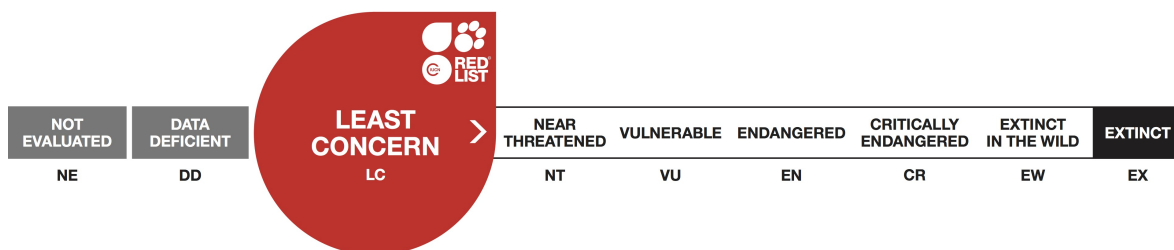


## *Conepatus chinga*, Molina's Hog-nosed Skunk

Assessment by: Emmons, L., Schiaffini, M. & Schipper, J.



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## Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Mammalia	Carnivora	Mephitidae

**Taxon Name:** *Conepatus chinga* (Molina, 1782)

**Common Name(s):**

- English: Molina's Hog-nosed Skunk
- Spanish: Zorrino Común

**Taxonomic Notes:**

While many authors have traditionally considered skunks a subfamily (Mephitinae) within Mustelidae, recent molecular evidence indicates that skunks do not lie within the mustelid group and should be recognised as a single family, Mephitidae (Dragoo and Honeycutt 1997).

A recent revision including morphological, molecular and pelage coloration analyses proposed that *Conepatus chinga* and *C. humboldtii* are conspecific, and as *C. chinga* has page priority, this should be the valid name for the species (Schiaffini *et al.* 2013). The same authors (p. 341) wrote that "samples from Chile, DNA samples from this country and from north-west Argentina, and other genes will help to test this hypothesis and the conclusions presented in this paper" and pending such corroboration, the Red List maintains the treatment as two species.

## Assessment Information

**Red List Category & Criteria:** Least Concern [ver 3.1](#)

**Year Published:** 2016

**Date Assessed:** March 1, 2015

**Justification:**

This species is listed as Least Concern because it is widespread in a region of extensively intact habitat, and although subject to hunting and habitat loss is not believed to be declining fast enough to warrant listing in a higher category of threat.

**Previously Published Red List Assessments**

2008 – Least Concern (LC) – <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2008.RLTS.T41630A10523582.en>

1996 – Lower Risk/least concern (LR/lc)

## Geographic Range

**Range Description:**

The species is found in mid to southern South America. It occurs from southern Peru through Bolivia south to Uruguay, western Paraguay, and southern Chile and Argentina. The species has been also

observed in various localities in South Brazil: São Paulo (de Vivo and Gregorin 2001); at south São Paulo and Paraná (Cáceres 2004); at eastern Paraná and eastern Santa Catarina (Cimardi 1996, Cherem *et al.* 2007); and Rio Grande do Sul (dos Santos *et al.* 2004, Kasper *et al.* 2012a, 2012b).

**Country Occurrence:**

**Native:** Argentina; Bolivia, Plurinational States of; Brazil; Chile; Paraguay; Peru; Uruguay

# Distribution Map

*Conepatus chinga*

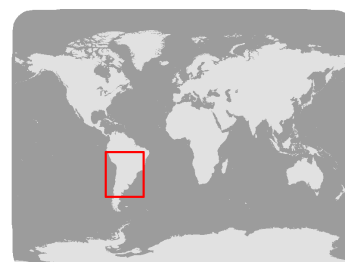


## Range

Extant (resident)

## Compiled by:

IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any official endorsement, acceptance or opinion by IUCN.



## Population

This species is locally common. Density value reported for Chile is 5 individuals/km<sup>2</sup> (Cofré and Marquet 1999). In two different landscapes in Argentina, density values vary from 0.68 to 1.66 individuals/km<sup>2</sup> (Castillo *et al.* 2011a).

**Current Population Trend:** Decreasing

## Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

Molina's Hog-nosed Skunk is mainly nocturnal and solitary (Donadio *et al.* 2001). It is a generalist feeder, using a wide variety of items, including arthropods (particularly Coleoptera larvae), vertebrates (as carrion) and some plant material (Travaini *et al.* 1998, Donadio *et al.* 2004). Its home range seems to be highly variable between sexes and areas, with 243 ha for males and 120 ha for females in grassland from Argentina (Castillo *et al.* 2011a), 194-195 ha for males and females in northwestern Patagonia (Donadio *et al.* 2001) and 255 ha for males and 100 ha for females in southern Brazil (Kasper *et al.* 2012b). During rest periods, it prefers the seclusion offered by shrub forests and rocky slope areas (Donadio *et al.* 2001). Most dens are found in underground burrows on areas with high shrubs and grass cover (Castillo *et al.* 2011b).

**Systems:** Terrestrial

## Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

Molina's Hog-nosed Skunks were heavily hunted for their fur in Argentina during the 1970s and early 1980s (Gruss and Waller 1988). Additionally extensive areas of skunk habitat, including the Patagonian steppe, have been severely degraded through overgrazing and soil erosion by livestock (i.e. primarily sheep) and feral, exotic species (Dinerstein *et al.* 1995, Novaro *et al.* 2000).

## Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

Suggested actions needed to reverse the decline of native species living in the Patagonian steppe include: prevent new introductions; create protected areas in the Patagonian steppe where livestock are excluded and the ecological role of native large fauna is restored; study other consequences of the introduction of exotic species and the ecological extinction of native ones (Novaro *et al.* 2000). It is also considered necessary to include species of *Conepatus* in CITES Appendix II in order to obtain data on the trade in the different species, to estimate the exploitation level, and to enforce a better control of the exports, and to avoid cases where one of the species can be exported under the name of any of the other species (IUCN/SSC Mustelid, Viverrid and Procyonid Specialist Group 1992).

## Credits

**Assessor(s):** Emmons, L., Schiaffini, M. & Schipper, J.

**Reviewer(s):** Duckworth, J.W.

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## Appendix

### Habitats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Habitat	Season	Suitability	Major Importance?
2. Savanna -> 2.1. Savanna - Dry	-	Suitable	No
3. Shrubland -> 3.5. Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry	-	Suitable	Yes
3. Shrubland -> 3.7. Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical High Altitude	-	Suitable	Yes
4. Grassland -> 4.5. Grassland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry	-	Suitable	Yes

### Threats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
2. Agriculture & aquaculture -> 2.3. Livestock farming & ranching -> 2.3.2. Small-holder grazing, ranching or farming	Ongoing	-	-	-
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
5. Biological resource use -> 5.1. Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals -> 5.1.1. Intentional use (species is the target)	Ongoing	-	-	-
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality		
8. Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases -> 8.1. Invasive non-native/alien species/diseases -> 8.1.1. Unspecified species	Ongoing	-	-	-
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		

### Conservation Actions Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Conservation Actions Needed
2. Land/water management -> 2.1. Site/area management
5. Law & policy -> 5.1. Legislation -> 5.1.1. International level

### Research Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

<b>Research Needed</b>
3. Monitoring -> 3.1. Population trends

## Additional Data Fields

<b>Distribution</b>
Lower elevation limit (m): 0
Upper elevation limit (m): 4100
<b>Population</b>
Population severely fragmented: No

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