

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Distribution by County of Breeding Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians, Rare Animals and Plants, and Significant Natural Communities in New York Data Dictionary

Data Label	Data Type	Data Description
County	Text	Name of New York State County. In addition to New York's 62 Counties, the dataset also includes separate entries for offshore open waters that are part of New York State but that are not within the jurisdiction of any county: Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and Atlantic Ocean/Long Island Sound.
Category	Text	Category of the species or community: Animal, Plant, or Natural Community.
Taxonomic Group	Text	<p>For animals and plants, the taxonomic phylum, class, or order to which the species belongs. Groups are not always equivalent to a single taxonomic group, and they are given English names.</p> <p>For natural communities, group is the system to which the natural community belongs. Natural communities are grouped into seven systems: marine, tidal wetlands (estuarine), rivers and streams (riverine), lakes and ponds (lacustrine), freshwater nontidal wetlands (palustrine), uplands (terrestrial), and subterranean (caves).</p>
Taxonomic Subgroup	Text	For animals and plants, a lower level of taxonomic group than the Taxonomic Group (above). The subgroup is the taxonomic phylum, class, order, or family to which the species belong. Subgroups are not always equivalent to a single taxonomic group, and they are given English names.

		<p>For natural communities, subgroup is the subsystem to which the natural community belongs. Marine and tidal wetland systems are divided into subtidal and intertidal subsystems. The freshwater nontidal wetlands system is divided into open mineral soil wetlands, forested mineral soil wetlands, open peatlands, and forested peatlands. The uplands system is divided into open uplands, barrens and woodlands, and forested uplands. The rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, and subterranean systems each have one subsystem.</p>
Scientific Name	Text	<p>For plants and animals, the scientific name used in the database of the New York Natural Heritage Program. Names are based on generally accepted references, augmented by recent scientific literature and expert opinion.</p> <p>For natural communities, the names of community types are documented in New York Natural Heritage's "Ecological Communities of New York State, Second Edition" (draft).</p>
Common Name	Text	<p>For plants and animals, the common name is its "plain English" name, as used in the database of the New York Natural Heritage Program. Names are based on generally accepted references, augmented by recent scientific literature and expert opinion.</p> <p>For natural communities, the names of community types are documented in New York Natural Heritage's "Ecological Communities of New York State, Second Edition" (draft).</p>
Year Last Documented	Text	<p>The most recent year the species or community type was observed in the given county, as documented in the dataset's source databases.</p> <p>A value of "2000 – 2005" indicates that the species was most recently documented during the second NYS Breeding Bird Atlas Project, conducted from 2000 to 2005.</p>

		<p>A value of “1990-1999” indicates that the species was most recently documented during the NY Amphibian and Reptile Atlas Project, conducted from 1990 to 1999.</p> <p>A value of “not available” indicates that the species or community type has been recorded in the given county, but no date is available.</p>
NY Listing Status	Text	<p>For animals and plants, the legal protected status under New York State Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) and under New York State regulations. The highest level of protection is given to species listed by New York State as Endangered or Threatened. Regulations regarding animals are administered by NYS DEC’s Division of Fish, Wildlife, and Marine Resources. Regulations regarding plants are administered by NYS DEC’s Division of Lands and Forests.</p> <p>(While significant natural communities are recognized as an important facet of biodiversity in the law creating the NY Natural Heritage Program (ECL §11-0539), there are no laws or regulations establishing official listing of natural communities. Some natural communities are afforded legal protection through other natural resource regulations, such as freshwater wetland regulations.)</p> <p>For Animals, categories of Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern species are defined in New York State ECL §11-0535. Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern species are listed in regulation 6NYCRR 182.5, and at http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7494.html.</p> <p>According to Regulation 6NYCRR 182.2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endangered Species are any species which meet one of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any native species in imminent danger of extirpation or extinction in New York.

