

Species at Risk & Local Government: A Primer for British Columbia

Advanced Search Search Criteria

Taxonomic Group	Molluscs
Jurisdiction	All
COSEWIC	All
BC Status	All
BC Wildlife Act	All
Identified Wildlife	All
SARA	All
Management Category	All
Habitat	All
Regional District	Capital Regional District: All Districts and Municipalities
Forest District	All Forest Districts

Search Results

Molluscs

Dromedary Jumping-slug

Hemphillia dromedarius

BC Status	Red	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	Threatened	SARA	Schedule 1		

This slug, which actually jumps when disturbed, is found in Washington and British Columbia, where it is confined to southern Vancouver Island. It is one of seven jumping-slug species, all of which are endemic to western North America. Dromedary jumping-slugs are known from six sites in Canada, five of which are in remnant patches of old-growth forest. The sixth is in mature forest with abundant woody debris. Eggs are deposited in rotting wood. Abundance and trends remain unknown, but populations are isolated and density is low at all sites. Habitat loss and fragmentation due to logging are likely the largest threats, although drought and wildfire are also concerns given the small, isolated nature of the populations.

[More Info...](#)

Blue-Grey Taildropper Slug

Prophysaon coeruleum

BC Status	Red	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	Endangered	SARA	Schedule 1		

Taildropper slugs are named for their ability to self-amputate the tail, a useful trick in escaping predation by ground beetles or carnivorous snails. This species is found from northern California to the southern tip of Vancouver Island, although populations in the northern portion of the range scattered and isolated. They live for just one year, with adults only occurring in late autumn. They are found on shaded, moist forest floors and require abundant cover, usually in the form of large woody debris and deep leaf litter. First identified in the province in 2002, taildroppers are known from only 5 locations on southern Vancouver Island. Major threats include habitat loss and fragmentation to land clearing, heavy recreational use of habitat, and introduced species, including other slugs and snails.

[More Info...](#)

Northern Abalone

Haliotis kamtschatkana

BC Status	Red	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	Threatened	SARA	Schedule 1		

Abalone are found along the Pacific coast from Baja California to Alaska. In British Columbia the species occupies subtidal habitats, usually in less than 10 metres of water. Abalone prefer rocky areas on open or semi-exposed coasts, but are patchily distributed within this habitat. Females and males release eggs and sperm into the water where the eggs are fertilized. The chance of successful fertilization depends on the density of abalone in the area. Movement of adults during their 50-year lifespan is typically limited to a few hundred metres and larvae disperse over even shorter distances. Commercial abalone fisheries for export were established in British Columbia in 1975. These fisheries were closed in 1990 due to declining abundance, but the trend has continued. The major threat is poaching. The impact of the rapidly recovering [sea otter](#) population is uncertain, as the otters are a major predator, but also prey upon sea urchins, which compete with abalone for food.

[More Info...](#)

Olympia Oyster

Ostrea conchaphila

BC Status	Blue	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	Special Concern	SARA	Schedule 1		

This oyster occurs on hard substrates in the lower intertidal and shallow subtidal zones of protected lagoons and estuaries from Panama to Alaska. It is a sedentary filter feeder. Individuals mature as males after one year, then alternate sexes annually over their ten-year lifespan. Females filter sperm from the water to produce larvae, which are released into the water column to drift for two to three weeks before settling and transforming into adults. Population size is unknown, but anecdotal evidence suggests that abundance declined dramatically during a period of heavy harvest between 1880 and 1930. Current populations are believed to be stable. The primary threats are overexploitation, pollution, disease, and an introduced predator (Japanese oyster drill, *Ceratostoma inornatum*).

[More Info...](#)

Warty Jumping-slug

Hemphillia glandulosa

BC Status	Blue	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	Special Concern	SARA	Schedule 1		

This small slug (20 mm), which actually jumps when disturbed, is found from Oregon to British Columbia, where it is confined to southern Vancouver Island. The warty jumping slug inhabits a variety of moist forest and riparian habitats at

low to middle elevations. Abundant woody debris and leaf litter are important for cover and the slugs are frequently encountered at the base of sword ferns. Population size and trends are unknown, but distribution is patchy and much apparently suitable habitat is not occupied. Habitat degradation, loss and fragmentation due to urbanization and clear-cut logging have occurred over much of its Canadian range and continue to be the greatest threat to the species. The low number of scattered populations increases its vulnerability.

