

**Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
County Lists of Protected Species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need
Frequently Asked Questions**

Q: What is the purpose of the county lists?

A: The county lists provided by this online application were compiled and are maintained by the Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program, in consultation with the Nongame and Rare Species Program, which are subprograms of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Wildlife Diversity Program. The lists are intended to provide county-level information regarding potential occurrence of protected (i.e. federal- or state-listed threatened or endangered) species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The statewide list of SGCN includes over 1,300 species, and the county lists provide a subset of SGCN with reasonable potential to occur in a particular county. Please read the information below regarding species included on the lists and their potential for occurrence.

Q: Who is the target audience for the county lists?

A: The county lists are most commonly used by entities that construct, plan, approve, permit, and/or fund development projects to determine which species to address when assessing potential environmental impacts. Users include federal, state and local regulatory or contracting/permitting agencies, environmental consultants, private developers, private landowners, and various educational bodies.

Q: What do the status abbreviations on the lists mean?

A:

Code on County List	Federal and State Listing Status
LE or LT	Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened
PE or PT	Federally Proposed Endangered or Threatened
SAE or SAT	Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened by Similarity of Appearance
C	Federal Candidate for Listing
DL or PDL	Federally Delisted or Proposed for Delisting
E or T	State Listed Endangered or Threatened
NT	Not tracked or no longer tracked by the State
“blank”	SGCN but with no regulatory listing status

Q: Why does the county range shown for a federally-listed species differ from the county range shown on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website?

A: TPWD includes the Federal listing status for your convenience and makes every attempt to keep the information current and correct. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the responsible authority for Federal listing status. The county lists do not substitute for contact with the USFWS, and ranges may differ from the USFWS county level lists for federally-listed species because of the inexact nature of range map development and use.

Q: How does TPWD determine which species to include on the county lists?

A: All species on the county lists are tracked in the Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD). More information about the TXNDD and lists of tracked species are available at http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/txndd/. The TXNDD tracks species that

have been listed as threatened or endangered at the state or federal level and have the potential to occur in Texas, as well as the majority of the SGCN listed in the Texas Conservation Action Plan (TCAP). More information about the TCAP and the list of SGCN is available at http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/nongame/tcap/.

In general, a TXNDD-tracked species is included on a county list if the species' range overlaps the county. However, because knowledge about species' ranges varies among taxa groups and determining habitat associations can be extremely difficult for very rare or cryptic species, inclusion of a TXNDD-tracked species on a county list is dictated by the following taxa group rules, some of which will be implemented starting in 2015:

Taxa Group	Counties of Inclusion	Source of Potential Occurrence Information
Amphibians and Reptiles	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	Range maps on Herps of Texas (http://www.herpssoftexas.org/), various field guides, expert opinion of state nongame and rare species herpetologist.
Birds	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	Range maps adapted from Mark Lockwood 2012, various field guides, expert opinion of state nongame and rare species ornithologist. Please see the question regarding county list limitations below for information about seasonal bird ranges (i.e. breeding, wintering, and migratory ranges).
Mammals	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	Various published range maps and field guides, expert opinion of state nongame and rare species mammalogist.
Fishes	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	Counties that intersect 8-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs) where occurrences have been documented, expert opinion of TPWD ichthyologists.
Bivalves (e.g. freshwater mussels)	Counties with documented or potential occurrence	Counties that intersect 8-digit HUCs where occurrences have been documented, expert opinion of various malacologists.
Non-bivalve Invertebrates	Counties with documented occurrence only	N/A
Plants	Counties with documented occurrence only	N/A

In addition to protected species and SGCN, the TXNDD tracks natural plant communities (e.g. native prairie remnants, bottomland hardwood communities, seepage bogs) and other significant features (e.g. bird rookeries, migratory songbird fallout areas, bat roosts, bat caves, invertebrate caves, prairie dog towns). The county lists include only TXNDD-tracked species and do not include documented or potential occurrence of natural plant communities or other significant features.

Q: Can I use the habitat description on the county list to determine whether a species potentially occurs on my project site?

A: The county lists include a short habitat description to provide basic information about the habitat requirements of a species. The short descriptions do not represent all of the information available about the habitat needs or survey methodology for a species and should only be used as a starting point when assessing potential habitat impacts. TPWD recommends accessing published resources for more detail regarding species habitat, behavior, and life requisites to inform survey methodology.

Q: How do I obtain observation data for a specific species on a county list?

A: Species data are obtained by e-mailing the TXNDD at TexasNatural.DiversityDatabase@tpwd.texas.gov. More information on requesting data from the TXNDD is available at http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/txnnd/data.phtml.

Q: What are the limitations of the county lists?

A: Species that appear on county lists do not all share the same probability of occurrence within a county. Ranges depicted by the county list application do not distinguish between breeding range, wintering range, and migratory range. Therefore, species shown on the lists have varying degrees of potential occurrence depending on the season or habitat availability/suitability. Historic ranges for some state-extirpated species, complete historic ranges for some extant species, accidentals and irregularly-appearing species, and portions of migratory routes for some species are not included on the county lists.

Q: How often are the county lists updated?

A: County lists are constantly changing based on new occurrence records, new information about species potential ranges, modifications to taxonomy, and changes in federal and state listing statuses. The “Last Revision” date shown on the report tab represents the last time information about any species included on that county list was modified. TPWD recommends checking the online county list application (<http://tpwd.texas.gov/gis/rtest/>) regularly during project planning and using the most up-to-date list for planning and assessment purposes. For questions regarding county lists, please email TES@tpwd.texas.gov.

Q: How do I cite the county lists?

A: Please use the following citation to credit TPWD for the county lists:
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Division, Diversity and Habitat Assessment Programs. TPWD County Lists of Protected Species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. [county name(s) and revised date(s)]. Accessed date.

Acknowledgment

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