

Piping Plover

(*Charadrius melodus melodus*)

- A small, thrush-sized shorebird.
- Piping Plover are the colour of dry sand, with a distinctive black breast band, a black band above the forehead, and a partially black tail.
- They have a white rump, bright orange legs, and a short bill that is orange with a black tip.
- Piping Plover winter along the southern Atlantic coast of the United States and in the Caribbean.



Provincial Distribution



Habitat/ Range

This rare shorebird nests on sandy beaches in all four Atlantic provinces and Québec. In this province it is only found on beaches on the southwest and west coasts of Newfoundland.

Population Trends

The 2006 census counted 48 adult, Piping Plovers nesting in Newfoundland, an increase from 39 birds counted in 2001. Piping Plovers use to be found on the northeast coast but have not been seen there since 1987. In 2009, a pair of Piping Plovers nested in Gros Morne National Park for the first time since 1975.

Limiting Factors and Threats

Piping Plovers are affected by disturbances to beaches. Nests and eggs are destroyed by off-road vehicles, dogs, and sometimes deliberately by humans. Predators, such as mink, can also prey on nests and predation rates seem to have increased in recent years.

Special Significance

Piping Plover is one of the few shorebirds which nest on sandy beaches and in dune systems. They are endemic to North America.

You can help protect the Piping Plover:

- Stop habitat and nest destruction by keeping bikes, all-terrain vehicles, and trucks off beaches.
- Our dogs are curious, when on a beach keep your dog on a short leash so that they stay away from birds and nests.

Department of Environment & Conservation

Wildlife Division

Endangered Species & Biodiversity

(709) 637-2026
www.gov.nl.ca/env