

## Rusty Blackbird

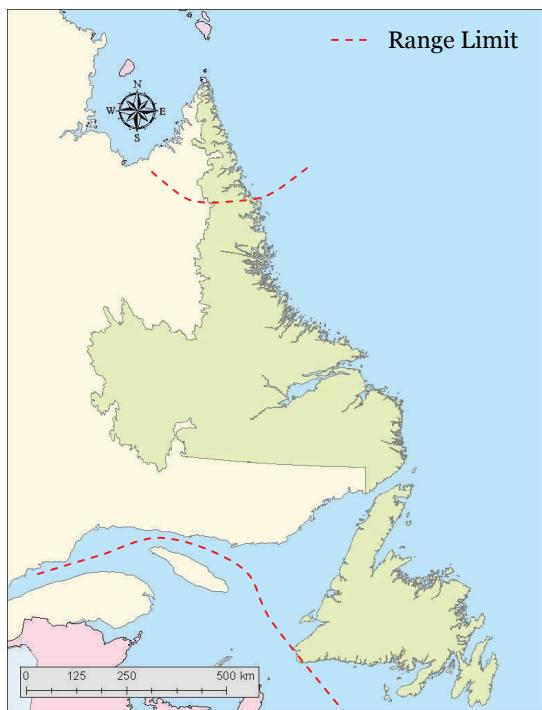
(*Euphagus carolinus*)

- The Rusty Blackbird is a medium-sized bird.
- Males are uniformly black with a faint green to violet gloss, whereas females are brownish grey. In the winter, both sexes are rust coloured.
- It has pale yellow eyes and a black, slightly curved bill.
- They mate in monogamous pairs and nest at the edges of wetlands.



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### Provincial Distribution



### Habitat/ Range

Rusty Blackbird are associated with forest wetlands, including slow-moving streams, peat bogs, sedge meadows, and ponds, dominated by conifer forest and scrub edges. In the winter, they occur in damp woodlands and cultivated fields. They breed throughout the forests of Canada, including on the island of Newfoundland and in Labrador.

### Population Trends

Approximately 70% of the world's population of Rusty Blackbirds is in Canada, including about 40 000 birds in the Atlantic Provinces. There is no estimate for this Province; however a breeding density of 6 bird/km<sup>2</sup> has been reported in optimal habitat. Christmas Bird Counts showed a decline of 5.1%/year since 1966 across Canada.

### Limiting Factors and Threats

Loss of wetlands to development and reservoir creation, particularly on the wintering grounds on the Mississippi Valley flood plain, is the primary threat to their population stability.

### Special Significance

This rare bird is endemic to North America and an important indicator of wetland health.

### You can help protect the Rusty Blackbird:

- Report any sightings to the Wildlife Division.
- Participate in bird surveys and counts.
- Support wetland habitat protection.

Department of Environment & Conservation

Wildlife Division

Endangered Species & Biodiversity

(709) 637-2026

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