



Species Lists

Background

An important function of the National Park Service (NPS) is protecting and maintaining the level of biological diversity found within parks. Park managers, planners, and scientists require basic information on the status of species occurring in parks as a basis for making decisions and working with other agencies, the scientific community, and the public for the long-term protection of park ecosystems. As one of the 12 core natural resource inventories, the I&M program provided parks with funding and technical assistance to compile existing data and to undertake targeted field investigations to document the occurrence of at least 90 percent of the species of vascular plants and vertebrates (birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles) currently estimated to occur in parks.

Products

The core of the **Species Lists** inventory is the **NPSpecies** information system. This system is a compilation of existing species lists and evidence records (vouchers, scientific documents, and observation records that support the species occurrences) for vertebrates and vascular plants in more than 270 parks with significant natural resources. The data are quality-checked and certified by subject-matter experts.

NPSpecies includes standardized information associated with the occurrence of species in parks, including scientific names and their synonyms, common names, abundance, residency, nativity, T&E status, and reasons why a species may be of particular management interest to a park.

The certified species lists and supporting evidence records in NPSpecies support NPS staff and collaborators at the park, network, regional, and national levels by managing fundamental park-level species information, and making this information available to other applications and databases for more specialized analyses.

Status

The initial effort to produce certified species lists was completed in 2008. The focus of NPSpecies has been limited to vertebrates and vascular plants because of data availability and funding constraints. However, the data system



Cascade frogs (*Rana cascadae*) at Crater Lake National Park. The floating plants are a new species (*Eleocharis acicularis*) added to the park during the biological inventories.

is designed to manage species information for all taxa and all parks in the National Park System. Development and update of NPSpecies will be a continual process as the NPS obtains funding and develops partnerships to conduct additional inventories of different species groups.

To make the data more available and useful to park staff (and eventually to other agencies, the scientific community, and the general public), NPSpecies has been redesigned and incorporated into the Natural Resource Information Portal (NRInfo), accessible at <http://nrinfo.nps.gov> (click on the “Biology” tab). For now, this information is accessible only to NPS staff. Public access should be available in 2011.

More Information

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NPSpecies Home: <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/apps/npspp/>
I&M Inventories: <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/inventory/>
NPS Nature & Science <http://nature.nps.gov/>
NPS Home: <http://www.nps.gov/>