

**Marten (*Martes americana*)**

**Status: NSS4; NatureServe G5 S3**

**Abundance:** Uncommon

**Introduction:** The marten occurs across most of North America from Alaska through much of forested Canada, into the northeastern US, and south along the major mountain ranges in the western US. It inhabits the mountains of western, south-central, and north-central Wyoming. The marten is considered uncommon in Wyoming. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department classifies it as a Species of Special Concern with a Native Species Status of 4 (NSS4) because population status and trends are unknown, although they are suspected to be stable, and because its habitat is vulnerable, although there is no ongoing significant loss of habitat. Due to its isolated status, the marten population in the Black Hills is considered to be at greater risk than the remainder of Wyoming's marten population.

**Habitat:** The marten inhabits mature and old-growth conifer and mixed stands, including spruce-fir, lodgepole pine, and various deciduous forests. It usually selects mesic stands that are characterized by at least 30 to 50% crown closure, living branches on the lower boles of trees, abundant coarse woody debris, herbaceous cover, and lengthy fire-return intervals. The marten usually avoids large openings in the forest, such as clear cuts, but it will use riparian areas, meadows, forest edges, and rocky alpine areas, especially for foraging. It occupies a den in a tree cavity, rotten log, or underground.

**Problems:**

- Population status, trends, and distribution of the marten are unknown, precluding effective management;
- There are no efforts to identify key habitats in Wyoming; and
- Populations may be limited in some areas by timber harvesting (including firewood cutting) and high-intensity fires in spruce-fir forests.

**Conservation Actions:**

- Conduct inventories for martens in all potential habitat in the state;
- Delineate crucial range and work cooperatively with land management agencies to maintain habitat within the designated area;
- Maintain structurally-diverse mature and old-growth spruce-fir forests with abundant snags, downed timber, and herbaceous vegetation in areas where martens occur; and
- Manage marten habitat to reduce conflicts with timber harvesting.

**References and Additional Reading:**

Buskirk SW, Harestad AS, Raphael MG, Powell RA, eds. 1994. Martens, sables, and fishers: biology and conservation. Ithaca (NY): Cornell Univ Pr. Clark TW, Anderson E, Douglas C, Strickland M. 1987. *Martes americana*. Mammalian Species 289:1-8.

Clark TW, Harvey AH, Dorn RD, Genter DL, Groves C, eds. 1989. Rare, sensitive, and threatened species of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Northern Rockies Conservation Cooperative, Montana Natural Heritage Program, The Nature Conservancy, and Mountain West Environmental Services. 153 p.

Powell RA, Buskirk SW, Zielinski WJ. 2003. Fisher and marten. In: Feldhamer GA, Thompson BC, Chapman JA, eds. Wild mammals of North America: biology, management, and conservation. 2d ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ Pr. p 635-649.

Ruggiero LF, Aubry KB, Buskirk SW, Lyon LJ, Zielinski WJ, tech eds. 1994. The scientific basis for conserving forest carnivores: American marten, fisher, lynx, and wolverine in the western United States. Gen Tech Rep RM-254. Fort Collins (CO): USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station. 184 p. Online: [http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pub\\_rm/rm\\_gtr254.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pub_rm/rm_gtr254.pdf).

Ruggiero LF, Pearson DE, Henry SE. 1998. Characteristics of American marten den sites in Wyoming. *J Wildl Manage* 62:663-73.

