

Species at Risk Act (SARA) Consultation, Cooperation
and Accommodation Project

**Amendment of the List of Species to the Species
at Risk Act – Batch 19**

February 9th, 2022

Created by:

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources
(CIER)



CIER

Centre for Indigenous
Environmental Resources

Acknowledgments

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) would like to thank the participants that attended the virtual “Species at Risk Act (SARA) Consultation, Cooperation, and Accommodation Project” workshops.

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Introduction

This multi-year project will facilitate Indigenous communities' and organizations' participation in Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC) listing and recovery planning processes for terrestrial species as part of implementing the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). Each region will focus their resources on an area of study and development that maximizes efforts to each species.

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) role is to support and facilitate a range of activities between Indigenous communities and organizations, and ECCC on developing recovery documents, sharing knowledge and language, addressing threats to terrestrial species at risk survival and recovery, and land use planning for species at risk on reserve lands and within traditional territories. CIER also manages the provision of funds on behalf of ECCC SARA participation, capacity funding requests and Expression of Interest call for proposals.

Amendment of the List of Species to the Species at Risk Act Session Agenda

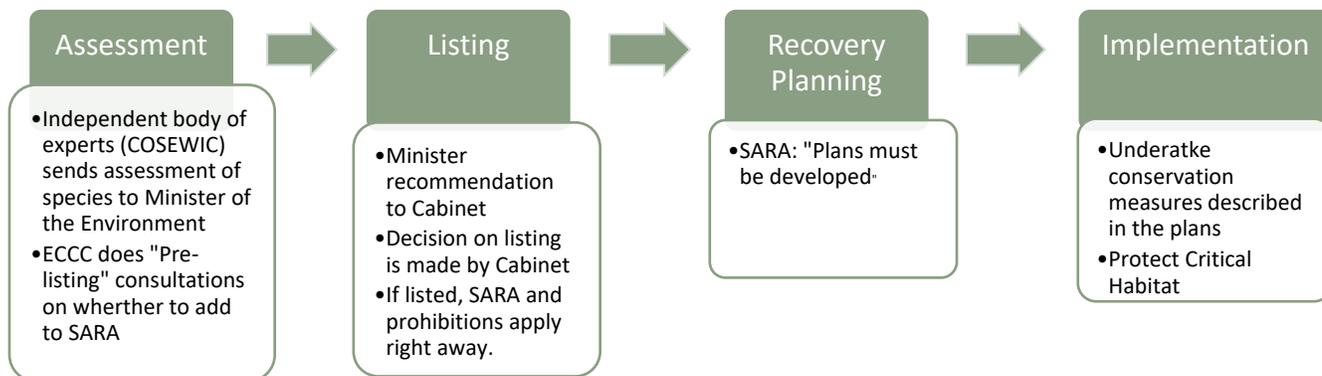
Time (EST)	Agenda Item & Who	Notes
2:00-2:15	<p>Introduction Lynn Mallett</p> <p>Welcoming and Polling Questions Lynn Mallett/Alexia Goodswimmer</p> <p>Acknowledgements, Agenda and Housekeeping Items Lynn Mallett</p>	<p>Introductions ECCC then CIER. Victoria Leck, Consultations Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service under ECCC – will be providing presentation.</p> <p>Elisabeth Shapiro, Wildlife Biologist</p> <p>Burke Korol, Wildlife Biologist</p> <p>Alexia Goodswimmer – Research Associates at CIER, will be working in the background aiding with slides, polling, breakout rooms, recording and notetaking</p>
2:15 – 2:45	<p>Presentation – Consultation on amending the list of species under the species at risk act.</p>	<p>PowerPoint presentation by Victoria Leck</p> <p>Discussion Q&A session facilitated by Victoria</p> <p>Polling Questions.</p> <p>Polling Question #1: Are you aware of any of these species occurring within your territory?</p>
2:45-2:55	<p>Break (10 mins)</p>	
2:55-3:45	<p>Presentation</p>	<p>Introduction to second portion of our workshop - Elisabeth and Burke, Wildlife Biologists with CWS, present information on recovery for specific species at risk.</p> <p>Elisabeth Shapiro – Davis's Shieldback, Aweme Borer.</p> <p>Burke Korol – plants and birds.</p> <p>Victoria Leck – closing comments and questions.</p>
3:45-4:00	<p>Wrap-Up by CIER: Lynn Mallett</p>	<p>Closing comments</p>

