

# **Committee on the Status Of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO)**

## **Comité de détermination du statut des espèces en péril en Ontario**

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

### **RAPPORT ANNUEL**

**2022**

**PREPARED FOR:**

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Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

**PREPARED BY:**

The Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario

**SUBMITTED:**

January 31, 2023

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) wishes to acknowledge and thank the observers who attended and contributed to the 2022 species assessment meetings. Observers represented First Nations, government offices, companies, industry associations, sporting associations and conservation organizations (listed below in no particular order). The observers' attendance and interest in the work of COSSARO was helpful and is appreciated.

- Algonquins of Ontario
- Beef Farmers of Ontario
- Birds Canada
- Canadian Renewables Energy Association
- Catchacoma Forest Stewardship Committee
- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
- Hydro One
- McMillan Vantage Policy Group
- Metis Nation of Ontario
- Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC)
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation
- Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA)
- Ontario Fur Managers Federation
- Ontario Nature
- Species at Risk Program Advisory Committee (SARPAC)
- WWF Canada

We also wish to express our thanks to the following organization who contributed scientific information and community knowledge through a written submission to COSSARO during 2022:

- Ontario Nature

As members on COSSARO, we are grateful to the Hon. David Piccini as the Minister of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) and his team at the MECP that serves as the Secretariat and provides support to COSSARO. We are grateful to the following MECP team members who worked hard to support COSSARO in 2022.

- |                   |                    |                  |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| • Jennifer Morton | • Susan Ecclestone | • Kathleen Pitt  |
| • Victoria Papuga | • Leanne Jennings  | • Rebecca Teare  |
| • Alison Richmond | • Sarah Parna      | • Megan McAndrew |
|                   |                    | • Eric Snyder    |

We are also grateful to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) for providing important Ontario species data to

COSSARO that enabled our assessments. In particular, we wish to thank Colin Jones (Provincial Zoologist, Invertebrates with the NHIC) who serves as a Province of Ontario member on the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). In this role he was able to support COSSARO's access to and understanding of COSEWIC considerations related to species assessments.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) is an independent committee of experts which considers which plants and animals should be classified as at risk in Ontario.

The *Endangered Species Act, 2007* (ESA) gives the committee legal recognition and specific responsibilities:

- Maintaining criteria for assessing and classifying species;
- Keeping a list of species that should be assessed and classified (or reclassified) in the future;
- Assessing, reviewing and classifying species; and
- Submitting reports regarding the classification of species and providing advice to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

COSSARO can consist of up to 12 members with expertise in scientific disciplines, community knowledge or Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge. A quorum of eight members is required for voting purposes.

In 2022, COVID-19 continued to affect COSSARO's activities. However, the MECP secretariat team and COSSARO members were able to maintain online meetings with observers attending open sessions. Experience of COSSARO members indicate that in-person meetings should return, as the online forum does not provide an ideal platform for discussion among committee members, staff, and the public. COSSARO held two virtual meetings to assess 18 species/populations. Of those 18 species, votes for one species (American White Pelican) were deferred until spring 2023. Voting on the remaining 17 species was completed at the two meetings held on:

- March 30 – April 1, 2022
- November 18 – 19, 2022

Throughout 2022, several COSSARO members were appointed or reappointed for three-year terms: Glenn Cunnington, Allison Featherstone, Shannon Catton, Ian Barrett, Toby Thorne, Darren Sleep, and Jillian deMan.

## 2. SUMMARY OF STATUS ASSESSMENTS

The table below summarizes the results of the assessments completed on 18 species/populations in 2022. These species are grouped by types of fauna/flora for ease of review. The order is the same used in Attachment 2 to this report.

From the table below, the following observations are offered: one species assessment was deferred to spring of 2023 and six species/populations retained the same status. No species/populations increased in the status level (e.g., moved upwards from Special Concern to Threatened). Four species/populations decreased their status from Endangered to Threatened. One species decreased in status to Not at Risk, one species moved from Endangered to Special Concern, and one species moved from Threatened to Special Concern. Four species that were not previously assessed were assigned a status of Special Concern, Threatened or Endangered.

SPECIES English, French, Indigenous*, Latin names	CURRENT CLASSIFICATION (UNDER ESA)	NEW COSSARO EVALUATED STATUS (2022)
<b>BIRDS</b>		
<b>Bald Eagle</b> Pygargue à tête blanche ( <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> )	Special Concern	Not at Risk
<b>Greater Prairie Chicken</b> Tétras des prairies ( <i>Tympanuchus cupido pinnatus</i> )	Extirpated	Extirpated
<b>Golden Eagle</b> Aigle royal Giniw (Ojibwe) Mikisiw (Cree) ( <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> )	Endangered	Endangered
<b>American White Pelican</b> pélican d'Amérique ( <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i> )	Threatened	Deferred to Spring 2023
<b>Bobolink</b> Goglu des prés ( <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i> )	Threatened	Threatened

<b>SPECIES</b> English, French, Indigenous*, Latin names	<b>CURRENT                      CLASSIFICATION                      (UNDER ESA)</b>	<b>NEW COSSARO                      EVALUATED STATUS                      (2022)</b>
<b>FISHES</b>		
<b>Eastern Sand Darter</b> Dard de sable <i>(Ammocrypta pellucida)</i> <b>(Southwestern Population)</b>	Endangered	Threatened
<b>Eastern Sand Darter</b> Dard de sable <i>(Ammocrypta pellucida)</i> <b>(West Lake Population)</b>	Endangered	Endangered
<b>INSECTS</b>		
<b>Skillet Clubtail</b> Gomphe ventru <i>(Gomphurus ventricosus)</i>	Not Listed	Threatened
<b>Northern Oak Hairstreak</b> Thècle méridionale d’Ontario <i>(Satyrium favonius ontario)</i>	Not Listed	Threatened
<b>Dukes’ Skipper</b> Hespérie de Dukes <i>(Euphyes dukesî)</i>	Not Listed	Special Concern
<b>MAMMALS</b>		
<b>Eastern Wolf</b> Loup de l’Est <i>(Canis sp. cf. lycaon)</i>	Threatened	Threatened
<b>Cougar</b> Puma <i>(Puma concolor)</i>	Endangered	Special Concern

