

Appendix A: Global / State Rank Definitions

HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS

The international network of Natural Heritage Programs employs a standardized ranking system to denote global (range-wide) and state status (Association for Biodiversity Information 2001). Species are assigned numeric ranks ranging from 1 (critically imperiled) to 5 (demonstrably secure), reflecting the relative degree to which they are "at-risk". Rank definitions are given below. A number of factors are considered in assigning ranks -- the number, size and distribution of known "occurrences" or populations, population trends (if known), habitat sensitivity, and threat. Factors in a species' life history that make it especially vulnerable are also considered (e.g., dependence on a specific pollinator).

RANK DEFINITIONS

G1 S1	Critically imperiled because of extreme rarity and/or other factors making it highly vulnerable to extinction.
G2 S2	Imperiled because of rarity and/or other factors making it vulnerable to extinction.
G3 S3	Vulnerable because of rarity or restricted range and/or other factors, even though it may be abundant at some of its locations.
G4 S4	Apparently secure, though it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
G5 S5	Demonstrably secure, though it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
GU SU	Possibly imperiled, but status uncertain; more information needed.
GA SA	Native in nearby states, but in Montana believed to be accidentally introduced, deliberately planted, or escaped from plantings.
GH SH	Historical, known only from records over 50 year ago; may be rediscovered.
GX SX	Believed to be extinct; historical records only.

COMBINATION RANKS

G#G# or S#S# Indicates a range of uncertainty about the rarity of the species.

SUBRANKS

T# Rank of a subspecies or variety; appended to the species' global rank of the full species, e.g. G4T3.

QUALIFIERS

Q Taxonomic questions or problems exist, more information needed; appended to the global rank, e.g. G3Q.

? Denotes uncertainty or for numeric ranks, inexactness.