Presentation Overview

The objectives of this workshop were to discuss consultation on amending the list of species under the Species at Risk Act listing process, to provide information on terrestrial species under consideration for amendments under SARA, and to engage with Indigenous communities' and organizations' participation, in meaningful consultation and cooperation in support of the listing, recovery and protection provisions of SARA

The Species at Risk Act recognizes that: “the roles of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada and of wildlife management boards established under land claims agreements in the conservation of wildlife in this country are essential,” and that, “the traditional knowledge of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada should be considered in the assessment of which species may be at risk and in developing and implementing recovery measures”

SARA is designed to protect individuals and habitat, allow for recovery of species, and work in a complementary fashion with provincial legislation. The diagram below shows a general outline of the SARA Process.



When deciding whether to list a species, the Minister considers:

- Recommendations from the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and the Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge sub-committee.
- If the species supports livelihoods (e.g., through harvesting, subsistence, or medicine).
- Potential impacts to people’s activities with the species and potential cultural, social, or economic costs or benefits to individuals, communities, or organizations.
- Any current/planned activities that may overlap range or harm the species and/or destroy part of its habitat.
- Any other information people choose to share during consultation

The table below represents the terrestrial species under consideration for SARA Schedule 1 amendment. Table was adapted from presentation from Victoria Leck- ECCC.

Terrestrial species under consideration for SARA Schedule 1 amendment

For addition to Schedule 1 of SARA	For reclassification - uplisting	For reclassification - downlisting	For removal from Schedule 1 of SARA
Davis’s Shieldback	Red Knot <i>rufa</i> subspecies (Southeastern USA / Gulf of Mexico / Caribbean wintering population)	Red Knot <i>rufa</i> subspecies (Northeastern South America wintering population)	Aweme Borer
Lesser Yellowlegs	Short-eared Owl	Barn Swallow	
		Canada Warbler	
		Lakeside Daisy	

Terrestrial species under consideration for SARA Schedule 1 amendment:

Some characteristics of the species which are in consideration are as follows:

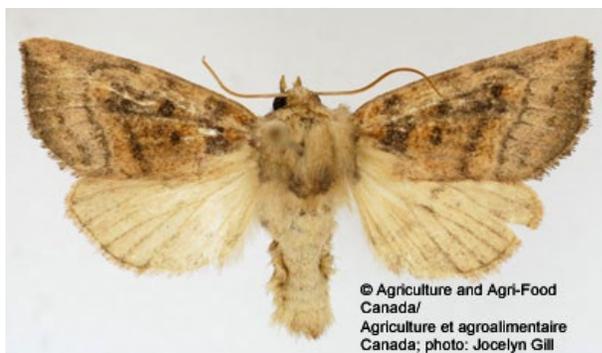
Davis's Shieldback

- Under consideration for addition to threatened status.
- Flightless katydid, 20-25 mm long, mottled brown and grey in colour.
- Located in Canada and found in sand barren and oak savannah habitats of the Norfolk Sand Plain in Ontario.
- Population is fewer than 1500 mature individuals left in Canada.
- Threats include major habitat loss of 90% in dry oak woodland, savannah, and sand barren habitats in Southern Ontario in the last 150 years
- Fire suppression, forest succession, afforestation efforts and invasive species have affected quality and quantity of the habitat for the Davis's Shieldback



Aweme Borer

- Under consideration for removal from Schedule 1.
- Currently listed as Endangered. Has been reassessed by COSEWIC as Data Deficient. A misinterpretation of habitat associations, and assumptions with known collection sites led to many years of searching in inaccurate habitats.
- A moth with wingspan of 33-37mm, light brown forewings with darker brown markings, pale yellow and light white hindwings.
- Bog Buckbean is a larval host plant. Habitat includes fens or peatlands with quaking mats.
- Located east-central Saskatchewan to the Ottawa Valley.
- Few immediate threats however may be threatened by hydrology changes.
- Conservation actions include filling knowledge gaps, and managing known sites where moth is present.



Lesser Yellowlegs

- Under consideration for addition to threatened.
- Medium-sized shorebird with bright yellow legs.
- Breeds in wetlands in the Boreal region across Canada and overwinters in South America.
- Short- and long-term declines are ongoing. About 25% in the past 12 years (based on Breeding Bird Survey data) and more than 50% in the past 10 years (based on International Shorebird Surveys).
- Large threats to this species are hunting for sport and subsistence, and habitat loss in migratory and overwintering ranges.



