

## Pygmy Mountainsnail - *Oreohelix pygmaea*

Abundance:

Status:

NatureServe:

Population Status:

Limiting Factor:

Comment:

### Introduction

Pygmy mountainsnail are land snails in the order Stylommatophora. Mountainsnails have depressed, heliciform shells with an umbilicus and 4 to 6 whorls (Pilsbry 1939). Shell diameter is about 11 mm (0.45 in) and shell height can be up to 9 mm (0.35 in). Pygmy mountainsnails are located Wyoming and Montana (Pilsbry 1939; NatureServe 2016). Pygmy mountainsnail are listed as critically imperiled in Montana and vulnerable in Wyoming, and critically imperiled across their range (NatureServe 2016). Mountainsnails eat leaf litter, detritus and microorganisms growing on surfaces, such as rocks, logs or soil (Speiser 2001). Little is known about the life history of mountainsnails, including how long these snails live and how often they reproduce. Mountain snails are live bearers, meaning they raise their young within their shell until the young reach about 2.5 whorls (Anderson et al. 2007). Pygmy mountainsnails are active during spring and early summer during wet, cool conditions but may be active in the fall or winter depending on conditions (Anderson 2005; Tronstad, personal observation). Pygmy Mountainsnails are located in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming.

### Habitat

Pygmy mountainsnails live in the Bighorn Mountains in areas with canopy cover and leaf or needle litter. Mountainsnails are generally found in moist, cool areas such as north facing slopes or near streams.

### Problems

### Conservation Actions

### Monitoring/Research

Anderson (2010) surveyed for *Oreohelix* at 15 sites and found live individuals at 13 sites. She identified *Oreohelix subrudis*, *O. pygmaea* and *O. yavapai* in the Bighorn Mountains.

### Recent Developments

Anderson (2010) investigated *Oreohelix* in the Bighorn Mountains and suggested that *Oreohelix pygmaea* and *Oreohelix strigosa cooperi* are the same species because of little genetic difference.

### References

Pygmy Mountainsnail (*Oreohelix pygmaea*)



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.