Endangered Species and Spaces

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3.14 Northern Long-eared Myotis: *Myotis septentrionalis* (Trouessart)

Order: *Chiroptera*
Family: *Vespertilionidae*

Status

Global Rank: G4
Provincial Rank: S2S3
COSEWIC: Not considered

Provincial Listing: **Blue list**

Distinguishing Features

The mouse-eared bats (genus *Myotis*) are easily confused and often can only be distinguished by experts. M *septentrionalis* is essentially the same size and colour as the little brown bat, but with long rounded ears and a dull brown shoulder spot. Colour below is a buffy grey. The sexes are alike. Average weight is approximately 7 grams (Banfield, 1974)

Distribution

Columbia Basin: Locally distributed throughout the Cranbrook, Invermere, Golden and Revelstoke forest districts.

British Columbia: The Northern Long-eared Myotis has been found at a number of sites scattered through eastern, central and northern British Columbia, including the Peace River, Revelstoke and Liard River areas. Records not confirmed by voucher specimens have been reported from the Cariboo region.

Global: The Northern Long-eared Myotis is widely but sparsely distributed across forested regions of the eastern United States and Canada north and west to the southern Northwest Territories and eastern British Columbia.

Habitat

Throughout most of its range, the Northern Long-eared Myotis is associated with boreal forests; in British Columbia it is also found in the wet forests of the Interior Cedar-Hemlock Biogeoclimatic Zone. Elsewhere in North America, day roosts and nursery colonies have been found in buildings and under the bark of trees.

Threats

Knowledge of range is hampered by difficulty in identification of this and related species. There are eight known occurrences; undoubtedly more exist. Timber harvesting could be detrimental, since this species forages in forested habitats and utilizes wildlife trees for nursery colonies and day roosts. Disturbance at cave or mine hibernacula is a potential threat. Use of chemical and biological insecticides would reduce their food supply (Cannings et al. 1999).

Biology

This species emerges at dusk to hunt at a height of 1-3 metres over small ponds and forest clearings for caddisflies, moths, beetles, flies and leafhoppers. In late summer or early autumn the bats gather to move to hibernacula, which may be up to 56 kilometres away. The Northern Long-eared Myotis hibernates alone or in small groups, and selects narrow crevices where temperatures may be as low as 1.6 ^{o}C. Mating occurs in autumn in the hibernaculum and the females store sperm over the winter. Ovulation occurs at the time of emergence in the spring and gestation lasts 50-60 days, after which a single young is born. In British Columbia, limited breeding information suggests that young are born in late June or early July (Cannings et al. 1999).

For recent research on the Long-eared Myotis, check out the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology website at http://www.cmiae.org

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