



Conservation Data Centre



Grasslands Conservation Council
of British Columbia

White-tailed Jackrabbit

Lepus townsendii

Physical Description:

Length 58 cm.

Large pale grey rabbit with very long ears and a pure white tail.

In winter completely white.

Status:

Global: G5
Subnational: SH
COSEWIC:
Provincial: Red List

Habitat:

Open grasslands and shrub-steppe.

Range within BC:

Formerly sparsely distributed in the grasslands and shrublands of the Okanagan Valley south of Penticton and in the lower Similkameen Valley.

Breeding habits:

They are active throughout the year, and breed from late February to mid-July (in North Dakota); gestation lasts 5-6 weeks; 1-11 young are born in a well-concealed depression in the ground or in a burrow abandoned by other animals.

Ecological Significance:

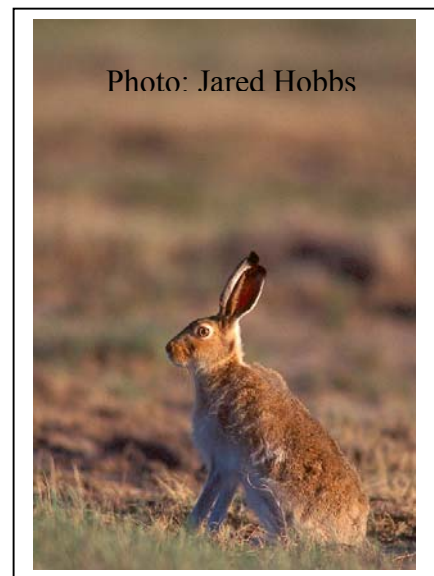
Special Significance

Food Habits

Eats grasses and forbs in summer, and browses on twigs, buds, and bark in winter

Agricultural Significance:

Why the species is at risk:



Much of its habitat has been lost to agricultural and urban development; alienation of this habitat continues. Last observed in the lower Similkameen Valley in 1981, with an unconfirmed sighting south of Oliver in 1996. Perhaps extirpated, although habitat remains relatively unchanged in the lower Similkameen and adjacent Washington State since 1981.

Quirky Unique Anecdote:

First Nations belief about/use of the species:

References:

Cannings, S.G., L.R. Ramsay, D.F. Fraser, and M.A. Fraker. 1999. Rare amphibians, reptiles, and mammals of British Columbia. Wildlife Branch and Resource Inv. Branch, BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. Victoria, BC. 198pp.

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Stevens, V. and S. Lofts. 1988. Species Notes for Mammals. Vol. 1 in A.P. Harcombe, tech.ed. 1988. BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Wildlife Branch. 174 pp. Technical Report.