		<p>2. Any species listed as endangered by the United States Department of the Interior, as enumerated in the Code of Federal Regulations 50 CFR 17.11.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threatened Species are any species which meet one of the following criteria:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Any native species likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future in New York.2. Any species listed as threatened by the U.S. Department of the Interior, as enumerated in the Code of the Federal Regulations 50 CFR 17.11.• Special Concern Species are species of fish and wildlife found by the department to be at risk of becoming threatened in New York. Species of special concern do not qualify as either endangered or threatened. <p>While Special Concern animals are not as rare as those listed as Endangered or Threatened, there is concern for their continued welfare in New York.</p> <p>Other categories of protected animals are defined in ECL §11-0103.</p> <p>"Protected birds" are all wild birds except house sparrow, starling, pigeons, and parrots and parakeets. (ECL §11-0505 provides that "No person shall rob or willfully destroy a nest of any protected birds" without a permit.)</p> <p>Some bird and mammals, and all native reptiles and amphibians, are defined as game species. Hunting and trapping are permitted only during open seasons as set by NYS DEC. Some game species have no open seasons set, and so hunting and trapping them is not allowed at any time.</p>
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	<p>This dataset uses the following categories in reporting NY Listing Status for animals:</p> <p>Endangered – Listed as Endangered by New York State.</p> <p>Threatened – Listed as Threatened by New York State.</p> <p>Special Concern – Listed as Special Concern by New York State.</p> <p>(The above three categories also include some species also listed as Protected Birds and/or as Game Species.)</p> <p>Protected Bird -- Defined as a Protected Bird by New York State law. Includes birds also defined as a game species, but for which no open seasons are set.</p> <p>Game with no open season – Defined as a Game species (other than birds) by New York State law, but there are no open seasons set and the species may not be hunted or taken at any time in New York.</p> <p>Protected Bird - with open season – Defined as a Protected Bird by New York State law and as a Game species; there are open seasons set when the species may be legally hunted or trapped.</p> <p>Game with open season – Defined as a Game species (other than birds) by New York State law, and there are open seasons set when the species may be legally hunted or trapped.</p> <p>Protected in law – Protected by specific mention in New York State law; hunting or taking of the species is not legal at any time in New York.</p> <p>Protected - no open season – New York State regulations specifically prohibit any open seasons, and possession and taking of the species is not permitted at any time in New York. (This category is used only when none of the above categories</p>
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		<p>are applicable.)</p> <p>For Plants, categories of Endangered, Threatened, Rare, and Exploitably Vulnerable are defined in ECL §9-1503. Plants in these categories are protected against picking, removal, or damaging with herbicides without the consent of the landowner. Endangered, Threatened, Rare, and Exploitably Vulnerable species are listed in regulation 6NYCRR 193.3, and at http://www.dec.ny.gov/regs/15522.html.</p> <p>According to Regulation 6NYCRR 193.3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Endangered native plants: in danger of extirpation throughout all or a significant portion of their ranges within the state and requiring remedial action to prevent such extinction. Listed plants are those with:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 5 or fewer extant sites, or2. fewer than 1,000 individuals, or3. restricted to fewer than 4 U.S.G.S. 7 ½ minute topographical maps, or4. species listed as endangered by U.S. Dept. of Interior, as enumerated in Code of Federal Regulations 50 CFR 17.11. • Threatened native plants: likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of their ranges in the state. Listed plants are those with:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 6 to fewer than 20 extant sites, or2. 1,000 to fewer than 3,000 individuals, or3. restricted to not less than 4 or more than 7 U.S.G.S. 7 and ½ minute topographical maps, or4. listed as threatened by U.S. Department of Interior, as enumerated in Code of Federal Regulations 50 CFR 17.11.
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Federal Listing Status	Text	<p>For animals and plants, the listing status under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, as it applies to populations of the species in New York State. Listing provides legal protection for this species at the federal level. Listing categories are Endangered, Threatened, or Candidate.</p> <p>The U.S. Endangered Species Act (US ESA) of 1974 is the primary legislation that affords federal legal protections to threatened and endangered species in the United States, and is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As defined by the Act, endangered refers to species that are "in danger of extinction within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range," while threatened refers to "those animals and plants likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of their ranges."</p> <p>In some cases only distinct population segments of vertebrate animals may be listed as threatened or endangered under the US ESA. Listed populations may be defined by geopolitical boundaries (i.e., the status applies to the species only within certain states, even though the species may range more broadly), or populations may be defined administratively (e.g., experimental populations). Status under the US ESA reported in this dataset is the status as it applies to the populations of the species in New York State.</p>

