Great Plains Toads are listed as special concern in Canada. They can be identified by their large size, 'L'-shaped ridges behind their eyes, and dark patches on a grey or brown back. They have an exceptionally loud call that some say resembles a jackhammer. They are nocturnal and burrow underground, allowing them to live in dry environments. They overwinter by digging a burrow below the frost line and staying there until spring. They are only active from about April to September, and live for 10 years or more. They do not reach sexual maturity in Canada until they are 3-5 years old. They are found exclusively in dry, native grasslands. They breed in clean, shallow runoff pools and ditches in the spring. Eggs hatch after about four days and tadpoles metamorphize in 18-49 days, depending on temperature.
Conservation

- Loss of their habitat, native prairie, to cultivation continues to be their greatest threat.
- Vehicles and farm implements kill a significant number of toads.
- Pesticide use may directly poison them or may reduce their potential food supply.
- The spread of chytrid fungus, an amphibian disease, is a potential threat.
- Toads sometimes fall into holes or depressions (such as cattle tracks) and are unable to climb back out.

Get involved

- Read the assessment and status report for Great Plains Toads here.

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