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Senticolis triaspis - (Cope, 1866)

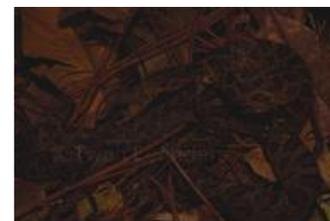
Green Ratsnake

Other Related Name(s): *Elaphe triaspis* (Cope)

Related ITIS Name(s): *Senticolis triaspis* (Cope, 1866) (TSN 209458)

Unique Identifier: ELEMENT_GLOBAL.2.100076

Element Code: ARADB44010

Informal Taxonomy: Animals, Vertebrates - Reptiles - Snakes


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Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family	Genus
Animalia	Craniata	Reptilia	Squamata	Colubridae	Senticolis

Genus Size: A - Monotypic genus

 Check this box to expand all report sections:

Concept Reference ?

Concept Reference: Collins, J. T. 1990. Standard common and current scientific names for North American amphibians and reptiles. 3rd ed. Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. Herpetological Circular No. 19. 41 pp.

Concept Reference Code: B90COL01NAUS

Name Used in Concept Reference: *Senticolis triaspis*

Taxonomic Comments: Until recently, this species was included in the genus *Elaphe*; the change to *Senticolis* was proposed by Dowling and Fries (1987), based primarily on the unique hemipenial morphology; electrophoretic data also support the separation of *triaspis* from *Elaphe* (Lawson and Dessauer 1981); the change to *Senticolis* was adopted by Price (1991) and Crother et al. (2000). Three subspecies (*triaspis*, *intermedius*, and *mutabilis*) are recognized (Price 1991); each was previously assigned by various authors totally or in part to the three species *Elaphe triaspis*, *E. chlorosoma* (a junior synonym of *intermedius*), and *E. mutabilis*.

Conservation Status ?

NatureServe Status

Global Status: G5

Global Status Last Reviewed: 14Dec2005

Global Status Last Changed: 30Oct1996

Rounded Global Status: G5 - Secure

Nation: United States

National Status: N3

U.S. & Canada State/Province Status	
United States	Arizona (S3), New Mexico (S1)

Other Statuses

NatureServe Conservation Status Factors

Global Abundance: 10,000 - 1,000,000 individuals

Global Abundance Comments: Total adult population size is unknown but undoubtedly exceeds 10,000. These snakes are secretive but not uncommon in the Chiricahua Mountains in Arizona (Degenhardt et al. 1996).

Estimated Number of Element Occurrences: 21 - 300

Estimated Number of Element Occurrences Comments: This species is represented by many occurrences or subpopulations. Price (1991) mapped roughly 50 collection sites.

Global Short Term Trend: Stable (unchanged or within +/- 10% fluctuation in population, range, area occupied, and/or number or condition of occurrences)

Global Short Term Trend Comments: Extent of occurrence, area of occupancy, number of subpopulations, and population size probably are relatively stable.

Global Long Term Trend: Relatively stable (+/- 25% change)

Global Protection: Several to many (4-40) occurrences appropriately protected and managed

Global Protection Comments: At least several occurrences are in protected areas.

