



Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas by County
Online Application
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the purpose of the county lists?

A: The Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas by County (RTEST; county lists) online application was compiled and is maintained by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program (WHAB), which is a subprogram of the Wildlife Diversity Program. WHAB consults with other Wildlife Diversity subprograms, Nongame and Rare Species Program and Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD), as well as the Inland Fisheries Habitat Conservation Branch and Coastal Fisheries Water Resources Branch to develop and maintain content. The county lists are intended to provide county-level information regarding potential occurrence of protected (i.e. federal- or state-listed threatened or endangered) species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The statewide list of SGCN includes over 1,300 species, and the county lists provide a subset of SGCN and other tracked species with reasonable potential to occur in a particular county. Please read the information below regarding species included on the lists and their potential for occurrence.

Q: Who is the target audience for the county lists?

A: The county lists are most commonly used by entities that construct, plan, approve, permit, and/or fund development projects. The county lists assist project proponents in the determination of which species to address when assessing their project area for potential environmental impacts. Other users include federal, state, and local regulatory or contracting/permitting agencies, environmental consultants, private developers, private landowners, and various educational and research entities.

Q: What do the abbreviations on the data table mean?

A: Table 1 defines the column headings used in the application. Table 2 provides acronyms and descriptions for state and federal listing status. Table 3 and 4 provide acronyms and descriptions for global and state ranks which reflect an assessment of the condition of a species across its entire range and statewide range, respectively.

Table 1. County data table column terms and their associated definitions.

Term	Definition
Map	Click icon to shade counties of potential occurrence on map
DL	Click icon to download a shape file of counties of potential occurrence
Taxon	Taxonomic group
SName	Scientific name

CName	Common name
USESAs	Federal protection/listing status
SPROT	Subnational (e.g. state) protection/listing status
Endemic	Native to, and restricted to, Texas
GRank	NatureServe global conservation status rank
SRank	NatureServe subnational conservation status rank. Subnational refers to state-level jurisdictions (e.g. Texas)
SGCN	Species of Greatest Conservation Need as defined in the 2012 Texas Conservation Action Plan (TCAP)
Description	Habitat and life history description for a specific species
# Counties	Number of Texas counties with records of potential occurrence for a particular species

Table 2. State and federal listing status acronyms and their descriptions.

USESAs and SPROT Listing Status	Description
LE or LT	Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened
PE or PT	Federally Proposed Endangered or Threatened
SAE or SAT	Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened by Similarity of Appearance
C	Federal Candidate for Listing
DL or PDL	Federally Delisted or Proposed for Delisting
E or T	State Listed Endangered or Threatened
NT	Not tracked or no longer tracked by the State
“blank”	SGCN but with no regulatory listing status

Table 3. NatureServe global conservation status ranks and their definitions.

Global Rank	Definition
G1	Critically Imperiled — At very high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations or occurrences, very steep declines, very severe threats, or other factors.
G2	Imperiled — At high risk of extinction or elimination due to restricted range, few populations or occurrences, steep declines, severe threats, or other factors.
G3	Vulnerable — At moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a fairly restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences, recent and widespread declines, threats, or other factors.
G4	Apparently Secure — At fairly low risk of extinction or elimination due to an extensive range and/or many populations or occurrences, but with possible cause for some concern as a result of local recent declines, threats, or other factors.
G5	Secure — At very low risk of extinction or elimination due to a very extensive range, abundant populations or occurrences, and little to no concern from declines or threats.
GH	Possibly Extinct (species) or Possibly Eliminated (ecosystems) — Known from only historical occurrences but still some hope of rediscovery. Examples of evidence include (1) that a species has not been documented in approximately 20–40 years despite some searching and/or some evidence of significant habitat loss or degradation; (2) that a

	species or ecosystem has been searched for unsuccessfully, but not thoroughly enough to presume that it is extinct or eliminated throughout its range.
GNR	Unranked – Global rank not yet assessed.
GNA	Not Applicable — A conservation status rank is not applicable because the species or ecosystem is not a suitable target for conservation activities.

Table 4. NatureServe subnational (state) conservation ranks and their definitions.

State Rank	Definition
S1	Critically Imperiled — At very high risk of extirpation in the jurisdiction due to very restricted range, very few populations or occurrences, very steep declines, severe threats, or other factors.
S2	Imperiled — At high risk of extirpation in the jurisdiction due to restricted range, few populations or occurrences, steep declines, severe threats, or other factors.
S3	Vulnerable — At moderate risk of extirpation in the jurisdiction due to a fairly restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences, recent and widespread declines, threats, or other factors.
S4	Apparently Secure — At a fairly low risk of extirpation in the jurisdiction due to an extensive range and/or many populations or occurrences, but with possible cause for some concern as a result of local recent declines, threats, or other factors.
S5	Secure — At very low or no risk of extirpation in the jurisdiction due to a very extensive range, abundant populations or occurrences, with little to no concern from declines or threats.
SH	Possibly Extirpated – Known from only historical records but still some hope of rediscovery. There is evidence that the species or ecosystem may no longer be present in the jurisdiction, but not enough to state this with certainty. Examples of such evidence include (1) that a species has not been documented in approximately 20-40 years despite some searching and/or some evidence of significant habitat loss or degradation; (2) that a species or ecosystem has been searched for unsuccessfully, but not thoroughly enough to presume that it is no longer present in the jurisdiction.
SNR	Unranked —National or subnational conservation status not yet assessed
SNA	Not Applicable —A conservation status rank is not applicable because the species or ecosystem is not a suitable target for conservation activities.

