Upland Sandpiper - Bartramia longicauda

Abundance: Uncommon

Status: NSSU NatureServe: G5 S3B

Population Status: population status and trends are unknown

Limiting Factor: Habitat (and Human Activity): limiting factors are severe; species is sensitive to human disturbance during nesting

Comment: change is attributed to unknown population status and trends; moved from NSS4 to NSSU

Introduction

The Upland Sandpiper breeds locally from Alaska across central Canada to southern New Brunswick, and south to Colorado, Texas, and Virginia. It winters in South America. During summer, it occurs primarily in the eastern half of Wyoming, although it has also been observed in north-central and northwestern Wyoming. The Upland Sandpiper is considered an uncommon summer resident in Wyoming.

Habitat

The Upland Sandpiper inhabits open grassland habitats, including prairies, meadows, pastures, hayfields, alfalfa fields, and highway right-of-ways. It requires large areas of short grasses for foraging and courtship, interspersed with or adjacent to taller grasses for nesting and short to medium grasses for brood cover.

Problems

- Impacted by the loss of habitat to urbanization, conversion of grasslands to woodlands and cultivated croplands, and loss of vegetation cover during the nesting season.
- Conversion of native grasslands to croplands and habitat loss to urbanization and industrialization have caused a contraction in this species' breeding range and rangewide population declines.
- Human activities have caused the loss of suitable nesting habitat in some areas.
- Local breeding populations are impacted by loss of nests and nestlings when fields are mowed during the nesting season.
- Population status and trends are largely unknown in Wyoming.
- Populations in eastern Wyoming may be declining significantly.

Conservation Actions

- Delineate crucial range and work cooperatively with land management agencies to maintain habitat within the designated area.
- Work with private landowners to conserve habitat for this species by seeking financial incentives from various sources and providing assistance and expertise with management activities.
- Maintain large tracts of contiguous grassland habitat and avoid fragmenting existing grassland tracts. Tracts should be no smaller than 50 ha (125 ac), and preferably 100 ha (250 ac) or more, and should be located within 1.6 km (1 mi) of each other.
- Manage nesting areas to provide a mosaic of short grass for feeding and courtship, interspersed with taller grasses and forbs for nest concealment and brood-rearing cover, and rock piles, fence posts, or stumps for display perches.
- Manage nesting areas to minimize disturbances such as haying, burning, grazing, and tilling during the breeding season.

Monitoring/Research

May need specialized, periodic monitoring to estimate the number of breeding pairs if existing monitoring programs do not detect this species in sufficient numbers to determine population density and trends. State Wildlife Grants project to develop essential datasets and a plan for minimizing wildlife and community conflicts with wind development in southeastern Wyoming.

Recent Developments

Populations of grassland birds have declined rangewide more than any other group of birds due to habitat degradation, fragmentation, and loss from industrial developments, urbanization, and conversion to croplands. An increase in industrial development in preferred habitat may negatively affect populations.

References

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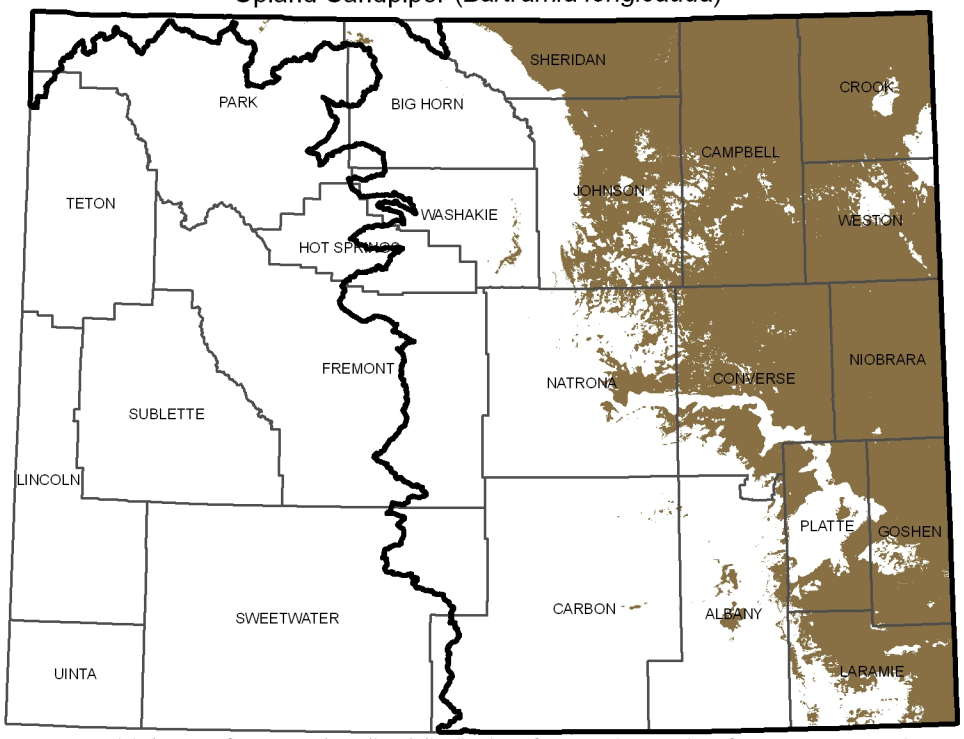
Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*)



SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges and predicted distributions for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: April 2010. Wyoming Natural Diversity Database. University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming. Note that brown indicates the predicted distribution of the species; heavy black lines indicate outermost boundaries of possible occurrence.