Degree of Threat: Unthreatened

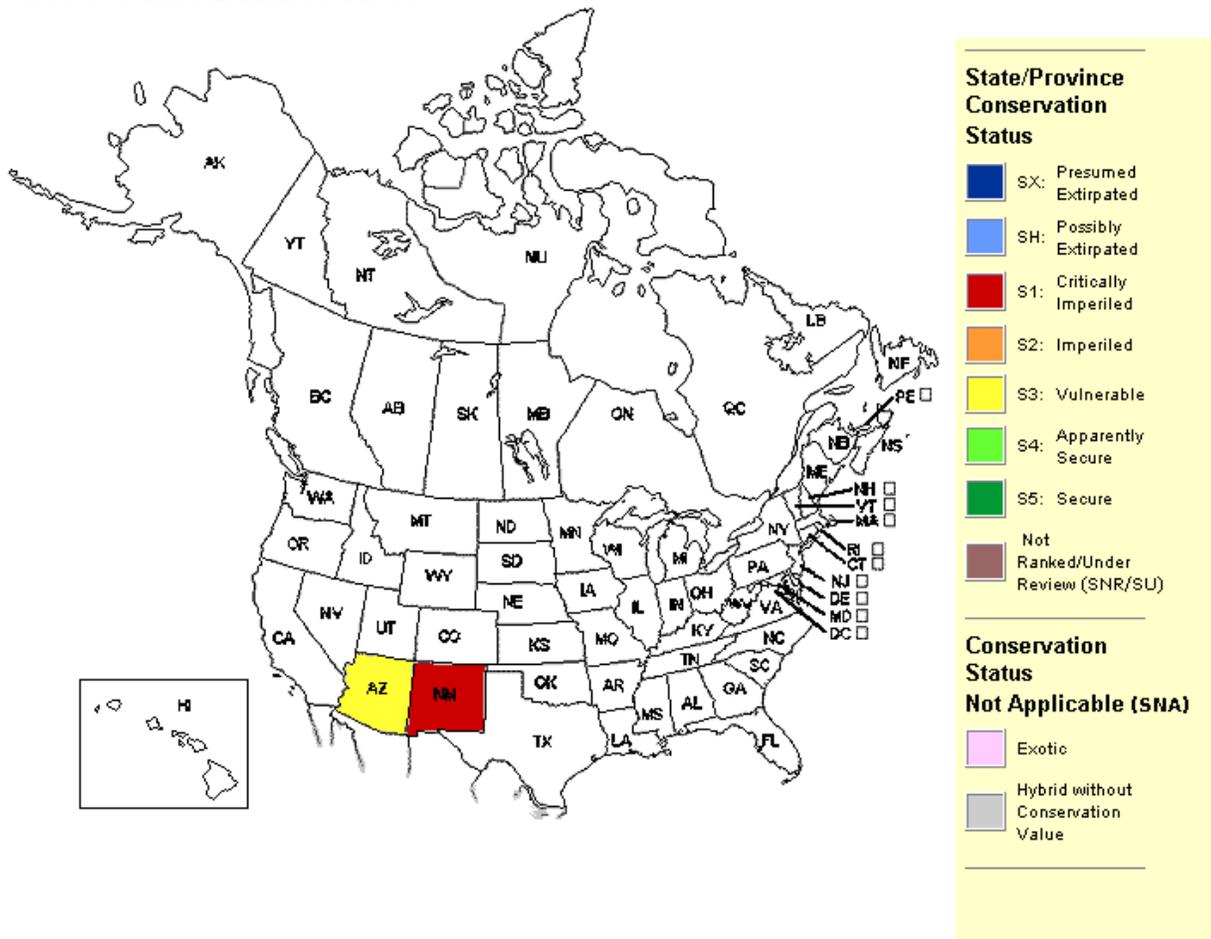
Threat Scope: Insignificant

Threats: No major threats are known.

Fragility:

Distribution

U.S. States and Canadian Provinces

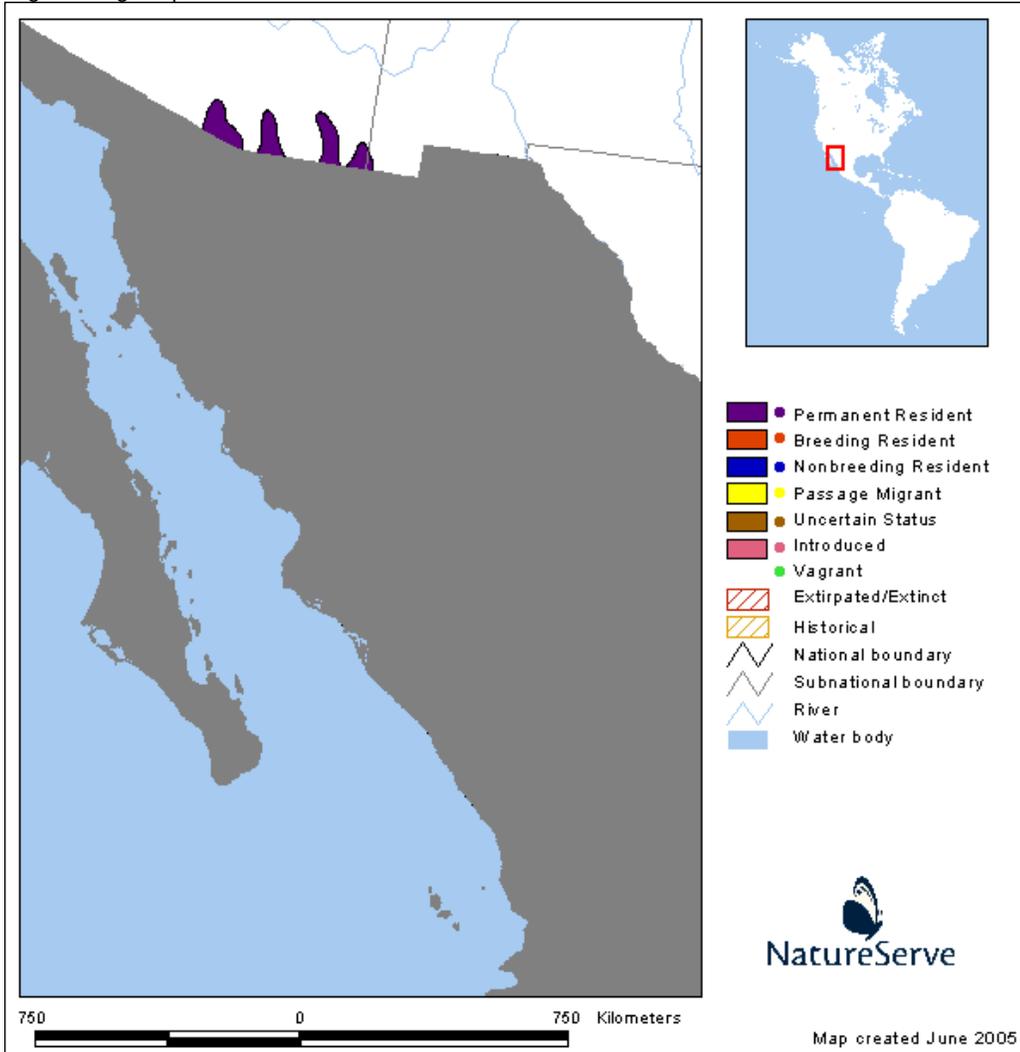


Endemism: occurs (regularly, as a native taxon) in multiple nations

U.S. & Canada State/Province Distribution	
United States	AZ, NM

Range Map

Note: Range depicted for New World only. The scale of the maps may cause narrow coastal ranges or ranges on small islands not to appear. Not all vagrant or small disjunct occurrences are depicted. For migratory birds, some individuals occur outside of the passage migrant range depicted.



Range Map Compilers: NatureServe, 2005

Global Range: 200,000 to >2,500,000 square km (about 80,000 to >1,000,000 square miles)

Global Range Comments: The range extends from southeastern Arizona (Baboquivari, Pajarito, Santa Rita, Empire, Whetstone, and Chiricahua mountains) and southwestern New Mexico (Peloncillo and Guadalupe mountains; possibly also the Animas and Mule mountains) south through northwestern, northeastern, and southern Mexico to Costa Rica, from near sea level to over 2,200 meters (Price 1991).

Natural heritage records exist for the following U.S. counties ?	
State	County Name (FIPS Code)
AZ	Cochise (04003), Pima (04019), Santa Cruz (04023)

* Extirpated/possibly extirpated

Ecology & Life History ?

Reproduction Comments: Little information available. Apparently lays 5 or more eggs in late summer or early fall (Behler and King 1979).

Non-Migrant: Y

Locally Migrant: N

Long Distance Migrant: N

Habitat Comments: Habitats include woodlands and chaparral of rocky mountain canyons near streams in the United States, montane mesophytic forests along the slopes of the Mexican highlands and in Central America, and xeric forest in western and southern Mexico (Price 1991, Stebbins 2003). Sometimes this snake can be found in agricultural areas or in buildings in towns. It is terrestrial and arboreal and uses rock crevices or underground burrows as shelter.

Food Comments: Eats birds, small mammals, lizards; mainly rodents.

Phenology Comments: Inactive in cold temperatures and extreme heat.

Length: 127 centimeters

Economic Attributes

Management Summary

Population/Occurrence Delineation

Group Name: Medium And Large Colubrid Snakes

Use Class: Not applicable

Minimum Criteria for an Occurrence: Occurrences are based on evidence of historical presence, or current and likely recurring presence, at a given location. Such evidence minimally includes collection or reliable observation and documentation of one or more individuals (including eggs) in or near appropriate habitat where the species is presumed to be established and breeding.

Separation Barriers: Busy highway or highway with obstructions such that snakes rarely if ever cross successfully; major river, lake, pond, or deep marsh (this barrier pertains only to upland species and does not apply to aquatic or wetland snakes); densely urbanized area dominated by buildings and pavement.

Separation Distance for Unsuitable Habitat: 1 km

Separation Distance for Suitable Habitat: 5 km

Separation Justification: Available information on movements of colubrid snakes is limited to a small minority of species. These data indicate that nearly all species have home ranges smaller or much smaller than 25 ha (e.g., less than 3 ha, *Pituophis catenifer* in California, Rodriguez-Robles 2003), with some up to about 75 ha (*Heterodon platirhinos*, average 50 ha, Plummer and Mills 2000), and the largest up to 225 ha in the biggest colubrids (*Drymarchon corais*, summer mean 50-100 ha, USFWS 1998).