Red Knot rufa subspecies is divided into 3 units based on overwinter grounds

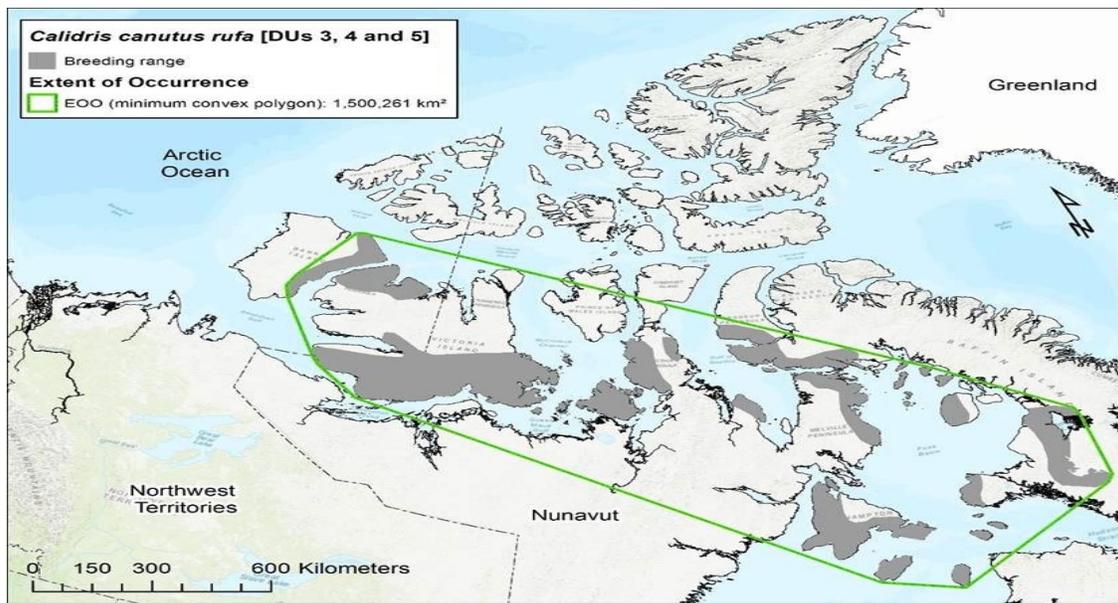
- Southeastern USA/ Gulf of Mexico/ Caribbean wintering population.
- Northeastern South America wintering population.
- Tierra del Fuego/ Patagonia wintering population.

Southeastern USA / Gulf of Mexico / Caribbean winter population and Northeastern South American:

- The wintering population of the *Rufa*, nests in exposed barren habitats such as windswept ridges, slopes, or plateaus in the central Canadian Arctic, typically close to water.
- Different *Rufa* populations share stopover sites, but typically have different overwintering grounds.
- They are under consideration for up listing from Threatened to Endangered.
- Population numbers have declined 33-84% over the past 21 years (3 generations). There are estimated to be 9300 mature individuals.
- Threats include disturbances to migratory and wintering areas from recreation. A reduction in food availability during migration, predation, and climate change plus severe weather.



The map below depicts the range and habitat of the Red Knot *rufa* subspecies mentioned above.



Red Knot rufa subspecies (Northeastern / South America wintering population)

- Under consideration for down listing from Threatened to Special Concern.
- Population stable at about 19,800 mature individuals
- Threats include reduced food availability during migration due to harvesting of prey species, increased predation from recovering falcon populations and climate change plus severe weather.

Conservation actions:

- Cooperative international management.
- Regulation of Horseshoe Crab harvest in Delaware Bay.
- Disturbance mitigations at key population sites.
- Reduction in *Red Knot* harvesting.
- Pollution control.

Short-eared Owl

- Under consideration for up listing from Special Concern to Threatened.
- Medium sized owl (about 34-42 cm long) with a large, round head, with small tufts of feathers that look like ears. Adults have a brown back and creamy-buff chest with brown streaks, their tails are short while the wings are long.
- Widespread in habitat and found on several continents across Canada. Open habitats such as grasslands, tundra, and wetlands.

- Population has declined over 30% over the past 12 years and is about 31,00 mature individuals. The decline is expected to continue.
- Threats include habitat loss from agriculture, urbanization, and invasive plants. Shrubification is another threat in low Arctic habitats.

