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Amazing Species: Tenerife Sand Grasshopper

The <u>Tenerife Sand Grasshopper</u>, Sphingonotus picteti, has recently been assessed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species[™]. It is endemic to Tenerife (Canary Islands, Spain), where it only occurs in the hottest semi-arid areas close to the coast. This small grasshopper performs a visual courtship display with the male climbing on a pebble and flagging with its hind leg to attract the female.

The Tenerife Sand Grasshopper is threatened by on-going development for tourism and industrialization of Tenerife's south coast. The small populations of this species become increasingly fragmented and isolated. Many of them occur on very small patches of coastal vegetation with a large cover of bare ground.

As is true of many invertebrates, no specific conservation actions are currently in place for the Tenerife Sand Grasshopper. However, parts of its habitat are protected in nature reserves such as the 'Parque Rural de Teno', the 'Reserva Natural Especial del Malpaís de La Rasca' and the Reserva Natural Especial de Montaña Roja'. There is a strong need to consider the occurrence of this species while planning the future development of Tenerife's south coast.





