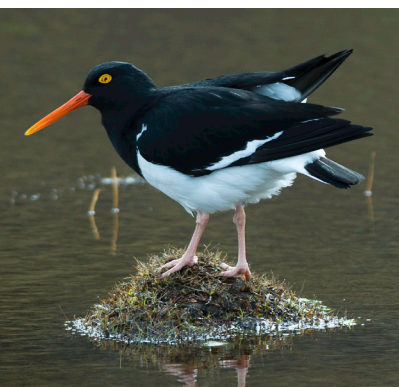




Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Need for Flyway-scale Conservation

Shorebirds (plovers, oystercatchers, sandpipers, godwits, curlews) can be found along the entirety of the Pacific coast of the Americas during some time of the year. During the northern winter, many species travel from Arctic breeding areas south as far as the tip of South America where they share beaches and mudflats with resident species. Whether migrants or residents, shorebirds and the habitats on which they depend are exposed to a myriad of threats. Although the challenges are great, they are not without solutions. Shorebird scientists, conservationists and resource managers have banded together to tackle the conservation issues that matter most throughout the annual cycles of these amazing birds. There is no doubt that successful conservation depends upon actions initiated locally, but isolated interventions will be most effective if coordinated at a flyway scale, which is the purpose of the Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative.

FOCAL GEOGRAPHY AND SPECIES

The Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative (Initiative) focuses primarily on the Pacific coast of the Americas, divided into four focal geographic regions, within which shorebirds share broad habitat characteristics and similar conservation challenges and opportunities. Twenty-one shorebird species were selected to represent: 1) a diversity of important shorebird habitats; 2) populations of conservation concern; or 3) populations endemic to the Pacific Americas Flyway (Flyway). Two species have known declines, nine species are stable and ten species have unknown population trends. Species endemic to South America are some of the least studied species in the Flyway.

Population Trends of Focal Species

■ Decreasing ■ Stable ■ Unknown

Snowy Plover ¹	Red Knot
Hudsonian Godwit	Marbled Godwit ²
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Whimbrel
Black Oystercatcher	Sanderling
Long-billed Curlew	Rock Sandpiper
Willet	Short-billed Dowitcher
Black Turnstone	American Oystercatcher ³
Surfbird	Blackish Oystercatcher
Western Sandpiper	Magellanic Oystercatcher
Dunlin	Wilson's Plover
	Rufous-chested Dotterel

Notes: The following species have populations segments or subspecies with variable population trends. ¹ Declining: *nivosus* (Pacific Coast) and *occidentalis*, Unknown: *nivosus* (Interior); ² Stable: *fedoa* (Great Plains breeding) and *beringiae*, Unknown: *fedoa* (James Bay breeding); ³ Unknown: *frazari*, *pitanay*, *galapagensis*, Stable: *palliatu*s. More details can be found in the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy. Available for download at www.pacificflywayshorebirds.org.

PARTNERSHIPS

Achieving conservation success at a flyway-scale requires strategic collaboration among many stakeholders. Guided by a small international steering committee, more than 85 individuals representing 53 unique institutions created the Initiatives' guiding document, the English version of the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy (Strategy) published in 2016. Stakeholders from governments, industry, and private landowners will need to be fully engaged to achieve conservation success.

MAJOR THREATS

The Initiative's partners identified and ranked the most pressing threats to shorebird populations and the habitats they depend on which include:

- Climate Change
- Development
- Invasive Species and Problematic Native Species
- Disturbance from Recreational Activities
- Water Use and Management
- Aquaculture
- Shoreline and Wetland Modification



Samantha Franks / British Trust for Ornithology

STRATEGIES

To address these threats, the Initiative partners developed the most effective strategies and actions in the context of the existing framework of laws, institutions, and funding.



Manage and Conserve Existing Habitats



Cultivate and Empower Conservation Constituencies



Create Conservation Initiatives with Natural Resource Industries



Strengthen Compliance and Enforcement



Develop Environmental and Wildlife Protection Policies



Improve Knowledge of Present and Future Habitats



Increase Partner and Stakeholder Capacity

Conservation in Action

Initiative partners are working together to reduce threats, protect habitat and improve management to benefit shorebird populations. The projects illustrated here are examples which show how partners are currently leveraging investments and intuitional capacity to sustain shorebirds across the Flyway.



Estimating shorebird population size surveys – Yukon Delta



Understanding local shorebird movements after human disturbance using Motus telemetry – Esowista Peninsula



Spatial analysis informing conservation and mariculture expansion – Humboldt Bay



Enhancing partner capacity to conserve and manage shorebirds using Migratory Shorebird Project data – Flyway



Securing saline lake habitats through policy and science – Salton Sea & Great Basin



Beach nesting shorebird conservation and management – Northwest Mexico



Conducting surveys and integrating important shorebird habitat into Marine Protected Areas planning – Guatemala



Creating opportunities for shorebird-friendly shrimp aquaculture – Gulf of Fonseca



Building local conservation capacity for improved management of wetlands habitats – Panama Bay



Empowering sustainable management of mangrove habitat – Pacific coast of Colombia



Protection of shorebird habitat through conservation planning and stakeholder investments – Ecuador



Improving knowledge and management to support shorebird conservation – Paracas Bay



Expanding shorebird habitat protection and compliance – Chiloe Island



INVESTMENT

To implement complementary actions for shorebird conservation across the Western Hemisphere, there is great need to generate new revenue and strategically leverage existing funding sources. Although the Initiative has not developed an explicit business plan for the Pacific Americas Flyway, experience elsewhere in the hemisphere suggests that a total investment of \$30 million USD over 10 years would make significant progress on the actions outlined in the Strategy. Ideally, at least 50% will need to come from new funding sources, such as international lending institutions and financial mechanisms backed by environmental conventions.

ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS

Multilateral agreements can provide a framework for increasing investment, building institutional capacity and providing opportunities for partners to implement conservation programs that protect habitats and the shorebirds that depend on them. The Initiative's strategies align with several international conventions particularly involving biodiversity and wetlands protection.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Conserve oceans for sustainable development (Goal 14)



Protect, restore, and promote sustainable ecosystem use (Goal 15)



Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi Biodiversity Targets)

Terrestrial and inland water, and coastal marine areas are conserved effectively (Target 11)



Extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status improved (Target 12)



Convention on Migratory Species

Conservation status of all migratory species especially threatened species has considerably improved (Target 8)



Critical habitats and sites for migratory species are identified and included in area-based conservation measures (Target 10)



Genetic diversity and erosion of wild populations of migratory species is safeguarded (Target 12)



Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance

There is a significant increase in the Ramsar Site Network (Target 6)



Restoration is in progress at priority wetlands (Target 12)



GET INVOLVED

Visit www.pacificflywayshorebirds.org to learn more about efforts to conserve shorebirds and their habitats across the Pacific Americas Flyway. For more information, please contact River Gates, rgates@audubon.org, Pacific Shorebird Conservation Initiative Coordinator.

COVER PHOTOS

TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: • Antonio Larrea / Centro Bahía Lomas • Ron Niebrugge / wildnatureimages.com • Matthew Jeffery / National Audubon Society
MIDDLE ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: • Jeisson Zamudio / Asociación Calidris • Danielle Rupp / U.S. Forest Service • Lucas DeCicco / U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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