

The ***Upland Sandpiper*** (*Bartramia longicauda*) is a medium-size sandpiper that breeds in northwestern and central North America, and winters in southern South America. The upper Great Plains region supports nearly 70% of the Upland Sandpiper breeding population. It is listed as a **Species of High Concern** by the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan and of **National Conservation Concern** by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Upland Sandpiper is considered **Endangered, Threatened**, or of **Special Concern** in many U.S. states. In South America, it has a **Fully Protected** status in Suriname and is categorized as **Low Risk / Near Threatened** in Argentina, but is not considered locally threatened in Paraguay and Brazil. Major threats to this species include: range-wide loss and degradation of habitat and use of agrochemicals, and loss or degradation of critical stopover habitat.



Photo: © Peter Vickery

SHOREBIRD RECOVERY

UPLAND SANDPIPER

~ ACTION PLAN SUMMARY ~

Species Description

The Upland Sandpiper is a monotypic, medium-size shorebird with a long, thin neck, relatively small head, and large, prominent eyes. Average body sizes of birds decrease from west to east across North America. Individuals are commonly seen perched on fenceposts. Breeding populations east of the Appalachian Mountains may be separate from the main population in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois west through the Great Plains to Alberta, Canada. A third breeding population occurs in central Alaska and Canada's Yukon Territory.

Migration

Northbound migration from Argentina begins in February and continues through March; some birds remain until April. Most travel through Mexico, proceed via central Texas, Kansas, and Mississippi, and arrive in North Dakota and Minnesota in early May. Others arrive in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maine from mid-April through mid-May. In Alaska, they generally appear in mid-May. Along the Atlantic Coast, southbound migrants are more numerous than northbound ones. Southbound migration occurs from mid-July to late August. Birds fly mainly through the High Andes and, secondarily, Colombia's Orinoco Basin, and continue along central Brazil and across Paraguay, where small numbers remain. More continue on to Argentina's Formosa and Corrientes Provinces by late August; Córdoba Province by late September; and northern Buenos Aires Province by mid-October.

Population Outlook

Historically, Upland Sandpipers were shot for food, leading to substantial declines in the late 19th Century. The current global population estimate is approximately 350,000 individuals; the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan's goal is 470,000—an estimated return to 1970s numbers. Since 1966, trend data show a population increase in the core range (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas), and in Maine and Quebec. However, substantial decreases have occurred in the Canadian prairie provinces as well as Wisconsin, Michigan, Ontario, and along the St. Lawrence River (New York/Ontario). Overall, the population increased 1.4% annually in the breeding range from 1966–2005; however, this is unlikely to be enough to restore historic levels.

Threats

Habitat loss and degradation from converting rangeland to row-cropping in the U.S. Prairie Pothole Region is the greatest threat for nesting sandpipers. **Increased urbanization** and **natural forest succession** in the eastern United States are also reducing sandpiper habitat. The population-depleting effects of **intensive market hunting**, legal in North America in the late 1800s, still persist. The **use of insecticides and other agrochemicals** is one of the main threats in Argentina and Paraguay, but has not been adequately studied on the breeding grounds. **Human disturbance** from farming practices, such as haying, can also adversely affect sandpipers in the breeding range.

This fact sheet is a summary of: Vickery, P.D., D.E. Blanco, and B. López-Lanús. 2008. **Conservation Plan for the Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*)**. Version 1.0. Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Manomet, Massachusetts.

Recommended citation: Vickery, P.D., D.E. Blanco, and B. López-Lanús. 2009. **Summary sheet for the Conservation Plan for the Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*)**. (Gutowski, M., D. Frank, and T. Fish, Eds). Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Manomet, Massachusetts, USA.

For a copy of this and other species plans and summaries, please visit <http://www.whsrn.org/conservation-plans>.



Conservation Strategies and Actions

To conserve the Upland Sandpiper (sandpiper), the recommended high-priority actions are:

By 2008

In core breeding range, permanently protect at least 100,000 hectares (5,000 hectares) per year of native prairie having high densities of sandpipers ■ Determine the causes and magnitude of sandpiper mortality in high Andes of Ecuador ■ Develop a hemispheric-scale cooperative network for monitoring nonbreeding populations using survey techniques and occupancy models.

By 2009

Convene a U.S. and Latin American workshop with broad participation to assess current land management practices and address population declines and breeding-range needs ■ Determine nonbreeding birds' use of agricultural/ranching habitat in relation to crop cycles and management of cattle-raising fields ■ Assess and monitor the impact of agrochemicals on nonbreeding populations in the Pampas of Argentina ■ Quantify the importance of habitats in Brazil's southern Rio Grande do Sul State, and Argentina's northwest and northern tip of Buenos Aires Province, northeast La Pampa Province, south Córdoba Province, and south Santa Fe Province.

