
A Cave Obligate Mite *Flabellorhagidia pecki*

Chelicerata — Actinedida — Rhagidiidae

CONSERVATION STATUS / CLASSIFICATION

Rangewide: Critically imperiled/Imperiled (G1G2)
Statewide: Critically imperiled (S1)
ESA: No status
USFS: Region 1: No status; Region 4: No status
BLM: No status
IDFG: Not classified

BASIS FOR INCLUSION

Idaho endemic; restricted distribution.

TAXONOMY

This taxon was first collected in 1969 and described as a new species in 1976. *Flabellorhagidia pecki* is the type species of the genus (Elliott 1976).

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

Flabellorhagidia pecki is believed to be endemic to a single cave in Craters of the Moon National Monument (Elliott 1976).

POPULATION TREND

No data are available to suggest population trend.

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

This species is an obligate cave inhabitant, but specific habitat requirements have not been published. Elliott (1976) summarized: "*Flabellorhagidia pecki* exhibits cave adaptation in the great attenuation of the legs and setae, eyelessness, and the high degree of sensory development. It should be considered troglobitic."

ISSUES

Threats are unknown, but any activity that might negatively disrupt the cave environment would be considered a threat.

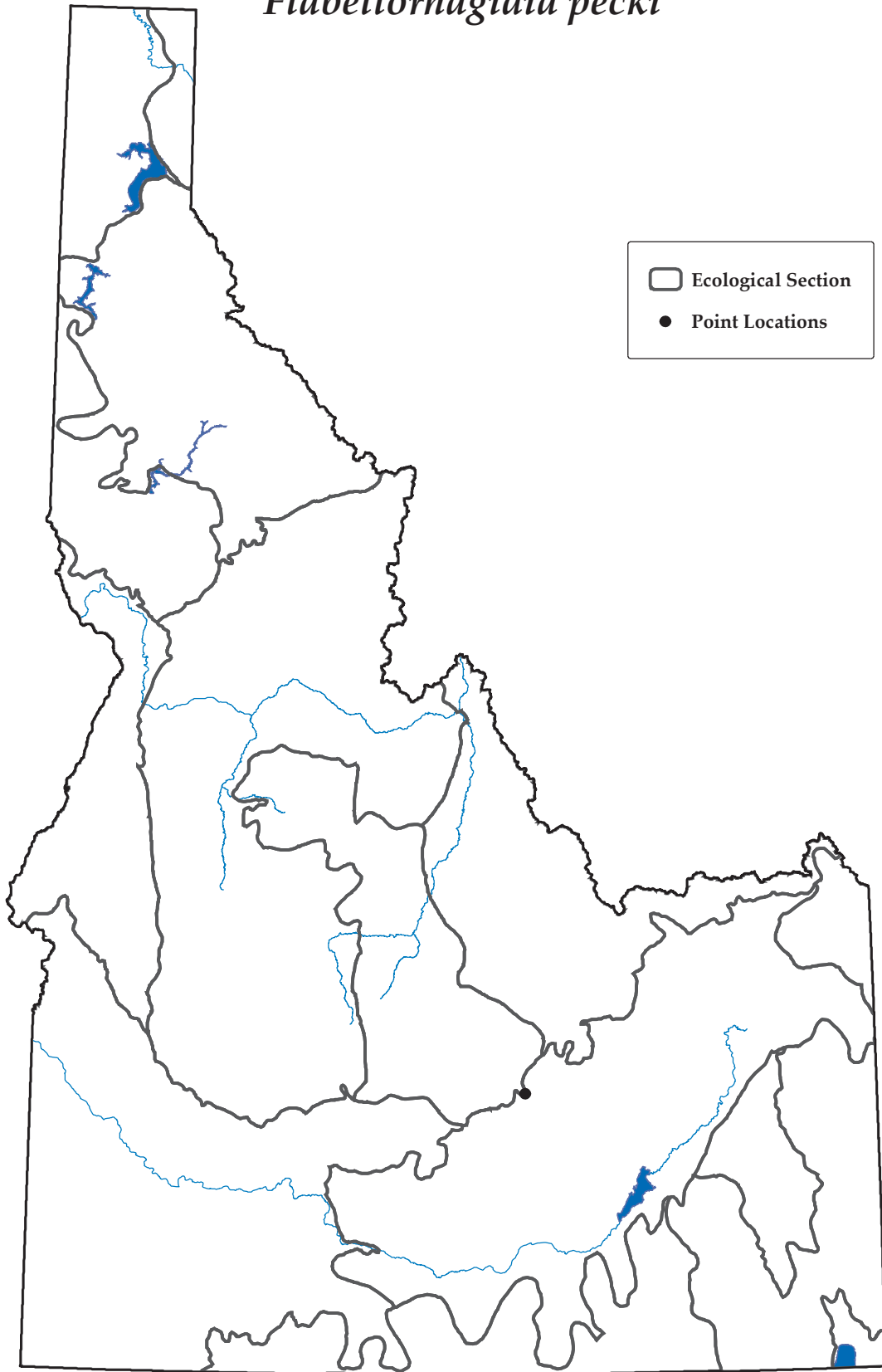
RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Additional surveys in other lava tube caves on the Snake River Plain should be conducted to better define the distributional extent of this species.

Although experienced spelunkers are generally aware of the fragility of cave environments, lava-tube caves are popular with inexperienced spelunkers and are susceptible to unintentional damage and vandalism. Particular efforts are needed to protect the cave occupied by this species.

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2 August 2005
Point data are from Idaho Conservation Data Center,
Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

