information on the species presence, distribution, and ecology 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 Northern Tree Lizard distribution in Wyoming.

### Recent Developments

Baseline reptile and amphibian surveys were conducted in southwest Wyoming in 2009 and 2010 (Snoberger and Walker 2012). Several Northern Tree Lizards were documented during these surveys and detailed habitat data was collected at these locations (Snoberger and Walker 2012). During these surveys, a small range expansion was documented for Northern Tree Lizards, in the White Mountain area north of Green River (Snoberger and Walker 2012). Reptiles have received increased attention in Wyoming. Incidental observations are encouraged to be reported to the herpetology program.

### References

- 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.
- 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.
- Snoberger, C.E. and Z.J. Walker. 2012. *Reptile and amphibian habitat associations in southwest Wyoming*. Wyoming Game and Fish Department Administrative Report. Cheyenne, Wyoming.
- Snoberger, C.E. and Z.J. Walker. 2012. *Southwest Wyoming reptile and amphibian surveys 2009-2010*. Wyoming Game and Fish Department Administrative Report. Cheyenne, Wyoming.

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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.