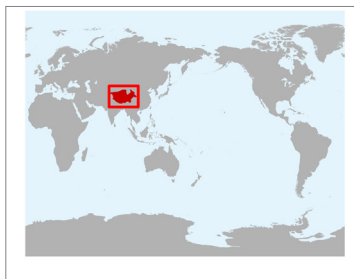




© Andrew Smith

NOT EVALUATED NE	DATA DEFICIENT DD	LEAST CONCERN LC	NEAR THREATENED NT	VULNERABLE VU	ENDANGERED EN	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED CR	EXTINCT IN THE WILD EW	EXTINCT EX
---------------------	----------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------	------------------	------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------	---------------



Geographical range

Amazing Species: Plateau Pika

The **Plateau Pika**, *Ochotona curzoniae*, is listed as 'Least Concern' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is a small lagomorph that inhabits the alpine meadows of the Tibetan Plateau, living in family groups that occupy an interconnected burrow system.

The Plateau Pika is a keystone species and an ecosystem engineer; its burrows serve as nest sites for most endemic birds on the plateau. They also are the primary food for nearly all avian and mammalian carnivores on the plateau (Saker Falcons, Upland Buzzards, Little Owls, Tibetan Foxes, Pallas's Cat, wolves and brown bears). Their burrowing activity serves to recycle nutrients and minimizes erosion and run-off from monsoonal rains.

Considered by the government to be an agricultural pest, the Plateau Pika has been the target of widespread poisoning. When the pikas are poisoned carnivores in the region starve, and as the burrows collapse native birds lose breeding habitat and disappear. Current efforts to exterminate this species in China should be curtailed.

www.iucnredlist.org
www.ualberta.ca/lsg
 Help Save Species
www.arkive.org



The production of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ is made possible through the IUCN Red List Partnership: IUCN (including the Species Survival Commission), BirdLife International, Conservation International, NatureServe and Zoological Society of London.