

ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD
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Amphibian and Reptile Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC)

-Minutes -

August 16, 2023 – 1:00 PM-3:00 PM

Illinois Natural History Survey, Conference Room 2064

1816 S. Oak Street, Champaign, IL 61820

ESTAC Members Present: Dr. Robin Warne, Mr. Gary Glowacki, Dr. Allison Sacerdote-Velat, Dr. Michael Dreslik, Mr. Andrew Kuhns, Mr. Scott Ballard, Dr. John Crawford, Ms. Jessica Mohlmann, and Mr. Eric Smith

ESTAC Members Absent: Dr. Richard King and Dr. Tom Anderson

Others Present: Ms. Natalia Maass (IDNR)

1. General Notes.

- The meeting began with introductory information.
- Members reviewed species currently on the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species (Illinois List).
- There was a consensus about the need to consider delisting *Pseudemys concinna* (river cooter), depending on the results of imminent survey work.
- There was a consensus about the need to consider uplisting *Necturus maculosus* (mudpuppy), depending on the results of imminent survey work.
- There was a consensus to consider uplisting *Terrapene ornata* (ornate box turtle) during the next revision, depending on the status of central populations.

2. Species Recommended for Changes in Status.

A. Change from endangered to threatened or from threatened to endangered

- *Pseudemys concinna* (endangered)—A motion to change the status of this species from endangered to threatened passed unanimously. Dr. Dreslik was to prepare the petition. It was later decided to wait until a full IDNR Species Status Assessment was created for the species, and then a packet would be constructed from that work. IDNR has INHS and NGRREC contracted to complete the assessment.
- *Heterodon nasicus* (plains hog-nosed snake; threatened) —A motion to change the status of the species from threatened to endangered passed unanimously. Dr. Crawford was to prepare the petition. It was later decided to wait until a full IDNR Species Status Assessment was created for the species, and then a packet would be constructed from that work. IDNR has INHS and NGRREC contracted to complete the assessment.

- *Nerodia cyclopion* (Mississippi green watersnake; threatened) —A motion to change status from threatened to endangered passed unanimously. Dr. Dreslik and Mr. Ballard were to prepare the petition. It was later decided to wait until a full IDNR Species Status Assessment was created for the species, and then a packet would be constructed from that work. IDNR has INHS and NGRREC contracted to complete the assessment.

B. Delist

- *Apalone mutica* (smooth softshell; threatened)—A motion to delist this species passed with a unanimous vote. Drs. Kuhns and Crawford were to prepare the petition. The petition was pending, and clear delisting criteria could be located to augment the packet. It was later decided to wait until a full IDNR Species Status Assessment was created for the species, and then a packet would be constructed from that work. IDNR has INHS and NGRREC contracted to complete the assessment.
- *Coluber flagellum* (coachwhip; endangered)—A motion to delist this species passed unanimously. Mr. Ballard was to prepare the petition.
- *Nerodia fascia* (southern watersnake; endangered)—A motion to delist this species passed unanimously. Drs. Dreslik and Crawford were to prepare the petition.

C. Additions to the Illinois List

- *Kinosternon subrubrum* (eastern mud turtle)—A motion to add this species to the Illinois List as threatened passed unanimously. Dr. Dreslik was to prepare the petition. It was later decided to wait until a full IDNR Species Status Assessment was created for the species, and then a packet would be constructed from that work. IDNR has INHS and NGRREC contracted to complete the assessment. The key will be to ensure it at least reappears as an SGCN.
- *Opheodrys vernalis* (smooth greensnake)—A motion was made to add this species to the Illinois List as threatened. The vote was divided, and there was debate about the regionalization of critical data, but the motion passed. Dr. Sacerdote-Velat will prepare the petition.

3. Species Needing More Field Searches

- There was a consensus that more field surveys are needed for *Tantilla gracilis*. (flat-headed snake) and *Gastrophryne carolinensis* (eastern narrow-mouthed toad). The IDNR has an active contract with the INHS/NGRREC to conduct fieldwork from 2026 to 2028.

Compiled by Samantha Chavez