



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Sacramento Fish & Wildlife Office
FACT SHEET



Threatened vs. Endangered Species
Under the Endangered Species Act of 1973

What is the Difference Between Threatened And Endangered Species?

If we determine that a species is on the brink of extinction, we list it as endangered. If a species is experiencing serious threats that may eventually lead to its extinction, but the situation is not yet critical, we classify it as threatened.

Protection of Threatened and Endangered Animals

Listing as endangered gives animal species protection under Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act, which prohibits the take of a Federally-listed endangered species. (Take is defined as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect.")



Animal species listed as threatened do not automatically have protection under the Act. But the Service has applied most of the same protection described above to threatened species. This is authorized by *Section 4(d)* of the Act. We sometimes make exceptions to the take rule for threatened species. Exceptions are often called *4(d) rules*. We also issue take permits to allow more activities that affect threatened species. See www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/permits.htm.

Endangered and Threatened Plant Protection

The Act prohibits malicious damage or destruction of threatened or endangered plant in any area under Federal jurisdiction, and the removal, cutting, digging up, or damaging or destroying of any such species on any other area in knowing violation of any State law or regulation, or in the course of any violation of a State criminal trespass law.



Species of Concern

Species of Concern is an informal term. It is not defined in the federal Endangered Species Act. The term commonly refers to species that are declining or appear to be in need of conservation. See www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/spp_concern.htm.

Credits: Endangered riparian brush rabbit, Heather Bell, FWS. Threatened San Joaquin kit fox, Carley Sweet, FWS. Endangered Bakersfield cactus, Adam Zennerer, FWS.

Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
<http://www.fws.gov/>
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, California 95825
Phone (916) 414-6600
FAX (916) 414-6713

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