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## Idaho Point-headed Grasshopper

### *Acrolophitus pulchellus*

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Insecta — Orthoptera — Acrididae

#### CONSERVATION STATUS / CLASSIFICATION

Rangewide: Critically imperiled/Vulnerable (G1G3)  
Statewide: Critically imperiled (S1)  
ESA: No status  
USFS: Region 1: No status; Region 4: No status  
BLM: Rangewide/Globally imperiled (Type 2)  
IDFG: Not classified

#### BASIS FOR INCLUSION

Lack of essential information pertaining to status; Idaho endemic.

#### TAXONOMY

This species was originally described as a member of the genus *Pedioscertetes*. Jago (1969) placed *P. pulchella* in synonymy with the taxon *P. nevadensis*, which occurs in Arizona and Utah, but recent treatments have considered these taxa to be distinct.

#### DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

This grasshopper is an Idaho endemic known to occur only in east-central Idaho in the Birch Creek and Big Lost River drainages. Few collections have been made (Baker 2003), the most recent of which was made during 1993 when only 2 individuals were found during a 4-day survey period (Kell et al. 1993). During 2002 and 2003, Baker (2003) made repeated visits to all of the historic locations and to the location of the 1993 collection but was unsuccessful at finding any individuals. Baker reported that it is possible the species is extinct, but he cautioned that it is also possible that this secretive species occurs at a low density and only under favorable conditions will it be seen.

#### POPULATION TREND

Because of the paucity of knowledge of this species, nothing definitive can be said in regard to range or population status (Baker 2003). No individual has been observed since 1993 despite concerted field surveys during 2002 and 2003, and there is some concern that populations have been lost (Baker 2003).

#### HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

This species occurs in xeric shrub-dominated habitat. Bruner (1890) found individuals under spiny hopsage. Baker (2003) found no spiny hopsage in the Birch Creek areas that he surveyed but did find considerable saltbush and black sagebrush. His interviews with previous collectors did not shed any definitive light on the grasshopper's food plant preferences. Scoggan and Brusven (1972) indicated that the terrain in the area from which they collected specimens was flat to gently rolling with extremely gravelly, rocky soil and low, sparse vegetation.

## **ISSUES**

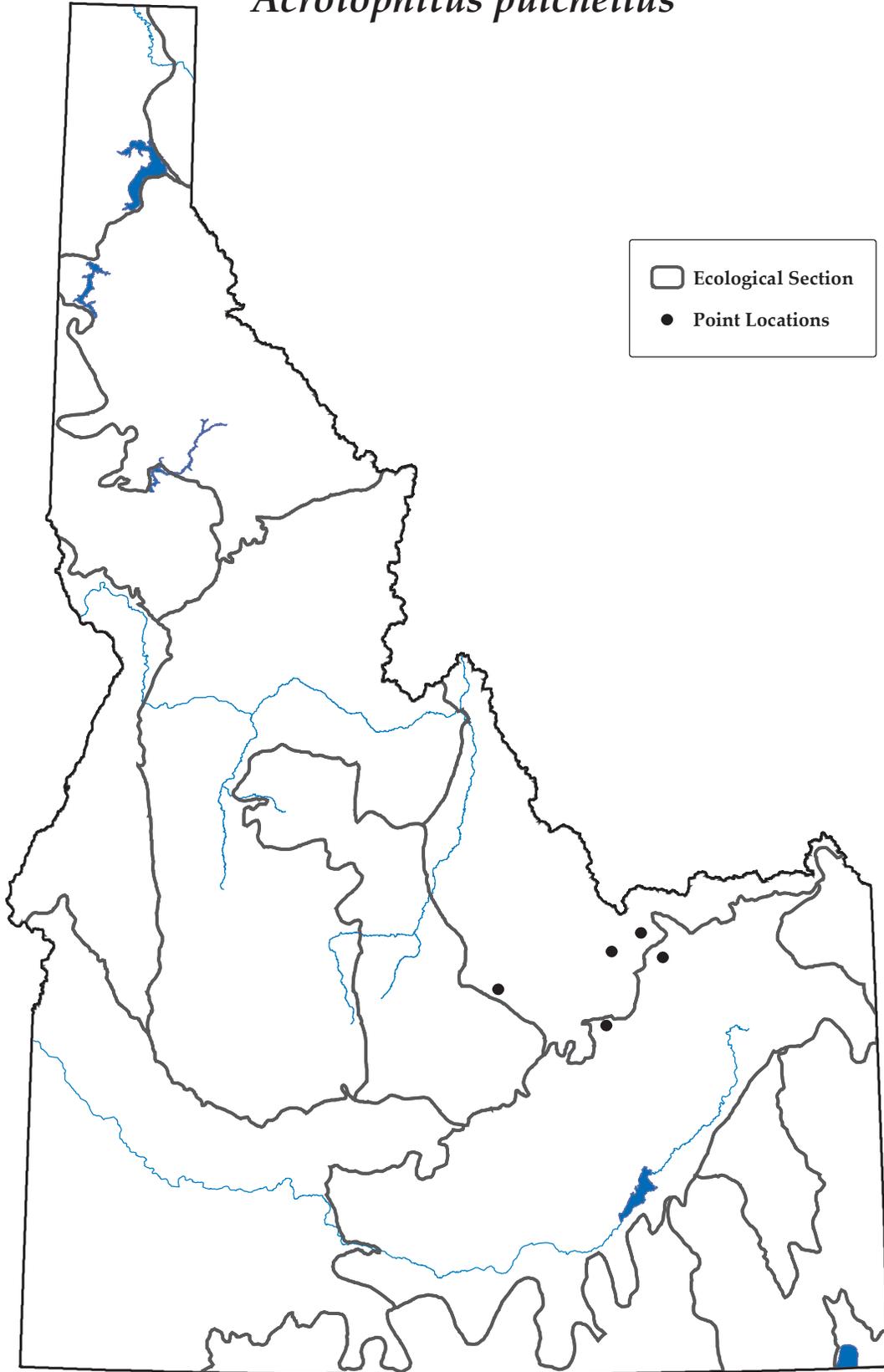
Threats to grasshoppers include pesticides and habitat modification. Although conversion of native habitat to agricultural uses has benefited some grasshopper species, there are no data to suggest that agriculture has benefited this species. Kemp (1994) reported post-drought declines of certain taxa; drought combined with other habitat modifications is of particular importance.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

Baker (2003) did not formulate any recommended management actions because the status of the grasshopper was unknown. Baker suggested the possibility that the grasshopper is extinct, but he recommended that additional attempts be made to locate the species. Specifically, he recommended waiting until after at least 2 successive years of normal precipitation before trying again to find the grasshopper.

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*Acrolophitus pulchellus*



0 20 40 80 Kilometers

0 20 40 80 Miles

2 August 2005

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

