Project Highlight – SD State Wildlife Grant

Project Type Research

Title Ecology of the Black Hills redbelly snake with emphasis on food habits

In a nutshell Information on this endemic species can aid in providing for its needs in the Black Hills. Seven snake species were collected by hand. Feeding habits were examined for the Black Hills redbelly snake.

Relevant Species of Greatest Conservation Need

- Black Hills redbelly snake (*Storeria occipitomaculata pahasapae*)

Relevant Habitats Streamside habitats of creeks and reservoirs in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Cooperators South Dakota State University (Dr. Charles Dieter)

Purpose Determine seasonal activity, reproductive and population characteristics, distribution, habitat selection and food habits. Determine the relationship between prey selection and prey abundance and whether prey abundance influences this species.

Timeframe September 2003 – June 2006

Summary or Important Findings

- A total of 250 redbelly snakes were found during the study.
- The most important food items were slugs and earthworms.
- Prey availability in the Black Hills did not negatively impact Black Hills redbelly snakes in this study.

Best contact person Dr. Charles Dieter, SDSU

Links to

Dieter, C. 2006. Ecology of the Black Hills redbelly snake (*Storeria occipitomaculata pahasapae*) with emphasis on food habits. Final report submitted to South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks for T-7-R-1.