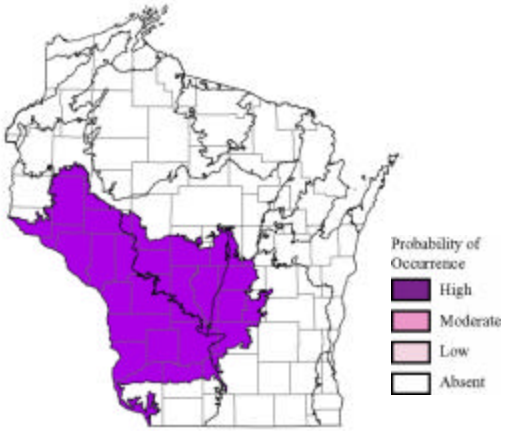
# Western Slender Glass Lizard (*Ophisaurus attenuatus*)

**Species Assessment Scores***

| | |
|---|---|
| State rarity: | 5 |
| State threats: | 4 |
| State population trend: | 4 |
| Global abundance: | 4 |
| Global distribution: | 4 |
| Global threats: | 4 |
| Global population trend: | 3 |
| Mean Risk Score: | 4 |
| Area of importance: | 2 |

* Please see the Description of Vertebrate Species Summaries (Section 3.1.1) for definitions of criteria and scores.




**Ecological Landscape Associations**
Please note that this is not a range map. Shading does not imply that the species is present throughout the Landscape, but represents the probability that the species occurs somewhere in the Landscape.

## Landscape-community Combinations of Highest Ecological Priority

| Ecological Landscape | Community |
|---|---|
| Central Sand Hills | Dry prairie |
| Central Sand Hills | Oak barrens |
| Central Sand Hills | Pine barrens |
| Central Sand Hills | Sand prairie |
| Central Sand Plains | Dry prairie |
| Central Sand Plains | Dry-mesic prairie |
| Central Sand Plains | Oak barrens |
| Central Sand Plains | Pine barrens |
| Central Sand Plains | Sand prairie |
| Western Coulee and Ridges | Dry prairie |
| Western Coulee and Ridges | Dry-mesic prairie |
| Western Coulee and Ridges | Oak barrens |
| Western Coulee and Ridges | Oak opening |
| Western Coulee and Ridges | Pine barrens |
| Western Coulee and Ridges | Sand prairie |

## Threats and Issues

- Habitat loss and fragmentation are major threats to this species. Causes include the past conversion of dry prairies and savannas to agriculture and pine plantations, and natural succession to oak woods.
- Spotted knapweed and other invasive plants are simplifying significant acreages of suitable habitat in the central sands of Wisconsin and may negatively affect invertebrate biomass and carrying capacity for the lizard.
- Paved roads are definite and significant barriers for this lizard as they are barely capable of locomotion on smooth surfaces. This results in population isolation and eventual loss depending on road densities and other habitat factors.

- Roadside mowing may cause significant mortality but is potentially important in maintaining open canopy along roadsides, which often serve as corridors between habitat patches.

**Priority Conservation Actions**

- Long term protection of suitable and restorable habitat within their range is needed. Low lizard biomass in Wisconsin suggests that large blocks of habitat are needed in order to insure long-term viability.
- Management and restoration of habitats, including creating corridor connections between suitable habitat patches, is needed.
- Roadside mowing policies are needed to minimize mortality (should include blade height, timing of day and year restrictions and mowing frequencies) along all suitable roadside habitats within their range.
- Major strides in policy and education are needed to ensure that wildlife habitat is adquately represented and considered in zoning and planning decisions.
- Significant education for town and county government mowing staff is needed to implement improved policies for roadside mowing.
- Educate private landowners on habitat management and mowing practices that would help this species.
- Long term monitoring is needed to evaluate population status and track trends of representative populations.
- Landowner incentive programs are needed to help restore and/or permanently protect suitable habitat on private lands.
- Partnerships with other groups are needed to most effectively protect and manage habitat for this species.