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(S.D.)-Endangered Beetle Species Survives In Parts Of South Dakota



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 09/03/2013 09:28 AM

PIERRE, S.D. (ASSOCIATED PRESS) - Two men from Pierre and Fort Pierre have spent several summers trapping a rare carnivore that's on the endangered species list - the American burying beetle.

Doug Backlund and Gary Marrone dig pitfall traps and bait them with beef kidney to catch the bug that once occupied 35 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian provinces.

Before its listing as an endangered species in 1989, it was known to survive only off the coast of Rhode Island and in eastern Oklahoma.

Marrone and Backlund say their population estimates are conservative and that it's clear South Dakota has more than 500 American burying beetles.

That's the minimum population the federal government wants to see in different areas for its recovery plan for the beetle.