Q: Why does the RTEST county range shown for a federally-listed species differ from the county range shown on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website?

A: TPWD includes the Federal listing status for your convenience and makes every attempt to keep the information current and correct. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the responsible authority for Federal listing status. The county lists do not substitute for contact with the USFWS, and ranges may differ from the USFWS county level lists for federally-listed species because of the inexact nature of range map development and use.

Q: How does TPWD determine which species to include on the county lists?

A: All species on the county lists are tracked in the TXNDD. The TXNDD includes species that have been listed as threatened or endangered at the state or federal level and have the potential to occur in Texas, as well as the majority of the SGCN listed in the Texas Conservation Action Plan

(TCAP). For more information about the TXNDD, TCAP, SGCN, and the list of tracked species, please go to TPWD’s website and visit the “Endangered Species” and “Wildlife Diversity” webpages.

In general, a TXNDD-tracked species is included on a county list if the species’ range overlaps the county. However, because knowledge about species’ ranges varies among taxa groups and determining habitat associations can be extremely difficult for very rare or cryptic species, inclusion of a TXNDD-tracked species on a county list is dictated by the following taxa group rules:

Taxa Group	Counties of Inclusion	Source of Occurrence Information
Amphibians and Reptiles	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	TXNDD, range maps from various field guides, iNaturalist, VertNet
Birds	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	TXNDD, range maps from various field guides, eBird.
Mammals	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	TXNDD, iNaturalist, data from taxonomic experts, VertNet, range maps from various field guides
Fishes	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	TXNDD, Fishes of Texas database, Fishes of Texas predictive distribution models, NatureServe Explorer, IUCN Red List
Bivalves	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	TXNDD, counties that intersect 8-digit HUCs where occurrences have been documented, expert opinion of various malacologists, data compiled from various sources by the state invertebrate zoologist
Non-bivalve invertebrates	Counties with documented occurrence only	TXNDD data, data compiled by the state invertebrate zoologist
Plants	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	TXNDD, expert opinion of various botanists, various field guides, herbarium records, USDA Plants database

In addition to listed species and SGCN, the TXNDD tracks natural plant communities (e.g. native prairie remnants, bottomland hardwood communities, seepage bogs) and other significant features (e.g. bird rookeries, migratory songbird fallout areas, bat roosts, bat caves, invertebrate caves, and prairie dog towns). The county lists include only TXNDD-tracked species and do not include documented or potential occurrence of natural plant communities or other significant features.

Q: Can I use the habitat description on the county list to determine whether a species potentially occurs on my project site?

A: RTEST includes a short habitat description for each species to provide basic information about its habitat requirements. The short habitat descriptions are not intended to include all of the known information available about the habitat needs, phenology, or survey methodology for a species and should be used as an initial research source for determining if appropriate potential suitable habitat occurs within a particular area. TPWD strongly recommends accessing other

published resources for more detail regarding species habitat requirements, behavior, and life requisites to inform survey methodology and if potential habitat occurs within a project area.

Q: How do I obtain observation data for a specific species on a county list?

A: Species data are obtained by e-mailing the TXNDD at TexasNatural.DiversityDatabase@tpwd.texas.gov. More information on how to request data from the TXNDD can be located on the TPWD website under Texas Natural Diversity Database's "Request Data" webpage.

Q: What are the limitations of the county lists?

A: Species that appear on county lists do not all share the same probability of occurrence within a county. Ranges depicted by the county list online application do not distinguish between breeding range, wintering range, and migratory range. Therefore, species shown on the lists have varying degrees of potential occurrence depending on the season or habitat availability/suitability. Historic ranges for some state-extirpated species, complete historic ranges for some extant species, accidentals and irregularly-appearing species, and portions of migratory routes for some species are not included on the county lists.

Q: How often are the county lists updated?

A: County lists are constantly changing based on new occurrence records, new information about species potential ranges, modifications to taxonomy, and changes in federal and state listing statuses. The "Last Update" date shown on the application's landing page and in the report tab represents the last time information about any species included on that county list was modified. TPWD recommends checking the RTEST online application regularly during project planning and using the most up-to-date list for planning and assessment purposes.

Q: How do I cite the county lists?

A: Please use the following citation to credit TPWD for the county lists:
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Division, Diversity and Habitat Assessment Programs. TPWD County Lists of Protected Species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. [county name(s) and revised date(s)]. Accessed date.

Acknowledgment

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