Radiotelemetry data for *Elaphe obsoleta* indicate that residents of hibernacula that are 1-2 km apart (with suitable intervening habitat) probably interbreed (Prior et al. 1997, Blouin-Demers and Weatherhead 2002). However, "evidence of genetic structure even over short distances (e.g., 2-20 km) implies that gene flow among rat snake populations can be easily disrupted" (Prior et al. 1997). Loughheed et al. (1999) found evidence of substantial genetic exchange among local hibernacula (< 6 km apart), but gene flow over distances of 10s of km appears to be substantially less. Based on extensive radio-tracking data, Blouin-Demers and Weatherhead (2002) found that home range size of *Elaphe obsoleta* averaged 18.5 ha and ranged up to 93 ha; based on the most mobile individuals, *Elaphe obsoleta* from hibernacula up to 8 km apart can come together for mating. *Elaphe obsoleta* and probably other colubrids exhibit high fidelity to hibernacula and shift even to nearby sites only rarely (Prior et al. 2001).

Many of the several studies that report small home ranges for colubrids did not employ methods (e.g., radio telemetry) suitable for detecting full annual or multi-annual home range size, dispersal, or other long-distance movements, so these may have yielded underestimates of home ranges or activity areas.

At least some colubrids, including medium-sized species such as garter snakes, not uncommonly move between areas up to a few kilometers apart, and several species make extensive movements of up to several kilometers, so separation distances of 1-2 km for suitable habitat probably are too small for medium-sized and large colubrids. On the other hand, long movements of several kilometers tend to be localized or exceptional phenomena.

A separation distance of 5 km for suitable habitat was selected as most appropriate for snakes assigned to this Specs Group. This is approximately 2.5 times the length of an elongate home range encompassing 100 ha.

For the purposes of these occurrence specifications, upland habitat is regarded as unsuitable habitat for aquatic and wetland snakes. For upland snakes, shallow or patchy wetlands are treated as unsuitable habitat whereas large deepwater habitats (subjective determination) are barriers.

Inferred Minimum Extent of Habitat Use (when actual extent is unknown): .5 km

Date: 09Oct2003

Author: Hammerson, G.

Population/Occurrence Viability

Justification: [Use the Generic Element Occurrence Rank Specifications \(2008\).](#)
[Key for Ranking Species Element Occurrences Using the Generic Approach \(2008\).](#)

U.S. Invasive Species Impact Rank (I-Rank)

Authors/Contributors

NatureServe Conservation Status Factors Edition Date: 14Dec2005

NatureServe Conservation Status Factors Author: Hammerson, G.

Element Ecology & Life History Edition Date: 14Dec2005

Element Ecology & Life History Author(s): Hammerson, G.

Zoological data developed by NatureServe and its network of natural heritage programs (see [Local Programs](#)) and other contributors and cooperators (see [Sources](#)).

References

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Note: All species and ecological community data presented in NatureServe Explorer at <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer> were updated to be current with NatureServe's central databases as of **August 2010**.

Note: This report was printed on **May 28, 2011**

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Citation for data on website including State Distribution, Watershed, and Reptile Range maps:
 NatureServe. 2010. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: May 28, 2011).

Citation for Bird Range Maps of North America:
 Ridgely, R.S., T.F. Allnutt, T. Brooks, D.K. McNicol, D.W. Mehlman, B.E. Young, and J.R. Zook. 2003. Digital Distribution Maps of the Birds of the Western Hemisphere, version 1.0. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia, USA.

Acknowledgement Statement for Bird Range Maps of North America:
 "Data provided by NatureServe in collaboration with Robert Ridgely, James Zook, The Nature Conservancy - Migratory Bird Program, Conservation International - CABS, World Wildlife Fund - US, and Environment Canada - WILDSPACE."

Not yet assessed**Citation for Mammal Range Maps of North America:**

Patterson, B.D., G. Ceballos, W. Sechrest, M.F. Tognelli, T. Brooks, L. Luna, P. Ortega, I. Salazar, and B.E. Young. 2003. Digital Distribution Maps of the Mammals of the Western Hemisphere, version 1.0. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia, USA.

Acknowledgement Statement for Mammal Range Maps of North America:

"Data provided by NatureServe in collaboration with Bruce Patterson, Wes Sechrest, Marcelo Tognelli, Gerardo Ceballos, The Nature Conservancy-Migratory Bird Program, Conservation International-CABS, World Wildlife Fund-US, and Environment Canada-WILDSPACE."

Citation for Amphibian Range Maps of the Western Hemisphere:

IUCN, Conservation International, and NatureServe. 2004. Global Amphibian Assessment. IUCN, Conservation International, and NatureServe, Washington, DC and Arlington, Virginia, USA.

Acknowledgement Statement for Amphibian Range Maps of the Western Hemisphere:

"Data developed as part of the Global Amphibian Assessment and provided by IUCN-World Conservation Union, Conservation International and NatureServe."

NOTE: Full metadata for the Bird Range Maps of North America is available at:

<http://www.natureserve.org/library/birdDistributionmapsmetadatav1.pdf>.

Full metadata for the Mammal Range Maps of North America is available at:

<http://www.natureserve.org/library/mammalsDistributionmetadatav1.pdf>.

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