		<p>Due to some geographically defined statuses, a species may have two different protection statuses within a particular state. For example, piping plover populations around the Great Lakes are listed as Endangered, and populations along the Atlantic coast are listed as Threatened. Therefore, in New York State piping plover is listed as both Endangered and Threatened.</p>
State Conservation Rank	Text	<p>A rank assigned by New York Natural Heritage to each species and community type indicating how imperiled it is in New York State. The state conservation rank is based on how rare or abundant the species or community type is in New York, its distribution, and on population trends and threats. As new information becomes available, ranks may be revised.</p> <p>The ranks are based on a one to five scale, ranging from S1 = critically imperiled to S5 = demonstrably secure (common and widespread).</p> <p>Natural Heritage conservation status ranks carry no legal or regulatory weight.</p> <p>Basic state conservation ranks are: S1 – Critically Imperiled in New York State S2 – Imperiled in New York State S3 – Vulnerable in New York State S4 – Apparently Secure in New York State S5 – Definitely Secure in New York State (common and widespread) SH – Historical in New York: not seen since before 1980, but could still be present SX—Extirpated: no longer present in New York</p> <p>SU – Unrankable: Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends. SNR – Not Ranked: state conservation status not yet assessed. SNA – Not Applicable, because the species is not a suitable target for conservation activities (e.g., species is a hybrid, a domesticated species, not native to New York, an accidental or infrequent visitor outside of its normal range, a transient or</p>

		<p>migrant just passing through the state, or a species with only unconfirmed or doubtful reports).</p> <p>Variations of these ranks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range ranks, such as S1S2, indicate not enough information is available to distinguish between two single ranks. • ? after a rank, such as S2?, indicates some uncertainty about the true rank, but is most likely the assigned rank. • B after a rank, such as S2B, indicates the rank applies to the breeding populations in New York of a migratory animal. • N after a rank, such as S3N, indicates the rank applies to the non-breeding populations in New York of a migratory animal. <p>NatureServe and its Natural Heritage member programs have developed a consistent method for evaluating the relative imperilment of both species and ecological communities, and for assigning conservation status ranks. (More information on assigning conservation status ranks is available from NatureServe.)</p>
Global Conservation Rank	Text	<p>A rank assigned by New York Natural Heritage to each species and community type indicating how imperiled the species or community type is throughout the world. The global conservation rank is based on how rare the species or community type is across its global range, and on population trends and threats. For species, these ranks provide an estimate of extinction risk; while for natural communities, they provide an estimate of the risk of elimination. As new information becomes available, ranks may be revised.</p> <p>The ranks are based on a one to five scale, ranging from G1 = critically imperiled to G5 = demonstrably secure (common and widespread).</p> <p>Natural Heritage conservation status ranks carry no legal or regulatory weight.</p>

		<p>Basic global conservation ranks are:</p> <p>G1 – Critically Imperiled (very high risk of extinction)</p> <p>G2 – Imperiled (high risk of extinction)</p> <p>G3 – Vulnerable (moderate risk of extinction)</p> <p>G4 – Apparently Secure (uncommon but not rare)</p> <p>G5 – Definitely Secure (common and widespread)</p> <p>GH – Possibly Extinct: not seen anywhere in last 30, but could still exist</p> <p>GX – Extinct: no longer present anywhere in the world</p> <p>GU – Unrankable: Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends.</p> <p>GNR – Not Ranked: global conservation status not yet assessed.</p> <p>GNA – Not Applicable, because the species is not a suitable target for conservation activities (e.g., species is a hybrid, or a domesticated species).</p> <p>Variations of these ranks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range ranks, such as G1G2, indicate not enough information is available to distinguish between two single ranks. • ? after a rank, such as G2?, indicates some uncertainty about the true rank, but is most likely the assigned rank. • T ranks, such as T3, indicate the rank applies to a subspecies or variety, but not to the species as a whole. <p>Global conservation status ranks are assigned by NatureServe, with guidance from local Natural Heritage Programs and from experts on particular taxonomic groups. (More information on assigning conservation status ranks is available from NatureServe.)</p>
Distribution Status	Text	Status of the presence of the species or natural community type in the given county, as recorded in the dataset’s source databases. Values are:

		<p>Recently confirmed = Documented, with confirmed identification, since 1980.</p> <p>Historically confirmed = Last documented, with confirmed identification, before 1980; current presence is unknown, but could still be present.</p> <p>Possible, but not confirmed = Has not been documented but has been confirmed nearby, or has been reported but identification has not been confirmed.</p> <p>Extirpated = Has been documented in the past, but is now believed to no longer occur in the given county.</p>
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