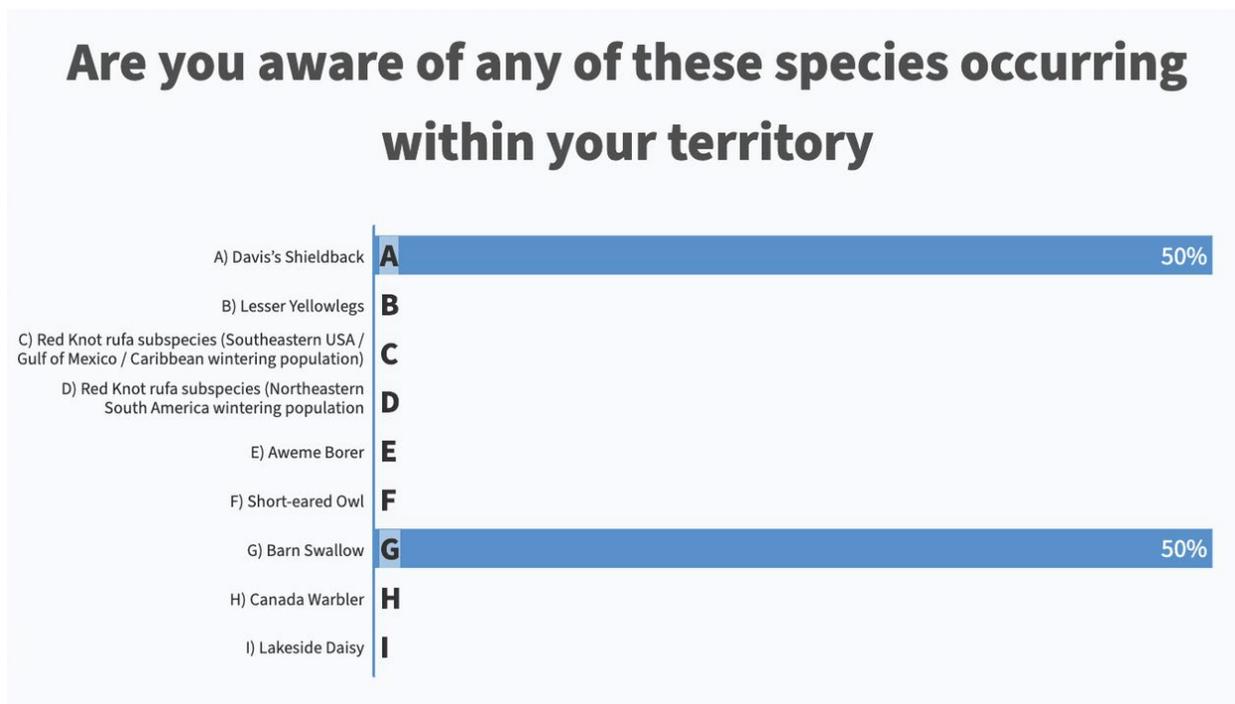
Conservation actions:

- Habitat protection and practices such as exclusion zones around nests.
- Reducing the presence of agricultural machinery in breeding habitats, and the
- Creation of vegetated buffers for cover.



Participants were asked one polling questions. Results from the poll can be seen below.

Figure 1: Are you aware of any of these species occurring within your territory?



Discussion Summary

As part of the SARA project, CIER facilitated a half day workshop on 'Consultation on Amending the List of Species under SARA' (Batch-19), on February 9, 2022. This session provided information on terrestrial species under consideration for amendments under Species at Risk Act (SARA). This session was organized to bring together Indigenous communities and organizations to participate in meaningful consultation and cooperation in support of the listing, recovery, and protection provisions of SARA

- Consultation on Amending the list of Species under the Species at Risk Act was presented by Victoria Leck, Consultations Biologist with Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) under ECCC
- Red Knot *rufa* subspecies was presented by Burke Korol, Wildlife Biologist with the CWS under ECCC.
- Davis's Shieldback and Aweme Borer presented by Elisabeth Shapiro, Wildlife Biologist with the CWS under ECCC.
- There were 11 participants who attended the workshop from 9 different organizations within Ontario.

Species at Risk Listings presentation

Species at Risk such as Lesser Yellowlegs, Red knot *rufa* subspecies, Short Eared Owl, Barn Swallow, Canadian Warbler and Lakeside Daisy was presented by Burke Korol. The following depicts the discussions during this species presentation.

