



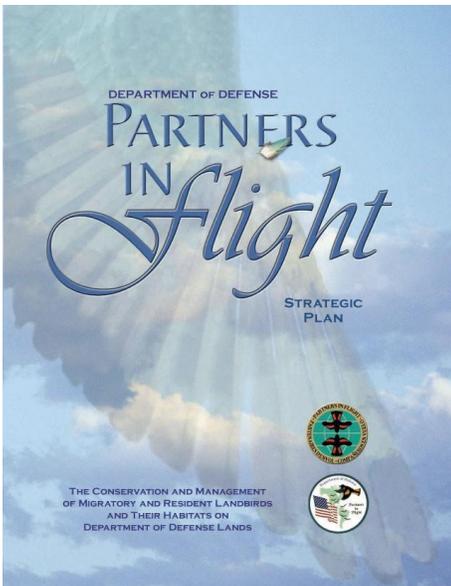
Department of Defense  
Partners in Flight

Fact Sheet #8  
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## Department of Defense Partners in Flight Program

### Mission

*To conserve migratory and resident birds and their habitats on Department of Defense lands.*



The Strategic Plan can be found at [www.dodpif.org](http://www.dodpif.org), or through the contact information on the next page.

# Bird Species of Concern

## *Identifying Priority Bird Species of Conservation Concern on DoD Lands*

### Conserving Birds and Their Habitats

Migratory bird populations are declining throughout the Western Hemisphere. The Department of Defense (DoD) works in partnership with public and private organizations to manage its natural resources to support mission needs and flight safety goals, while pursuing a sound conservation ethic that strives to benefit bird species and their habitats throughout the Americas. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) is the lead Federal agency for managing and conserving migratory birds in the U.S., and administers laws and regulations pertaining to migratory birds. DoD works closely with FWS to develop appropriate measures to minimize and mitigate potential negative impacts to migratory birds from military training and operations.

### Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

The MBTA (16 U.S.C. 703-712) is the domestic law that affirms, or implements, the commitment of the U.S. to international conventions with Canada, Japan, Mexico, and Russia for the protection of shared migratory birds. Each of the conventions protects selected species of birds that occur in both countries at some point during their annual life cycle. The MBTA decreed that all migratory birds and their parts (including eggs, nests, and feathers) were fully protected.

### Executive Order 13186

“Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds,” signed by the President on January 10, 2001, directs Federal agencies to minimize their negative impacts on migratory birds, promote conservation of migratory bird populations, enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with FWS, and carry out certain actions to implement the MBTA and related U.S. Treaty commitments. The Executive Order also calls on

Federal agencies to take reasonable steps to restore and enhance habitat, promote research and information exchange, incorporate migratory bird conservation into planning processes, provide training and visitor education, and develop partnerships beyond agency boundaries.



*Red-headed Woodpecker is a High Overall Priority for PIF, and a Bird of Conservation in 13 BCRs and nationally. (Photo: Chris Eberly)*

### Migratory Bird Rule (50 CFR Part 21)

The 2003 National Defense Authorization Act provides that the Secretary of Interior shall prescribe regulations to exempt the Armed Forces for the incidental taking of migratory birds during military readiness activities. Other regulations authorized permits for take of migratory birds for activities such as scientific research, education, and depredation control (for instance, to remove a bird aircraft strike risk). This rule provides for incidental take during military readiness activities. The rule, when finalized, will require DoD to work cooperatively with the FWS to develop and implement conservation measures that ensure military operations do not adversely affect migratory birds.

## Bird Species of Conservation Concern

In order to effectively manage for those species most in need of conservation attention, an accurate assessment of bird species is needed. Each of the bird conservation initiatives has developed a list of bird species of conservation concern. In addition, concern lists have evolved within the various migratory bird regulations and treaties.

## Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC)

*BCC 2008* is the most recent FWS effort to accurately identify the migratory and non-migratory bird species (beyond those already designated as Federally threatened or endangered) that represent our highest conservation priorities and draw attention to species in need of conservation action. *BCC 2008* includes 272 total species (147 species are on the National List) which are primarily derived from assessment scores from three major bird conservation plans: Partners in Flight, the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, and the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan. Bird species considered for inclusion on lists in this report include nongame birds, gamebirds without hunting seasons, subsistence-hunted nongame birds in Alaska, and Endangered Species Act candidate, proposed endangered or threatened, and recently delisted species.

## Partners in Flight (PIF)

Scores were assigned to the 448 breeding landbird species occurring regularly in Canada and the U.S. in six biologically based “global” categories (vulnerability factors) including: Relative Abundance, Breeding and Non-breeding Distributions, Threats to Breeding and Non-breeding (Conditions), and Population Trend. A



Eastern Meadowlark, a PIF species of High Regional Priority. (Photo: Chris Eberly)

seventh factor, Area Importance (AI), reflects local stewardship responsibility and is based on the seasonal abundance (for breeding or wintering populations) of each species within a Bird Conservation Region (BCR). The Percent of Total Species Population occurring in each BCR is included as another measure of stewardship responsibility. Species are included on the priority list for one of five reasons: *High Overall Priority, High Regional Priority, Additional Watch List Species, Additional Federally Listed Species, Additional Species of Local Management Interest.*

## U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan

The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan identifies priority shorebird species in five categories: *Highly Imperiled, High Concern, Moderate Concern, Low Concern, Not at Risk.*

## North American Waterbird Conservation Plan

The 210 species of waterbirds in North America (seabirds, coastal waterbirds, wading birds, and marshbirds utilizing aquatic habitats) were assessed as either *Highly Imperiled, High Concern, Moderate Concern, Low Concern, or Not Currently at Risk.*

## North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP)

The NAWMP 2004 Update assembles suites of priority species for each BCR in the U.S. The list is not a comprehensive inventory of all waterfowl species that inhabit a BCR during some time during the year; only species designated as *Highest, High, or Moderately High* conservation priorities are included. Priority designations reflect conservation need during breeding and/or non-breeding seasons. Species identified in previous versions of the NAWMP (1986 Plan; 1994 and 1998 Updates) but not included in the 2004 Update are identified under *Species Identified in Previous Years.*

## Game Birds Below Desired Condition

This FWS list identifies species whose population are below long-term averages or management goals, or for which there is evidence of declining population trends. The list refers to waterfowl and migratory shore and upland game birds of management concern, and are a subset of the species (50 CFR 10.13) protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.



The Wood Stork is a High Concern in the Waterbird Plan, as well as being Federally Endangered. (Photo: Chris Eberly)

## DoD PIF Species of Concern Database

Our goal is to prevent the need for additional ESA bird listings by implementing proactive management and conservation actions. Focusing attention on these highest priority species will help promote greater study and protection of the habitats and ecological communities upon which these species depend, thereby ensuring the future of healthy avian populations and communities. To help natural resources personnel identify priority species, a DoD Species of Concern Database is available. This database identifies, for each installation and BCR, priority species from the following sources: *BCC 2002; Partners in Flight; U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan; North American Waterbird Conservation Plan; North American Waterfowl Management Plan; Game Birds Below Desired Condition; Federal Threatened and Endangered Species (50 CFR 17.11).*

To access the database, visit:  
[www.dodpif.org](http://www.dodpif.org).

## For more information on the DoD Partners in Flight Program:

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