

Causes of Decline

- **Inclement weather** - affecting nest success.
- **Fluctuations in water levels** - At Lake Diefenbaker some nests must be slowly moved back from the water's edge to prevent them from being flooded as water is released.
- **Human disturbance** - Dogs, all-terrain vehicles, housing and development, and garbage attracting predators.
- **Livestock** - Ruts can be lethal to the young plovers having to feed at the shoreline.
- **Predation** - Coyotes, foxes, raccoons, skunks, hawks, gulls, and crows.
- **Vegetation encroachment** - Piping Plovers can tolerate only up to 50% vegetation.

Nests are extremely well camouflaged



How Can You Help?

- **Precautions** should be taken to avoid stepping on nests or young during breeding season.
- Saskatchewan stewards with Piping Plover habitat play an important role. **Maintaining** available nesting sites is important to the Piping Plover population and its survival.
- **Leave a legacy** through a legal agreement to conserve the land you love.
- **Participate** in workshops and a stewardship program like Nature Saskatchewan's Plovers on Shore.

Thank you to our supporters!

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- Nature Saskatchewan donations
- Land stewards and volunteers helping to conserve species-at-risk habitat



To learn more about **Plovers on Shore** contact:

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Photo Credits (in order): Emily Putz, Brian Kushner, May Haga, Kaytlyn Burrows, Ashley Vass, Emily Putz, David Krughoff, Ashley Vass, & Harry Collins
Range Map Courtesy of the Recovery Strategy of Piping Plovers

 Printed on FSC Certified paper.

April 2023

Piping Plover

Charadrius melodus circumcinctus



Status: **Endangered**

To report a sighting
call the Hoot Line:

1-800-667-HOOT (4668)

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Identification

- The Piping Plover has a pale, clay-coloured back and head with a white breast and rump. The legs are orange and the bill is orange with a black tip.
- Distinguishing marks include a single neck band and a single black band on the forehead. Males' bands are thicker than females.
- The Killdeer (below right) is a similar looking bird but is slightly larger, darker and has two neck bands.



Nesting Habitat

- Piping Plovers nest on gravelly or sandy shorelines of saline or fresh water lakes.
- Shallow nests are lined with pebbles collected by the male.



Did You Know?

- Canada accounts for nearly 36% of the world's total Piping Plover population, and up to 64% of the Canadian population breeds in Saskatchewan.
- An international census of Piping Plovers every 5 years from 1991 to 2016 showed Saskatchewan to support more Piping Plovers than any other jurisdiction.
- To protect themselves from danger, plover chicks will crouch motionlessly in the sand and become very difficult to see due to their camouflage. An adult plover lures the predator away, often by pretending to be injured, and then flies away to re-join the chicks.

Piping Plover Breeding Range



Breeding Distribution

- Piping Plovers nest along the Atlantic coast, the Great Lakes, and the Northern Great Plains.
- The Saskatchewan Piping Plovers are part of the Northern Great Plains population, which extends from the Canadian Prairies south to Colorado.

Life Cycle



- In late March to early April adults migrate north to Saskatchewan. Plovers arrive in the prairies late April to mid-May.
- By late May females lay 4 eggs over 7 days. Both parents incubate the eggs for 28-34 days.
- In mid to late June eggs hatch and within hours chicks leave the nest to feed.
- By early July chicks begin learning to fly. Until migration in early August, the chicks are practicing to fly while they grow fast in preparation.
- By September all Piping Plovers are migrating up to 3000 km south to the Gulf of Mexico, Alabama, and Florida. They will remain there until early to late March when they will migrate north again.

Chicks are well camouflaged

