

## On the Search for Lizards - Finding a Cryptic Critter on a Varied Landscape (Poster)

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Greater short-horned lizards (*Phrynosoma hernandesi*) are a Species of Greatest Inventory Need (SGIN) in Montana. Since 2016, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MTFWP) has conducted structured surveys and public outreach campaigns seeking to fill an information need for this species. Prior to this effort, the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) database included 1669 records for the species, however, about 80% (1341) came from a single study conducted in Carbon and Stillwater Counties from 2004 – 2013. These study sites are in unique habitats in Montana which do not represent the species range throughout the rest of the state. Understanding where lizards are found and how they utilize their habitat throughout the rest of their range in Montana is important for assessing threats to the species and observing population trends. MTFWP's efforts have met mixed success. Detectability has been low during structured surveys, though incidental observations reported by members of the public have proven valuable in increasing observations statewide. Here we discuss our efforts to refine structured survey methodology to increase detectability, report on successes with our public outreach campaigns, and discuss future directions for research.