Q: Have you found a difference in the way harvesting is done now. My community lives in the Northeast of the Boreal Forest. A lot of trappers and members have said they do not hear the birds as much anymore. So, with the different way of clear cutting, spraying, cutting to the water's edge, does this have an impact? Because it does kill a lot of the insects and we find it a concern up here. I don't hear the Whip-poor-will here anymore.¹

CWS: In general, it is related to the groups of birds present. There are a lot of different ways the bird populations forage for food. It is important to break up the focus and look only at birds that forage for insects in the air. The decline is typically related to pesticide use (food loss). We are getting good at controlling insects with pesticides, managing water quality and sedimentation. However, with this, there is a reduction in prey availability for the birds, and if the lakes and rivers cannot provide these species with enough insects to eat then they go elsewhere.

Comment: We heard a whip-poor-will last spring for the first time in over 15 years³.

Q: The way clear cutting is done now with clearing to the water, it changes the temperatures and how the snow melts. Is this being investigated? Forestry and hydro lines all include spraying. It must be a cumulative effect, right?¹

CWS: I am not as familiar with the cause of the declines, or if someone has looked at the declines with forest harvesting methods on insect population declines.

Comment: Information provided to communities on Forest Management has not changed a lot in the last of couple years, it might be something that needs to get investigated.¹

CWS: Perhaps the information provided has stabilized due to changes in forestry and other practices using herbicides and clear cutting. Status reports are typically very comprehensive. Extensive research and literature can be found summarized in COSEWIC.

Summary of presentation

This part of the workshop gave an opportunity for participants to provide questions or comments.

Comment: Under the threats, there should be a bullet that identifies the industry and the cumulative effects from the industry. Not just talking about forestry but also mining, aggregates and hydro dams. All these industries should be providing information on threats. They are all involved in extracting resources, and the extraction is one of those threats.¹

We only find out, after the fact that these species are disappearing. An example would be a specific species of bird not being heard anymore. However, we have found that the Martens are coming back. Indigenous communities are

impacted by these species being listed as endangered because the trappers, hunters, land users must travel further to find them. We understand the presentation and the SARA, but industrial impacts need to be addressed.¹

CWS: Burke agrees and provided a recap of topics touched on during the presentation that addressed some of the listed concerns. One thing about this presentation is the time limitation and there is a lot that was missed within the listing of impacts. COSEWIC status reports have more information, addressing more concerns.

Comment: if you are addressing the public on these threats to species, then you need to include these threats because the public doesn't see this a lot.¹

CWS: Elisabeth Shapiro: When the threat of the species is being assessed it is done in a 10-year time frame. So, threats that might apply to the species in the next 10 years. If there are no industrial development projects that the report writers are made aware of in that time frame, that might not be included

Q: For the First Nation communities how do they fit in, when they are giving their knowledge about these threatened species, near or within their communities. Is the threat listing localized or is it throughout Canada?¹

CWS: Yes, when threats are being assessed, and when a species is being assessed as being "at risk", localized threats are considered.

Q: So, it would still be a threat?¹

CWS: Yes (Elisabeth Shapiro)

CWS: Victoria Leck (ECCC) additional comment: Part of the reason that ECCC does these sessions is that we do not know the specific projects that are occurring in your communities and in your traditional territories. This is some of the information that we are looking to collect, especially with these species in which we are currently doing consultation, and recovery documents (threats are identified within recovery documents). This is the stage where we are looking for input. If you see that within an area that the threats occurring are not reflected in those documents listed, that is something that ECCC wants to know, so that we can include that information when the development of recovery plans is being created.

Q: So, we can contact you directly?¹

CWS: Victoria confirms that she can contact her to discuss these concerns or share comments.

CWS: (Victoria adds) The information that is shared from participants, can be included within those comments that will go to inform the Minister for review, but if there is anything related to the recovery documents where there are threats as well, ECCC would love to hear about that also.

Comment: SARA is very important. However, it is Industry that threatens and continues to threaten extinction across the landscape and until we can mitigate these concerns species will continue to disappear. There must be a better way industry can operate without creating a major impact on wildlife. I am a First Nation person who has close ties with the land and when I was a child I saw lots of butterflies, bumble bees, hornets, and bird species. What I see now is next to nothing, and I live 50 km in the bush. Just wanted to share².

Appendix 1 – Participant and contact list

The contact information from participants has been left out of this public document. Participant information will be kept private internally, to help ECCC with report writing and the engagement phase of their SARA work.