

## Wildlife: Survey and Manage Program Support

### *Training for Protocol Surveys and Specimen Identification*

#### Overview

The Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP 1994) and subsequent decisions (ROD 2001) marked the beginning of new considerations and requirements for national forests within the range of the northern spotted owl. The NWFP was developed as an ecosystem management plan to protect species associated with older forests on approximately 24 million acres of lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service in northwestern California, western Oregon and western Washington. Subsequent decisions included the January 2001 Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, commonly referred to as Survey and Manage. Survey and Manage are a set of standards and guidelines intended to reduce or eliminate (mitigate) potential effects from agency actions to just over 300 flora and fauna species that are considered rare, including mosses, liverworts, fungi, lichens, vascular plants, slugs, snails, salamanders, great gray owl and red tree voles.

Surveys are a key requirement of mitigation approaches for some of these species and in some cases where all known sites must be managed. Additionally, for any projects that propose habitat disturbing activities in old growth and are not exempt from surveys under specific circumstances, units must complete either equivalent effort surveys or document that strategic surveys have been completed for the ecological province in which the project area falls. Red tree voles and certain mollusk species (snails and slugs) are an example where surveys are required under established survey protocols. As a result, field units often need training in delineating suitable habitat, survey techniques and specimen identification.

#### Project Summary

The Enterprise Program has worked with Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) wildlife biologists, primarily from the Klamath, Shasta-Trinity and Six Rivers National Forests over the last several years to train field units in red tree vole and mollusk protocol surveys and specimen identification. This effort has involved classroom, lab and field components as well as assistance with surveys, delineating suitable habitat and providing specimen identification services. In addition, assistance has been provided to forests and BLM Districts in Oregon and Washington for mollusk training needs and consultation on suitable habitat requirements.

#### Next Steps

This collaborative effort has developed specifically over the past several years in northern California, but looks to expand and provide further assistance to Oregon and Washington, including the Pacific Northwest Region (Region 6) Interagency Special Status/Sensitive Species Program.

Red tree vole and mollusk trainings for survey techniques and specimen identification provide support to the much-needed information about the species range, distribution and habitat requirements. It will also assist managers in making better recommendations and decisions for these rare species.



Top left: Red tree vole (photo credit: Brendan Currie).



Bottom right: Blue-gray tailedropper slug (photo credit: Bill Leonard).

#### For More Information

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