<b>SPECIES</b> English, French, Indigenous*, Latin names	<b>CURRENT CLASSIFICATION (UNDER ESA)</b>	<b>NEW COSSARO EVALUATED STATUS (2022)</b>
<b>PLANTS</b>		
<b>American Ginseng</b> Ginseng à cinq folioles ( <i>Panax quinquefolius</i> )	Endangered	Threatened
<b>Incurved Grizzled Moss</b> Ptychomitre à feuilles incurvées ( <i>Ptychomitrium incurvum</i> )	Extirpated	Extirpated
<b>Eastern False Rue-anemone</b> Isopyre à feuilles biternées ( <i>Enemion biternatum</i> )	Threatened	Special Concern
<b>Pumpkin Ash</b> Frêne pubescent ( <i>Fraxinus profunda</i> )	Not Listed	Endangered
<b>REPTILES</b>		
<b>Eastern Foxsnake</b> Couleuvre fauve de L'Est ( <i>Pantherophis vulpinus</i> ) <b>(Carolinian Population)</b>	Endangered	Threatened
<b>Eastern Foxsnake</b> Couleuvre fauve de L'Est ( <i>Pantherophis vulpinus</i> ) <b>(Great Lakes/ St. Lawrence Population)</b>	Endangered	Threatened

**NOTES:**

- Not Listed means the species had not been formerly assigned a status in Ontario
- All English, French and Indigenous names of species are included in Status Reports, where known. Indigenous names are highlighted with an asterisk and these names are not intended to be inclusive of all cultures and languages. Indigenous names are not based upon western scientific methods.

### 3. SUMMARY OF 2022 COSSARO MEETINGS & OPERATIONS

#### 3.1 Meetings

COSSARO, like most agencies and organizations, was affected by COVID-19 in 2022. The traditional two in-person meetings per year were replaced with two virtual meetings. Each meeting included opportunities for observers to attend.

The following table offers a summary of the 2022 meetings.

MEETING DATE	MEETING SUMMARY
<b>March 31 – April 1, 2022</b>	<p>Ms. Shannon Catton and Ms. Allison Featherstone were welcomed to their new role as members of COSSARO.</p> <p>A best practises manual was being assembled to provide references and guidance for members to locate data and identify other government jurisdictions that may have data and resources relevant to COSSARO species evaluations.</p> <p>Approximately 25 observers from various public and private organizations attended the Spring 2022 meeting.</p>
<b>Nov 18 - 19, 2022</b>	<p>The Fall 2022 COSSARO meeting did not attract substantial interest from the public. No public presentations were made at this meeting, and there were approximately 5 – 10 observers at each session.</p>

#### 3.2 Updates Regarding Other Matters

The website for COSSARO (<http://cossaroagency.ca>) continued to be helpful in keeping Ontario citizens apprised of COSSARO activities. COSSARO members appreciate the MECP team continuously updating and operating the website on behalf of the committee.

COSSARO continues to work with the province to update the 2017 Terms of Reference for the committee. Those updates are in progress.

### 4. 2023 PLAN

COSSARO anticipates a return to in-person meetings for 2023. COSSARO members believe that in-person meetings are more constructive for discussing and evaluating species

In addition to species assessments considered at the previous COSEWIC meeting, COSSARO is beginning to complete reassessments for species that have not been considered by COSEWIC in their ongoing assessments. In 2023, these assessments will likely include: Upland Sandpiper, Purple Martin, and West Virginia White.



Other species that may be assessed in 2023 are those which have been subject to the provision of additional and/or new data provided in the form of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and community knowledge. COSSARO is placing an emphasis on ensuring that assessments are based upon “the best available scientific information, including information obtained from community knowledge and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge.”

<b>PRELIMINARY 2023 MEETING DATES</b>	<b>MEETING FOCUS</b>
<b>April 18 - 20, 2023 (Subject to confirmation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment focused on COSEWIC species assessed in November 2022 along with Black Tern and American White Pelican.</li> </ul>
<b>September 2023 (Subject to confirmation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment focused on COSEWIC species assessed in Spring 2023.</li> </ul>

Species that will be assessed during 2023 are as follows:

	<b>SPECIES SCHEDULED FOR ASSESSMENT</b>	
<b>MEETING DATE</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>
<b>April 18 – April 20, 2023 (Subject to confirmation)</b>	<i>Nicrophorus americanus</i>	American Burying Beetle
	<i>Bombus affinis</i>	Rusty-patched Bumble Bee
	<i>Antrostomus vociferus</i>	Eastern Whip-poor-will
	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	American White Pelican
	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Black Tern
	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	Horned Grebe (Western population)
	<i>Collinsia verna</i>	Spring Blue-eyed Mary
<b>September 2023 (Subject to confirmation)</b>	To be determined	

Candidate species for assessment in 2023 and 2024 are as follows:

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>
<i>Progne subis</i>	Purple Martin
<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	Upland Sandpiper
<i>Zizania</i>	Wild Rice
<i>Pieris virginiensis</i>	West Virginia White

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>
<i>Carex schweinitzii</i>	Schweinitz's Sedge
<i>Cypripedium arietinum</i>	Ram's-head Lady's-slipper
<i>Cicindela lepida</i>	Ghost Tiger Beetle
<i>Chelydra serpentina</i>	Snapping Turtle

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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