



FALL FLIGHTS INVESTMENTS

Benefit Shorebirds

SHOREBIRDS ARE IN TROUBLE

Shorebirds are in trouble. A recent analysis of 28 North American species found that 93% are declining, and more than half have lost more than 50% of their population since 1980 (Smith et al., 2023). But your state's investments in Fall Flights are part of the solution, and new science tells the story.

We've shared before how [telemetry work from the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center's Shorebird Science and Conservation Collective](#) revealed shorebirds using the same priority waterfowl areas where Fall Flights dollars are directed. That finding prompted shorebird conservation leaders and the [Prairie Habitat Joint Venture](#) (PHJV) to dig deeper. They enlisted Ducks Unlimited Canada to evaluate how waterfowl-focused conservation in Prairie Canada affects shorebirds.

Conservation funded through Fall Flights is benefiting shorebirds too. The study authors put it this way: "These findings provide clear evidence that wetland conservation can advance both waterfowl and shorebird objectives, while highlighting priority landscapes where multi-species gains can be maximized."



- For migrating Lesser Yellowlegs (a species that has declined by more than 60% since 1980) and Greater Yellowlegs, an estimated 51.6% and 48.2% of suitable habitat in Prairie Canada falls within PHJV priority waterfowl areas.
- For breeding shorebirds, including Marbled Godwit, Upland Sandpiper, Willet, and Wilson's Phalarope, 31.7 to 48.8% of suitable habitat in Prairie Canada lies within PHJV Target Landscapes.
- Shorebird occupancy in restored wetlands matched or exceeded that of natural wetlands for every focal species.

“Ducks for shorebirds' is becoming a rallying cry in our community. The wetlands that U.S. states help conserve for waterfowl are the same places shorebirds depend on, and protecting them takes exactly this kind of cross-border partnership. We're thankful for these investments, and excited about what we can accomplish together.”
~Kelly Srigley Werner, Coordinator, Lesser Yellowlegs International Working Group

The next time you see a shorebird, reflect on the role you've played in providing critical habitat for it on one of its first stops in a very long, perilous journey. You're ensuring that future generations can enjoy the wonder of bird migration!

[Want the full picture? Read the Ducks Unlimited Canada study for the complete findings.](#)

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