

Washington State Species and Communities of Special Concern

information for family forest owners

As a good land steward, it is important to be aware of plant and animal species of special concern that may occur on your lands, and how forest management activities may affect these species. The Washington State Implementation Committee (WA SIC) for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is pleased to provide a series of factsheets on species of special concern that may occur on forested lands within Washington State. Each species factsheet includes a description of the species, habitat, range, and information on known threats to populations in Washington.



Photo of Sharp Tailed Grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*)
www.fws.gov

Species: Sharp Tailed Grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*)

Group: Bird

Natural Heritage Rank: G4, S2

Legal Status: State Threatened

General Description

This species is a small prairie grouse. Adults are 17 inches in length and have a wingspan of 25 inches. These grouse are mottled brown with a pale pointed tail and a slightly crested head. Males have a purple neck patch. This species gathers in groups at breeding areas (called leks) in the spring. Males compete with each other and try to lure females with a dance-like display that includes a distinctive “whump-whump-whump” drumming. Their diet is plants, seeds, and some insects.

Habitat

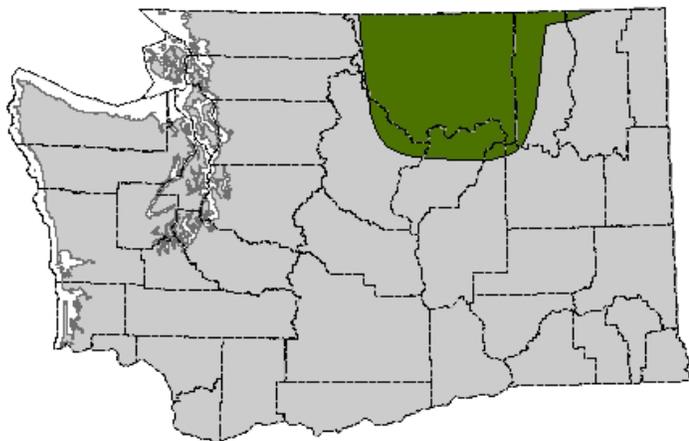
This species lives in shrub (e.g. sage) steppe and meadow steppe with intermittent forest.

Range in Washington

Current populations occur in Okanogan, Douglas, and Lincoln counties.

Threats

Threats to sharp tailed grouse include the alteration of shrub steppe habitat to grazing and agricultural uses, fire suppression and in-growth of trees in meadow steppe, and fragmentation and isolation of remaining populations of this grouse.



Map source is NatureServe with following reference:
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. Downloaded September 5, 2006

The information provided in this sheet has been compiled by the Washington SFI Implementation Committee. This species is one example of many that depend on family forest owners in Washington State for protection. To view other accounts, visit www.wdfw.wa.org or www.dnr.wa.gov/nhp, or www.natureserve.org.

