

# **SPECIES AT RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED HIDDEN QUARRY SITE**

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## **Species at Risk**

A Species at Risk (SAR) is any naturally-occurring plant or animal species in danger of becoming threatened, endangered or disappearing. Natural threats or stresses to native plants and animals include predators, food and shelter availability disease and natural disasters. Unfortunately, many of these organisms also face problems caused by human activities, such as the degradation, fragmentation, or outright removal of their habitat. Consequently, their numbers can decrease from that of a healthy population, and in some cases may fall below what is sufficient to maintain the local population or the species and thus reduce the number of species in the ecosystem.

The Canadian Species at Risk Public Registry (Government of Canada, 2018) contains Status Reports that provide the best available information on the basic biology of a wildlife species, including population size and trends, and habitat availability. This forms the basis for a species assessment and status designation (COSEWIC, 2018). The following provides the SAR categories (with Ontario as example), in increasing degree of concern or severity:

- Special Concern (lives in the wild in Ontario, is not endangered or threatened, but may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats);
- Threatened (lives in the wild in Ontario, is not endangered, but is likely to become endangered if steps are not taken to address factors threatening it);
- Endangered (lives in the wild, but facing imminent extinction or extirpation in Ontario);
- Extirpated (lives somewhere in the world, and at one time lived in the wild in Ontario, but no longer lives in the wild in Ontario).
- Extinct (no longer lives anywhere in the world).

In Ontario, 245 species of plants and animals are currently listed as of Special Concern, Threatened or Endangered (COSSARO, 2018). It is noteworthy that species classified as 'Threatened' or 'Endangered' automatically receive legal protection in Ontario, as does their habitat. "All species, including humans, depend on each other to survive. This means that threatened or endangered species can put the survival of species that rely on them at risk." (MNR, 2018).

Surveys in 2011-2012 (GWS, 2012) found that the proposed Hidden Quarry site provided habitat for numerous plant species and a large number of animals, including: damselflies and dragonflies (21 species); butterflies (26 spp.); amphibians (6 spp.); reptiles (1 sp.); birds (50 spp.); and mammals (14 spp.), as well as providing overwintering habitat for some White-Tailed Deer. Of

the bird species, 29 were listed as breeding both on-site and on adjacent lands, while 8 species were only found breeding on the proposed quarry site.

The following list provides the status of the Species at Risk identified on the proposed Hidden Quarry site (GWS, 2012), including those species found on adjacent lands, i.e., within 120 metres. This includes insect, reptile, mammal and bird species (see Figure 1). Letters in brackets indicate their Federal (CDN) and/or Provincial, i.e. Ontario (ON) classification. A number of other bird species (see Figure 2) were also found on the site and on adjacent lands. Although not yet listed as SAR, they require a minimum of 10 to 50 hectares of forest habitat (GWS, 2012; MNRF, 2015) for successful breeding, and their populations decline when habitat becomes fragmented and reduced in size (MNR, 2000). Their habitat includes large, mature trees (older than 60 years) in forest stands or woodlots greater than 30 ha, with the interior forest habitat at least 200 metres from the forest edge (MNRF, 2015).

***On the proposed Hidden Quarry site:***

- **Endangered** - Little Brown (Myotis) Bat (CDN, ON)



- **Special Concern** –

- **Snapping Turtle (CDN, ON)**



- **Eastern Wood Pewee (CDN, ON)**



- **Monarch Butterfly (CDN, ON)**



- **Midland Painted Turtle (CDN)**



➤ **Area-Sensitive**

- **Pileated Woodpecker**



- **Hairy Woodpecker**



- **Ovenbird, Ruffed Grouse**



- **Savannah Sparrow Red-Breasted Nuthatch**



- **White-Breasted Nuthatch**



***On Adjacent Lands:***

- **Threatened** - Bobolink (CDN, ON), Wood Thrush (CDN), Barn Swallow (CDN, ON).



- **Special Concern** Wood Thrush (ON).



- **Area-Sensitive** – Scarlet Tanager, Veery



Removal of 24.9 hectares of sand, gravel, rock and soil, plus the 21.1 ha of associated woodland from the proposed quarry site (Stovel, 2016) in order to access the underlying bedrock will also remove the associated Significant Woodland and Significant Wildlife Habitat. This will adversely impact the numerous animal species, including those which require substantial areas for breeding and the raising of young.

**References**

COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada), 2018.

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MNR (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources), 2000. Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide. Peterborough, Ontario.

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