

Understanding Yukon Conservation Data Centre's data layers on GeoYukon

What is the Yukon Conservation Data Centre?

The Yukon Conservation Data Centre (CDC) is a program within Environment Yukon that assists in the conservation of Yukon's biodiversity by collecting and sharing scientific data and information about all species in the territory. The CDC is part of a network of Conservation Data Centres across North America and parts of Central and South America called [NatureServe](#). The primary functions of the CDC are to:

- **Compile a list of species** that occur in Yukon;
- **Assign conservation status ranks** to all species, based on collaboration with scientists and experts across the country, indicating level of risk of being lost;
- **Map known locations** of those species assessed as having the highest risk of being lost and compile information on these occurrences (referred to as "CDC Species of Conservation Concern" on GeoYukon)
- **Make data and information available.**

What spatial data is available?

The mapped locations of species of conservation concern are available on Yukon Government's interactive map application, GeoYukon. You can use GeoYukon to explore, print and download map data. Our layers fall under the category Biological.

There are two layers available – **CDC Species of Conservation Concern** and **CDC Species of Conservation Concern – Restricted**.

CDC Species of Conservation Concern contains the vast majority of our mapped locations. It displays mapped locations exactly as mapped in our database (see mapping methods) and additional information, including the species name and last observation date are provided (see [What information is provided with the mapped location?](#) for a list of all data fields). Most mapped locations are very small. In order to alert viewers of their presence, the layers are displayed as points (representing the centers of the polygons) when zoomed out at a scale of 1:320,000 or beyond. As you zoom in from 1:320,000 the features will appear as polygons.

CDC Species of Conservation Concern - Restricted Access contains a masked location in the shape of a hexagon and does not identify the species involved. This layer is for the handful of species that have been identified as being **Species Susceptible to Harm** – *species where unrestricted sharing of data places populations, residences or occurrences at risk of intentional or inadvertent harm, interfering with their conservation or recovery*. If your area of interest falls within one of these hexagons, you are asked to [contact the Yukon CDC](#) for further information. Details, including species name and exact location, *may* be released, provided the user has a business case for needing the data and a Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Agreement is signed. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Why is some data restricted?

The Yukon Conservation Data Centre needs to balance making data openly and freely available with ensuring that the species are not harmed by the release of this data. Some species are considered susceptible to harm, regardless of whether that harm is intentional or inadvertent. An example would be a Peregrine Falcon nest site – we want to avoid disturbing the nest inadvertently by people trying to access the site for taking photographs, or intentionally by poachers taking eggs. However, if a user is planning work in the area, we do want them to be aware of the site so they can avoid disturbing it. The Yukon CDC will assess on a case-by-case basis whether a user has a “need to know” (i.e. business case) and what level of details to provide.

Mapping methods

The Yukon Conservation Data Centre follows NatureServe methodology that depicts “element occurrences” (an area of land and/or water in which a species is or was present) as polygons. These are the mapped locations shown on GeoYukon. These polygons include locational uncertainty. The locational uncertainty incorporates inaccuracies that can be associated with the collection of location information, such as inaccurate GPSs or vague locational descriptions. Mapped locations of newer data are generally more precise than older, historical occurrences.

It is very important to note that the **absence of mapped locations** in an area of interest does not necessarily mean that there are no species on conservation concern present; only that there are none currently recorded in the database. A detailed assessment of the site conducted during the appropriate season by qualified biologists is the only way to confirm presence or absence of a species of conservation concern.

What information is included with the mapped locations?

When you use the Identify tool in GeoYukon and click on one of our mapped locations in the public access layer (or download the data), you will see the following data fields:

Element Occurrence ID or EO_ID	A unique identifier for each element occurrence record used internally by the Yukon CDC and to link shapefile records to the Element Occurrence Record report.
Scientific Name or SPECIESNAM	Standard scientific name used in Yukon for the species (or subspecies or variety) of this occurrence.
Common Name or COMMONNAME	Standard common name (in English) used in Yukon for the species (or subspecies or variety) of this occurrence.
Taxonomic Group or TAXGROUP	The informal taxonomic group to which the species belongs.
Yukon Rank or YK_RANK (also known as S Rank)	The Yukon conservation status for the species, assigned by the Yukon CDC. For rank definitions and to learn more about how they are assigned, please see https://explorer.natureserve.org/AboutTheData/Statuses

Canadian Rank or CDN_RANK (also known as N Rank)	The Canadian (national) conservation status for this species, assigned by NatureServe. For rank definitions and to learn more about how they are assigned, please see https://explorer.natureserve.org/AboutTheData/Statuses
Global Rank or GLOBALRANK (also known as G Rank)	The global conservation status for this species, assigned by NatureServe. For rank definitions and to learn more about how they are assigned, please see https://explorer.natureserve.org/AboutTheData/Statuses
COSEWIC Status or COSEWICSTA	Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) designation. If blank, the species has not been assessed by COSEWIC.
COSEWIC Date or COSEWICDAT	Date the COSEWIC status was assigned.
Estimated Representational Accuracy or REP_ACCUR	A measure of how well the mapped shape represents what was seen on the ground. Low representational accuracy means that much of the shape includes locational uncertainty. A big polygon with low representational accuracy means that the species was somewhere within that polygon but exact location is unknown, as opposed to meaning the species was all over the place.
Probability of Persistence or PROB_RANK (also known as EO Rank)	A measure of the probability of persistence of the species at this particular mapped location, if current conditions prevail. Ranks range from A (excellent estimated viability) to D (poor estimated viability), with other options including E (verified extant but viability not assessed), F (failed to find), H (historical – generally last observed more than 40 years ago), U (unrankable due to lack of information) and X (extirpated).
Sensitive Data Indicator or SENSI_IND	Indication of whether the data is considered sensitive ecological data (N/Y). Sensitive Ecological Data is <i>data and information that, if inappropriately released, could significantly increase the risk of harm to Species of Conservation Concern, their habitats, or the environment, or interfere with their conservation or recovery.</i>
Last Observation Date or LAST_DATE	Last observation date.
Data Update Date or UPDATEDATE	Date of last major update to the data record.

Please note that additional data fields are available from the Yukon Conservation Data Centre, including details on site visits. If you require this additional information, please [contact the Yukon CDC](#) with the EO ID for the mapped location(s) you are interested in.

How current is this data layer?

The CDC Species of Conservation Concern layers displayed on GeoYukon are updated quarterly. The last update date is listed in the metadata for the layers. You can access the metadata for any layer in GeoYukon by clicking on the arrow to the right of the layer (this will only appear if they layer is turned on). If you need access to more recent data, you can [contact the Yukon CDC](#).

How do I cite Yukon Conservation Data Centre data?

When citing Yukon CDC data obtained through the GeoYukon web application, please use the following credit:

Yukon Conservation Data Centre. [YEAR]. CDC Species of Conservation Concern layer, GeoYukon web application. Available at <https://mapservices.gov.yk.ca/geoyukon/>. Accessed: [date accessed].

Where do I go for more information?

Check out links to more information at [Species conservation and biodiversity research | Government of Yukon](#). You can also [contact the Yukon CDC](#) with any questions you may have.

If you require spatial data that is not easily obtained via GeoYukon, such as all mapped locations of a particular species or group of species, you can submit a custom data request to the Yukon CDC using [this form](#).

Non-spatial information, such as lists of species or conservation status ranks, can be requested by contacting the CDC.

How do I contact the Yukon CDC?

The best way to contact the Yukon CDC is via email – yukoncdc@yukon.ca

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