

calidris canutus

Red Knot

Linking Communities

The long migration route and population decline of the Red Knot has led it to become a "Trigger Species" for the Linking Communities Project. The Red Knot is often used as a focal species for conservation strategies for long distance migration because it migrates about 15000 km each year. It has been recorded using Chaplin Lake, Reed Lake, and Old Wives Lake as a staging ground during its northern migration in the spring. Populations of the Red Knot are on the decline, from 82,000 in 1980 to 30,000 in 2010, hence, conservation of the staging areas along its migration route is important to keeping the Red Knot populations at a healthy level.



Identification

The Red Knot is a medium sized shorebird easily identified by its salmon-red face, neck, breast, and upper belly. The feathers on its back have black centers and rusty to grey edges which aid in camouflage. It has a straight bill not much longer than its head, a dark eye line, and a light coloured lower belly.

Habitat & Distribution

The Red Knot uses different habitats for breeding and non-breeding as well as different Arctic habitats for nesting, foraging, and chick rearing. Habitat selection varies depending on snow when individuals arrive in the breeding areas. Nesting habitat is on sparsely vegetated, dry, sunny, slightly elevated tundra locations, often on windswept ridges or slopes. Non-breeding wintering ranges are on sandy beaches along the coast. In these ranges they move from roosting areas on sandy beaches to intertidal feeding areas on sandy mud.

Feeding

The Red Knots chooses its habitat based on food quality and availability. It feeds primarily on aquatic invertebrates, especially bivalves, small snails, and crustaceans. During breeding season it will also eat terrestrial invertebrates.



LEGEND
■ Year Round
■ Summer (breeding)
■ Winter (non-breeding)
■ Migration

Map by Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Range data by NatureServe

Nesting

Red Knots nest on cup shaped scrapes on the ground rimed with dried leaves, grasses, and sometimes lichens. The male prepares 3-5 scrapes in the breeding territory before the females arrive. The scrapes are made by the male removing vegetation, sitting in the nest depression and pivoting on his breast while kicking backward with feet. Once the female arrives she chooses the most suitable scrape. Four eggs are laid and then incubated by both parents equally. The young are born precocial and the young are able to leave the nest almost immediately after hatching. Parental care by the female ends after all eggs are hatched, from here the male raises and protects the young.



Chaplin Tourism