

---

## Ring-necked Snake

### *Diadophis punctatus*

---

Reptilia — Serpentes — Colubridae

#### CONSERVATION STATUS / CLASSIFICATION

Rangewide: Secure (G5)  
Statewide: Imperiled (S2)  
ESA: No status  
USFS: Region 1: Sensitive; Region 4: No status  
BLM: Watch list (Type 5)  
IDFG: Protected nongame

#### BASIS FOR INCLUSION

Population trend data are lacking; populations are sparse and discontinuous in Idaho.

#### TAXONOMY

Two subspecies are found in Idaho. The northwestern ring-necked snake (*D. p. occidentalis*) is found in west-central Idaho. The regal ring-necked snake (*D. p. regalis*) is found in southeastern Idaho.

#### DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

The ring-necked snake is widespread throughout North America, but the distribution in the western part of the range is sparse and discontinuous. The species has been detected in 2 parts of Idaho. A cluster of populations occurring in west-central Idaho comprises records from the Clearwater and Potlatch river drainages and the lower Salmon River drainage near White Bird. These populations extend into eastern Washington and are disjunct from populations occurring in central Washington by about 130 km (see, e.g., Nussbaum et al. 1983). Another cluster of populations occurs in southeastern Idaho in the Portneuf River drainage and the Bear River Range (Linder and Fichter 1977). These populations appear to be disjunct from other ring-necked snake populations to the south by approximately 150 km.

#### POPULATION TREND

Current population trends are unknown. In southeastern Idaho, the species has been reported only once since 1972. In west-central Idaho, 6 of the 10 records are dated prior to 1980.

#### HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

Throughout much of the interior west, habitat requirements are poorly understood. In west-central Idaho, localities are typically adjacent to perennial rivers or streams in grassland or forested habitats. The few records for the southeastern Idaho populations are in areas characterized by sagebrush-dominated habitat and rocky canyons adjacent to ephemeral and perennial water sources. This species preys upon invertebrates and perhaps small amphibians.

**ISSUES**

Threats to populations in Idaho are unknown. Possible threats include habitat loss and changes in the prey base arising from habitat change and species introductions.

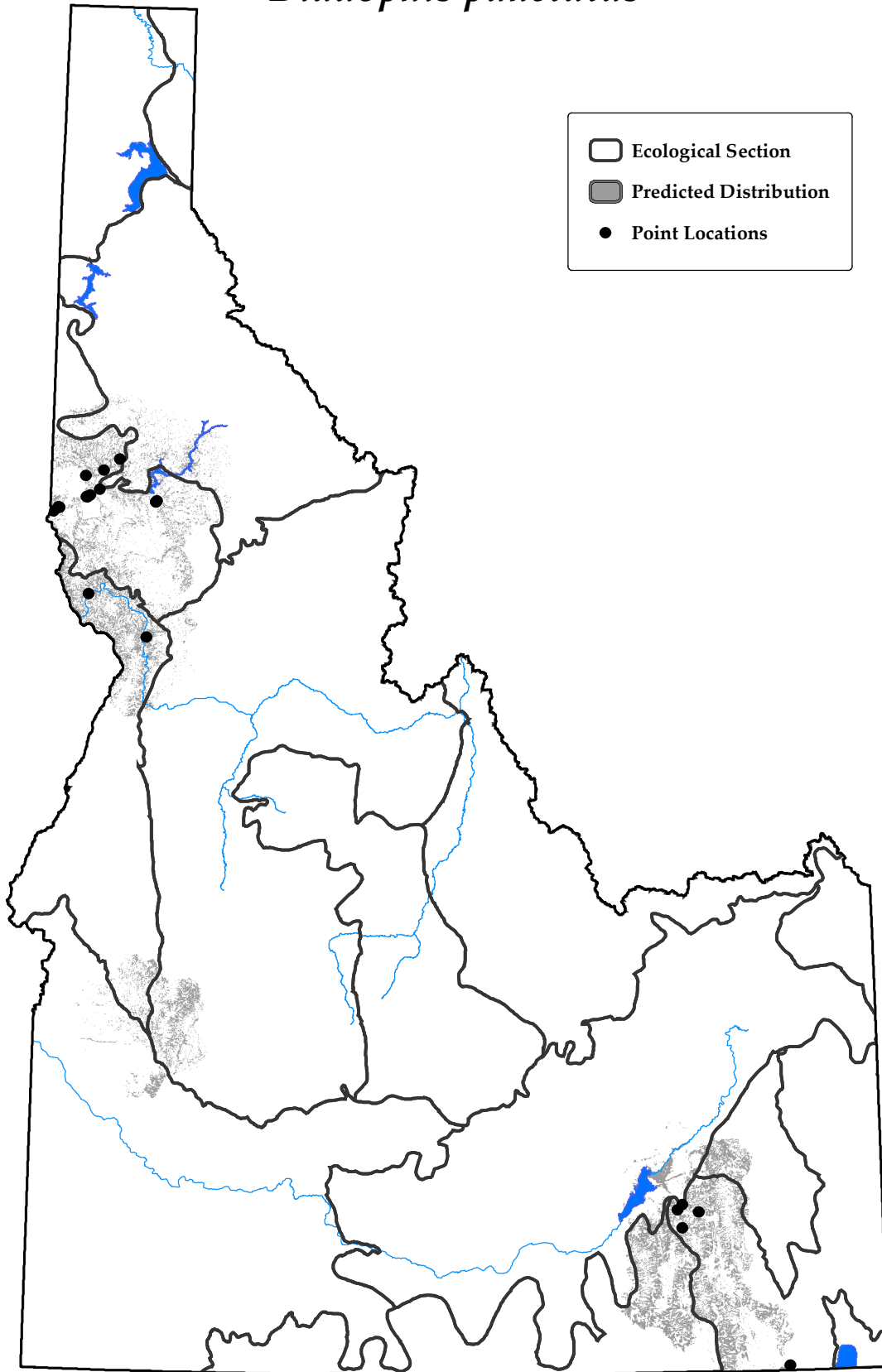
**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

Studies to clarify the status of populations are needed, including investigations of habitat requirements and threats to populations.

Protection of occupied sites from large scale habitat destruction associated with timber harvest, damming, and intensive agricultural use is needed.

# Ring-necked Snake

*Diadophis punctatus*



Map created on September 19, 2005  
and prepared by Idaho Conservation Data Center.  
Sources: Point data are from Idaho Conservation Data Center,  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game (2005). Predicted distribution  
is from the Wildlife Habitat Relationships Models (WHR),  
A Gap Analysis of Idaho: Final Report. Idaho Cooperative Fish  
and Wildlife Research Unit, Moscow, ID (Scott et al. 2002).  
Predicted distribution is approximate (for more information, go to  
[http://www.wildlife.uidaho.edu/idgap/idgap\\_report.asp](http://www.wildlife.uidaho.edu/idgap/idgap_report.asp)).

