American Pipit

Anthus rubescens

Federal Listing	N/A
State Listing	SC
Global Rank	G5
State Rank	S2
Regional Status	

Photo by Pamela Hunt

Justification (Reason for Concern in NH)

Widespread in northern and western North America, American Pipits also occur on a handful of isolated mountaintops in the Northeast (1-2 in Quebec, one each in NH and ME). These isolated small populations are considered vulnerable to stochastic events and possibly climate change.

Distribution

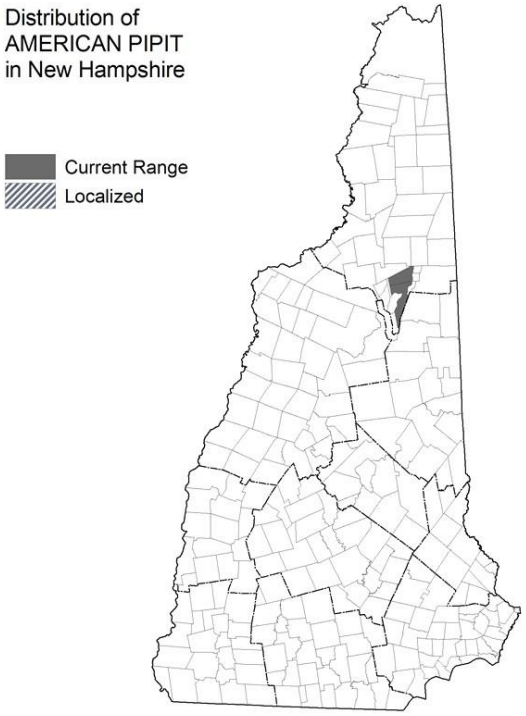
The American Pipit breeds across arctic North America from Alaska to Newfoundland, and south in the Rocky Mountains to Colorado. It also occurs on isolated mountains west of the Rockies (e.g., in the Cascades and Great Basin) and on 3-4 sites in the Northeast: Mt. Washington (NH), Mt. Katahdin (ME), and the Gaspe Peninsula (Quebec). The non-breeding range occupies a large area of coastal and low-latitude North America from Washington and Virginia south to Guatemala (Hendricks and Verbeek 2012).

Habitat

American Pipits breed on arctic and alpine tundra. On Mount Washington they use alpine sedge meadow communities dominated by *Carex*, dwarf *Salix*, and *Deschampsia*, and fell fields associated with cushion plants such as *Silene*, *Trifolium*, *Phlox*, and *Arenaria* (Hendricks and Verbeek 2012). Eroded turf, tussocks, or tilted rocks are necessary features of nesting habitat, as they provide snow-free nest sites early in the season (DeGraaf and Yamasaki 2001). During migration and winter, pipits can be found on a wide variety of open habitats, including agricultural fields, dunes, mudflats, and open grassy areas.

NH Wildlife Action Plan Habitats

- Alpine
- Grasslands
- Dunes



Distribution Map

Current Species and Habitat Condition in New Hampshire

Periodic surveys of the Mt. Washington population suggest that the population there is relatively stable at 10-20 pairs.

Population Management Status

Management is not currently in place for this species.

Regulatory Protection (for explanations, see Appendix I)

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918)

Quality of Habitat

No information (see alpine habitat profile).

Habitat Protection Status

The habitat on Mount Washington is protected within the White Mountain National Forest.

Habitat Management Status

Habitat management has not been implemented for this species.

Threats to this Species or Habitat in NH

Threat rankings were calculated by groups of taxonomic or habitat experts using a multistep process (details in Chapter 4). Each threat was ranked for these factors: Spatial Extent, Severity, Immediacy, Certainty, and Reversibility (ability to address the threat). These combined scores produced one overall threat score. Only threats that received a "medium" or "high" score have accompanying text in this profile. Threats that have a low spatial extent, are unlikely to occur in the next ten years, or there is uncertainty in the data will be ranked lower due to these factors.

There were no threats ranked high or medium for this species.

List of Lower Ranking Threats:

Disturbance from agricultural contaminants

Disturbance by hikers

Habitat degradation from the retraction of alpine zone in response to climate change

Actions to benefit this Species or Habitat in NH

TBD

References, Data Sources and Authors

Data Sources
NHBR/NH eBird, Len Reitsma (Plymouth State University)

Data Quality
There have been limited surveys of the pipit population on Mount Washington, although when conducted they have been relatively thorough due to the small are of habitat to be searched.

2015 Authors:
Pamela Hunt, NHA

2005 Authors:
Celine Goulet, NHFG; Steven Fuller, NHFG

Literature

Hendricks, P. and N. A. Verbeek. 2012. American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America Online: http://bna.birds.cornell.edu.bnaproxy.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/095 doi:10.2173/bna.95

Seidel, T.M.,D.W. Weihrauch, K.D. Kimball, A.A.P. Pszenny, R. Soboleski, E. Crete, and G. Murray. 2009. Evidence of climate change declines with elevation based on temperature and snow records from 1930s to 2006 on Mount Washington, New Hampshire., U.S.A. Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research 41: 362 -372.