[More Info...](#)

Broadwhorl Tightcoil

Pristiloma johnsoni

BC Status	Blue	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	None	SARA	None		

This tiny (to 2.8 mm), flattened, translucent to waxy-white snail is found from the mid-coast of British Columbia (including Vancouver Island) south to Oregon. It is considered rare within this range and is typically found in the leaf litter of deciduous, mixed or coniferous forests below 1300 m elevation. The major threats are habitat loss and fragmentation to forest harvest, urbanization, and agricultural development.

[More Info...](#)

Scarletback Taildropper

Prophysaon vanattae

BC Status	Blue	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	None	SARA	None		

This small (to 55 mm) slug is found from California to British Columbia, where it is limited to Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland. Colour varies from red, to whitish or greyish. Like other 'taildropper' slugs, it can self-amputate its tail, which wriggles to distract a predator, while the slug escapes to grow another tail later. It is primarily arboreal, living on mossy branches and trunks of trees and shrubs in mixed coastal forests. The major threats are habitat loss and fragmentation to forest harvest, urbanization, and agricultural development.

[More Info...](#)

Western Thorn

Carychium occidentale

BC Status	Blue	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	None	SARA	None		

This tiny (to 3mm), spindle-like land snail is translucent or white. It is found from California and western Idaho to British Columbia where it occurs on Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and the adjacent mainland. It is found in undisturbed leaf litter of low elevation forests that are dominated by bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) and do not flood. The major threat is loss and degradation of suitable forest habitat to logging and development.

[More Info...](#)

Pacific Sideband

Monadenia fidelis

BC Status	Blue	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	None	SARA	None		

This land snail occurs from California to Alaska, and to the west of the Coast and Cascade Mountains within British Columbia. It is found in a variety of forest types, woodland and grassy areas. It is most often encountered in late spring crawling on the ground or climbing the trunks of trees and shrubs. The primary threat is habitat loss and fragmentation due to commercial forest harvest and urban and agricultural development.

[More Info...](#)

Pewter Physa

Physa acuta

BC Status	Red	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	None	SARA	None		

This small aquatic snail is extraordinarily widespread, occurring across most of Canada and the United States, and also in Europe. In British Columbia, however, it is recorded from only three sites. There is a great deal of uncertainty about its origins and taxonomy. For example, it appears that this and a number of other supposedly distinct species may all actually be the same one. It is also unclear if this has been introduced from Europe, or vice versa. It tolerates a broad range of habitats and is considered globally secure. It eats algae, diatoms and detritus. Threats in British Columbia may include shoreline development and introduced fish species.

[More Info...](#)

Black Gloss

Zonitoides nitidus

BC Status	Blue	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	None	SARA	None		

This small (to 5.9 mm), dark snail is known from Europe, North Africa, northern Asia, Iceland and much of North America. It may be introduced to British Columbia, as it has been to Australia and Madeira. It is found at low elevations, close to water, usually under wood, rocks or vegetation. It eats vegetation and snail eggs, including those of its own species. Loss and degradation of wetland and riparian areas to urban and agricultural development are likely the major threats.

[More Info...](#)

Extinct or Extirpated

Molluscs

Puget Oregonian Snail

Cryptomastix devia

BC Status	Red - Extirpated	BC Wildlife Act	None	Identified Wildlife	No
COSEWIC	Extirpated	SARA	Schedule 1		

This species is endemic to the Pacific Northwest and was once found in coastal forests in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, where it was limited to Vancouver Island and the Fraser Valley. The last recorded observation in the province was in 1905. Isolated populations still occur in Oregon. The snail is a mature forest specialist. It requires a closed canopy to moderate temperature and prevent drying and abundant large woody debris and leaf litter for cover. Little is known about the species' biology, but it appears to be long lived, slow maturing and slow dispersing. The most probable reason for extirpation is habitat loss, as mature and old growth forests within its British Columbia range have been extensively logged.

[More Info...](#)

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