

FOCUS ON CONSERVATION

Horned Lizard Conservation



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Thirteen species of Horned Lizards (Genus *Phrynosoma*) occur in North America. Ranges extend from southern Canada to Guatemala. Horned lizards live in a variety of arid and semi-arid environments from oak-pine woodlands to thorn-scrub deserts. Populations of several species throughout the range of the genus are in trouble.

For example, populations of the Texas Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) have disappeared in eastern and central Texas, and are decreasing in northern Texas. Declines and disappearances also have been recorded in Oklahoma and New Mexico. The primary cause for population decline is the loss of habitat to agriculture and urban development. However, overharvesting for the pet and curio trades and invasions of exotic species are also implicated. Some states protect Horned Lizards. In Texas, both the Texas and Mountain Short-horned (*P. hernandesii*) lizards are state-listed as Protected, meaning that it is illegal for anyone to take, possess, transport, or sell them without a special permit. Not only is it illegal to keep Horned Lizards in Texas, but they are difficult to care for in captivity, and most captured animals eventually die from improper care.

The Horned Lizard Conservation Society is dedicated to protecting Horned Lizards. The Mission of the organization is to document and publicize the values and conservation needs of Horned Lizards, to promote Horned Lizard conservation projects, and to assist with Horned Lizard management initiatives. The Society includes three existing chapters in Texas, Southern California, and Oklahoma and emerging chapters in New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada.

If you would like to contribute to the Society, you can help in many ways. We always welcome new faces, new ideas, and new inspiration. For further information contact:

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