

Commonly ate them. It was considered a very sporting game bird to hunt as well as a tasty delicacy. A hunter had to be both stealthy and a skillful shot to obtain enough for a couple of meals.

The conversion of prairie sod into agricultural land removed much of the ideal Upland Sandpiper nesting habitat. In addition, the decline of the passenger pigeon in North America caused wildlife gourmets to switch to Upland Sandpipers to satisfy their yearnings for tasty game. This increased demand increased prices and the destruction of Upland Sandpipers began in earnest. Large numbers were netted and shot during spring migration. In 1917 the Migratory Birds Convention Act put a stop to market gunning. But on the game eater's table, the Upland Sandpiper replaced the Eskimo Curlew which had declined rapidly after 1875, and wholesale slaughter continued in all the settled areas of their winter range.

Despite almost total protection today, Upland Sandpiper numbers remain far below that of the 1900's primarily because it has adapted poorly to agricultural habitats.

The Upland Sandpiper breeds irregularly from Alaska across Canada and south to Colorado and Virginia. It winters in the southern half of South America. Currently the breeding range of this sandpiper is extending towards the northeast. There are several nesting records in the Cape Cod area of Massachusetts.

David Christie, curator from the New Brunswick Museum, sends the following report on its status in New Brunswick:

"In New Brunswick the bird has been a casual visitor during migration, both spring and fall, for half a century or more. The same is probably true for Nova Scotia. There was an increase in spring records in the late 1960's about which time it probably began breeding in the province. Several birds were found in a field near Salisbury (west of Moncton) in the fall of 1969 and throughout the 1970 summer season. In 1971 young birds from two different broods were found there and in 1974, a nest with eggs was found. Since 1971 birds exhibiting breeding behavior have been seen in June and July in Penobscis, southwest of Rexton, and near Midgic, as well as in an area about 5 miles east of the known Salisbury breeding fields".

On Prince Edward Island, the Upland Sandpiper is known to occasionally pass through during spring migration. There has been an unconfirmed sighting for the fall but there are no previous nesting records for Upland Sandpipers on Prince Edward Island. Hence, the observation of a pair of Upland Sandpipers with young near St. Eleanor's by the Gilchrist's is an important record of their range extension.

Generally, the Upland Sandpiper is less common than it once was, but it is not considered endangered. It seems to have stabilized at a safe level which is considerably below the vast numbers that used to occur. This sandpiper joins the Cowbird and Bobolink as grassland species which are slowly extending their range eastward and have recently arrived on Prince Edward Island.

#### LITERATURE CITED:

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I was telling another NHS member that I had seen large flocks of geese flying westwardly on Dec. 11. She asked: "Why west"? I replied: "Probably they were going to Borden to catch the ferry". "You should put that in the newsletter", she said laughing merrily.

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