

Four Species Added to Endangered Species List

By DNR staff

In September 2002, four species—a bird, a plant, a fish, and a mammal—became protected under Nova Scotia's Endangered Species Act. Two are listed as endangered, one as threatened, and one as vulnerable. Endangered means that the species could become extinct in Nova Scotia if steps to remove the threats to these species are not taken.



Endangered: The Atlantic whitefish, a species that breeds nowhere in the world but Nova Scotia, is found in the Petite Riviere watershed and possibly the Tusket watershed. Relatively little is known about the Atlantic whitefish and no population estimate for the species exists. Past and present threats include hydro-electric development, fishing, acidification of watercourses, and predation by non-native species such as chain pickerel and smallmouth bass.

Endangered: The Canada lynx, which was found across the province at one time, is now restricted to two areas on Cape Breton Island. Canada lynx has become endangered due to historic and current threats such as habitat loss, disease, climate change, and competition from bobcats and coyotes.

Threatened: Redroot, a plant species found only in Canada along a few of Nova Scotia's lakeshores, is listed as threatened and could become endangered if steps to improve the situation are not taken. Redroot populations are threatened by loss and human alteration of lakeshore habitats, water pollution, and the destruction of both the plants and their habitat by recreational vehicles.

Vulnerable: The Bicknells thrush, a species of song bird, has been identified as vulnerable because little is known about this secretive species and because of its limited distribution. In Nova Scotia it is currently known to be primarily located on Cape Breton Island. Its future is of concern because of habitat change, low numbers, patchy distribution, and low reproductive potential. Over the last century its habitat has been altered by infestations of spruce budworm and certain forest-management practices.



The Endangered Species Act was proclaimed in May 1999 and reflects Nova Scotia's commitment to the National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk. The four additions bring the total to 20 species in Nova Scotia that have been placed under protection. To view the entire list, or for more information about species at risk, visit our web site at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife/endngrd/specieslist.htm>

Above: The Atlantic Whitefish
Right: The Canada Lynx