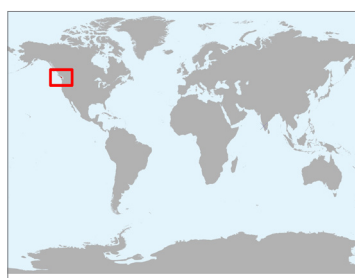




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Geographical range

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Species of the Day: Vancouver Island Marmot

The **Vancouver Island Marmot**, *Marmota vancouverensis*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. One of the rarest mammals in North America, this species is only found on Vancouver Island, Canada. Its total population was estimated at fewer than 130 individuals in 2004, most of which were in captivity.

Natural successional processes, such as the advancement of tree growth in alpine meadows, may be responsible for this marmot's original scarcity. However, the main causes of its recent decline may be habitat disruption through logging, and high predation rates associated with forestry practices and changes in the numbers of predators. With such a small population, any predation on the Vancouver Island Marmot may represent a significant threat.

The Vancouver Island Marmot is legally protected, and a recovery plan is in place for the species. A captive breeding programme is underway, and reintroductions have been planned. Detailed research is also needed to better understand aspects of the marmot's dispersal, survivorship, requirements for hibernation sites, and its reproduction in natural and logged habitats.



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