

APPENDIX E: RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES STATUS AND DESCRIPTION OF RANKING

Federal Status

As defined in the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), **endangered species** are “any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range other than species of the Class Insecta as determined by the Secretary to constitute a pest whose protection under the provisions of the Act would present an overwhelming and overriding risk to man.” A **threatened species** is “any species which is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.” The term **species**, as defined in the ESA includes “subspecies of fish or wildlife or plants, and any distinct population of vertebrate fish or wildlife which interbreeds when mature.”

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determines the federal status for all plants and animals listed as endangered or threatened by the U.S. government and receiving protection under the federal Endangered Species Act.

LE	Listed Endangered. A taxon is threatened with extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
LT	Listed Threatened. A taxon is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.
PE	Proposed Endangered. A taxon is proposed for listing as endangered.
PT	Proposed Threatened. A taxon is proposed for listing as threatened.
C	There is enough available information to propose the taxon for listing, but listing is precluded by other pending proposals of higher priority". The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is "directed to make prompt use of the emergency listing if the well-being of any such species is at significant risk."
*	An * following the status denotes that the species or variety is possibly extinct.

State of Virginia Status

State status specifies the plants and animals listed as endangered or threatened in Virginia. The status of plants and insects is determined by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, as mandated in the Endangered Plant and Insect Species Act (Code of Virginia, Section 3.1-1020 through 1030). The status of all other animals is determined by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries under Virginia's Endangered Species Act (Code of Virginia, Section 29.1-564 through 568).

LE	Listed Endangered.
LT	Listed Threatened.
PE	Proposed Endangered.
PT	Proposed Threatened.
C	Candidate for listing as threatened or endangered.

State and Global Rank

The following information is from Virginia's Natural Heritage Resource Program.

Global Rank

Global ranks are determined based on a consensus of the network of natural heritage programs, scientific experts and NatureServe¹. Global ranks signify the rarity of the plant or animal species and are assigned a rank based on a combination of the following criteria: the number of occurrences of the species, the number of individuals, and the severity of the threats to the particular species.

G1	Extremely rare and critically imperiled with 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals; or because of some factor (s) making it especially vulnerable to extinction.
G2	Very rare and imperiled with 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals; or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extinction.
G3	Either very rare and local throughout its range or found locally (even abundantly at some of its locations) in a restricted range; or vulnerable to extinction because of other factors. Usually fewer than 100 occurrences are documented.
G4	Common and apparently secure globally, though it may be rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
G5	Very common and demonstrably secure globally, though it may be rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
GH	Formerly part of the world's biota with expectation that it may be rediscovered.

¹ NatureServe is a non-profit conservation organization that provides scientific information guiding conservation decisions throughout the world. They collect and manage detailed local information on plants, animals, and ecosystems and maintain biodiversity data. For more information: <http://www.natureserve.org>

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GX	Believed extinct throughout its range with virtually no likelihood of rediscovery.
GU	Possibly rare, but status uncertain and more data needed.
G?	Unranked, or, if following a ranking, rank uncertain (ex. G3?).
G_Q_	The taxon has a questionable taxonomic assignment, such as a G3Q.
G_T_	Signifies the rank of a subspecies or variety. The taxon rank (T1-T5) indicates a rank assigned to the subspecies following the above Global Rank definitions. For example, a G5T1 would apply to a subspecies of a species that is demonstrably secure globally (G5) but the subspecies warrants a rank of T1, critically imperiled.

State Rank

State ranks are assigned similarly to global ranks, but consider the criteria determining the rarity of the species only within the political boundaries of Virginia.

S1	Extremely rare and critically imperiled with 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals in Virginia; or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extirpation in Virginia.
S2	Very rare and imperiled with 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals in Virginia; or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extirpation in Virginia.
S3	Rare to uncommon in Virginia with between 20 and 100 occurrences; may have fewer occurrences if found to be common or abundant at some of these locations; may be somewhat vulnerable to extirpation in Virginia.
S4	Common and apparently secure with more than 100 occurrences; may have fewer occurrences with numerous large populations.
S5	Very common and demonstrably secure in Virginia.
SH	Formerly part of the Virginia biota with expectation that it may be rediscovered.
SX	Believed extirpated from Virginia with virtually no likelihood of rediscovery.
SE	Exotic; not believed to be a native component of Virginia's flora.
SR	Reported for Virginia, but without persuasive documentation which would provide a basis for either accepting or rejecting the report.
SRF	Reported for Virginia, but with convincing evidence that the report was in error.
SU	Possibly rare, but status uncertain and more data needed.
S_?	Rank uncertain, for example a S2? denotes a species or variety which may range from S1 to S3, another example is SE?, meaning a taxon may or may not be native to Virginia.