

# Glossary

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**at risk:** Wildlife species that is extinct, extirpated, endangered, threatened, or special concern.

**biodiversity:** The variety of life on earth, different species, genetic variability within species and the variety of ecosystems in which they live.

**carrying capacity:** The amount of species that a given ecosystem is capable of supporting.

**conservation:** The maintenance of environmental quality, diversity and resources through the management of human activities.

**COSEWIC:** The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, COSEWIC is a committee that assesses species that are at risk.

**ecological integrity:** A condition that is determined to be characteristic of its natural region and likely to persist; specifically, when the structure and function of its ecosystems are not being stressed by human activity.

**ecosystem:** An interdependent and dynamic system of living organisms with their physical and geographical environment.

**endemic species:** A species native and confined to a certain region; it usually has a comparatively restricted distribution.

**endangered:** A wildlife species facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

**endangered spaces:** Threatened natural areas, such as tall-grass prairie, old growth forests and wetlands.

**extinct:** A species that no longer exists.

**extirpated:** A species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere in the wild (for example, in the wild in the United States).

**habitat:** The arrangement of food, water, shelter space suitable for species survival.

**indicator species:** A species whose progress is monitored by people as an indication of what is happening to the environment as a whole.

**in-situ conservation:** The conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings.

**invasive species:** A species that has moved into an area and reproduced so aggressively that it has replaced some of the original species.

**keystone species:** A species whose loss from an ecosystem would cause a greater than average change in other species populations or ecosystem processes.

**native species:** An indigenous species that is normally found in Canada.

**niche:** The "place" occupied by a species in its habitat, including the particular set of circumstances (chemical, physical and biological) that enable it to survive.

**non-native species:** A species that did not originally occur in the areas in which it is now found, but that arrived as a direct or indirect result of human activity. Examples include purple loosestrife, Scotch pine, and Asian Longhorn beetle.

**population:** A group of individuals of one species, found within a prescribed area and usually somewhat isolated from other groups of the same species.

**range:** The geographical limits of a species or group; a migratory species usually has both a breeding range and a wintering range.

**recovery:** Conservation actions undertaken to benefit an endangered or threatened species until a sustainable population level of fit individuals has been reached and threats to the population have been controlled.

**RENEW:** The Recovery of Nationally Endangered Wildlife, a program under which teams of experts develop recovery plans for species at risk.

**restoration:** Returning a degraded ecosystem or population to its original condition.

**special concern:** A wildlife species that may become a threatened or an endangered species because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

**stewardship:** Management of the heritage of our natural spaces, species and culture in such a way that it can be passed on to future Canadians intact.

**subspecies:** A geographically limited subdivision of a species that is taxonomically different from other such subdivisions of the same species.

**sustainable forest management:** Management that maintains and enhances the long-term health of forest ecosystems for the benefit of all living things while providing environmental, economic, social and cultural opportunities for present and future generations.

**threatened:** A wildlife species likely to become endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.

**wildlife species:** A species native to Canada.