By 2010

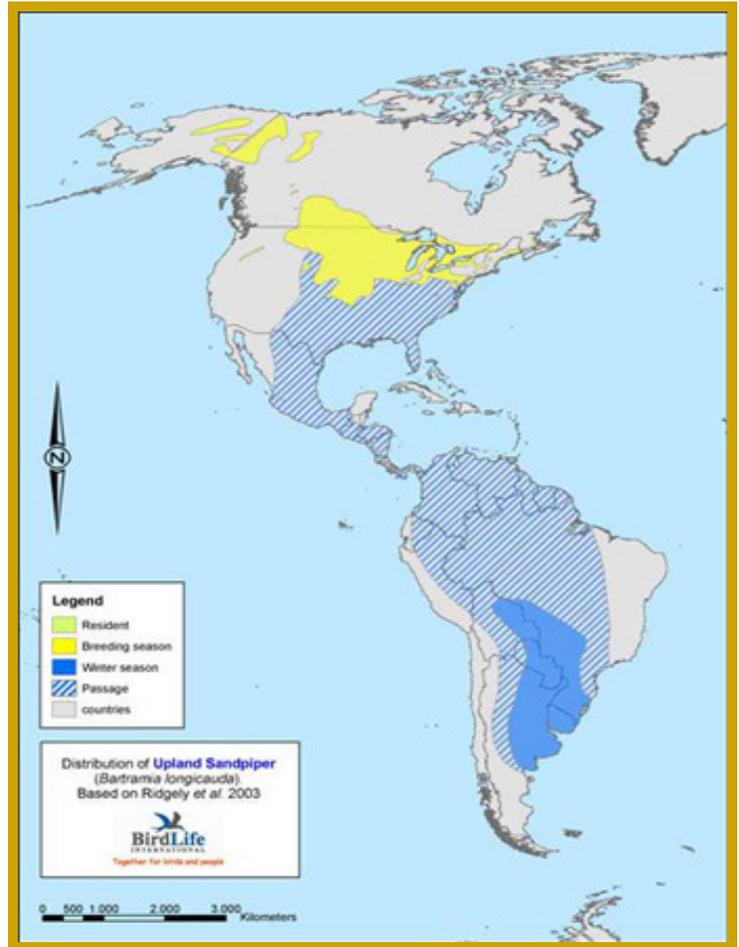
Determine demographic parameters related to age at first breeding ■ Determine nest success of inexperienced breeders versus experienced adults ■ Determine if inadequate reproductive success, high rates of mortality in migration, or low survival rates on nonbreeding grounds limit population growth ■ Research the effects of agrochemicals on mortality rates within the South American Pampas ■ Refine knowledge of nonbreeding areas: Argentina's modified Espinal (Laguna Mar Chiquita and Bañados del Río Dulce) and southern Pampas; and Uruguay's grasslands of Salto and Artigas Departments ■ Determine whether the three geographically concentrated breeding populations differ genetically; expand monitoring of breeding populations in the U.S. Northeast, Illinois, and Oregon ■ Determine migration routes to and from, and the timing of movements within, South America using satellite radio technology.

By 2012

Convene two workshops (North and South America) with broad participation to address the use and impact of agrochemicals on sandpipers.

By 2015

Determine if the southern and northeastern South American nonbreeding populations are genetically related, and where they breed ■ Determine the age structure for sandpipers, particularly how long the species breeds and lives.



- **Natural History:** These grassland-associated birds breed in Alaska, south-central and eastern Canada, and central and northeastern United States; they winter primarily in central South America. Major gaps remain in understanding its demography, migration, and genetic variation between breeding populations.

- **Nesting Habitat:** Large areas (> 100 hectares) of mixed grassland habitats, such as short grass (10–20 cm) for feeding and courtship and taller grasses and forbs for nesting and brood cover. Some nest along highway rights-of-way or on airfields. In Alaska, they use woodlands and scree slopes at or above timberline; in the Northeast, lowbush blueberry barrens.

- **Foraging Habitat:** Areas in or near recently burned or grazed areas are preferred, seemingly for their greater abundance of invertebrates.

- **Important Foods:** A variety of insects.



The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) is a partnership-driven, hemisphere-wide, site-based shorebird conservation initiative that began in 1985. It is facilitated by the WHSRN Executive Office, a program of the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences located in Manomet, Massachusetts, USA. Learn more at <http://www.whsrn.org>.

