

Plovers

Charadriidae



Photos by Greg Lavaty

The Generic Plover



- ◇ Short to medium legs
- ◇ Stocky body, round undercarriage
- ◇ Blocky head, rounded crown
- ◇ Short, stubby bill
- ◇ Start-stop-tilt feeding style

Large Plovers

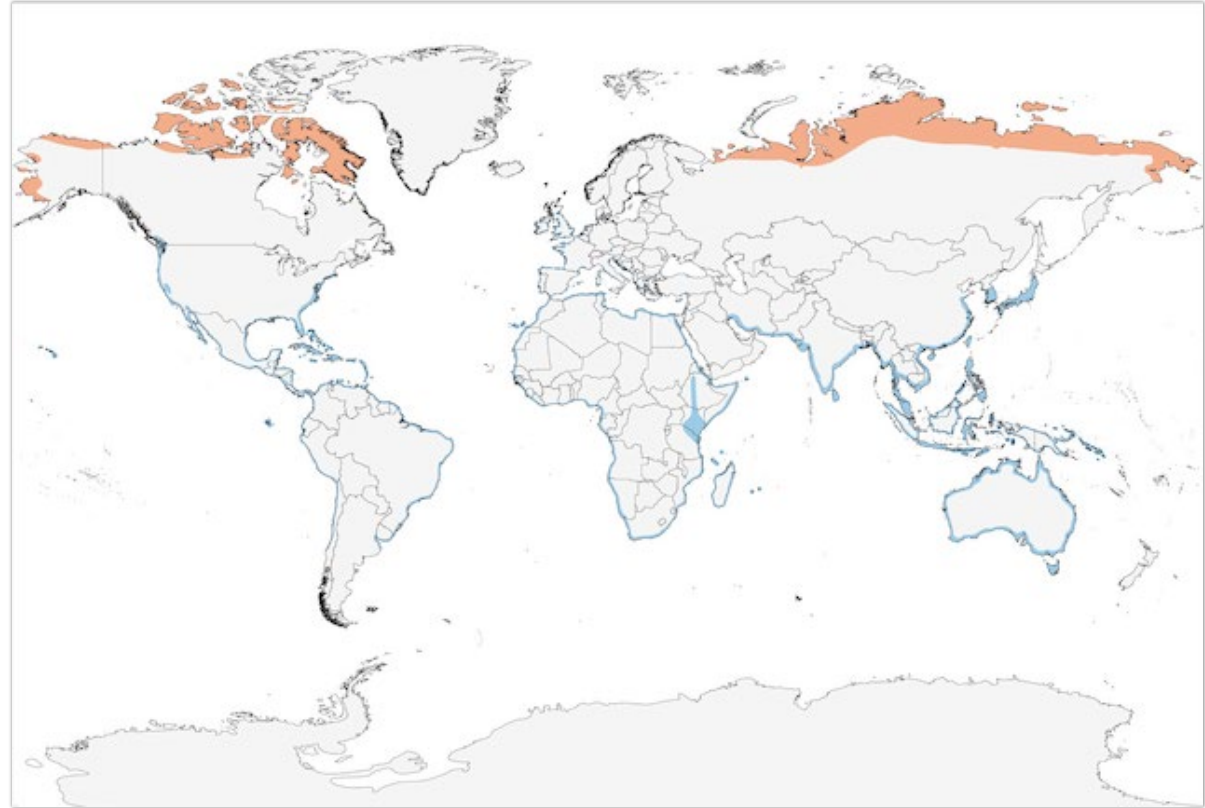


Black-bellied Plover



Black-bellied Plover

- Uncommon migrant in Central TX
- Common migrant and wintering bird on TX coast
- Beaches, mud flats



Black-bellied Plover

- ◆ Big puffy head
- ◆ Heavy bill
- ◆ Bulky chest
- ◆ Thick neck



Black-bellied Plover



Nonbreeding Plumage

- ◇ Bland face
- ◇ Beady eye
- ◇ Clean white belly and undertail

Black-bellied Plover

Breeding Plumage

- ◇ White cap
- ◇ White rump and tail

Sharp contrast



Black-bellied Plover



Flight

- ◆ Black wing-pits
- ◆ White wing stripe
- ◆ White rump

Call plaintive *clu-wee*

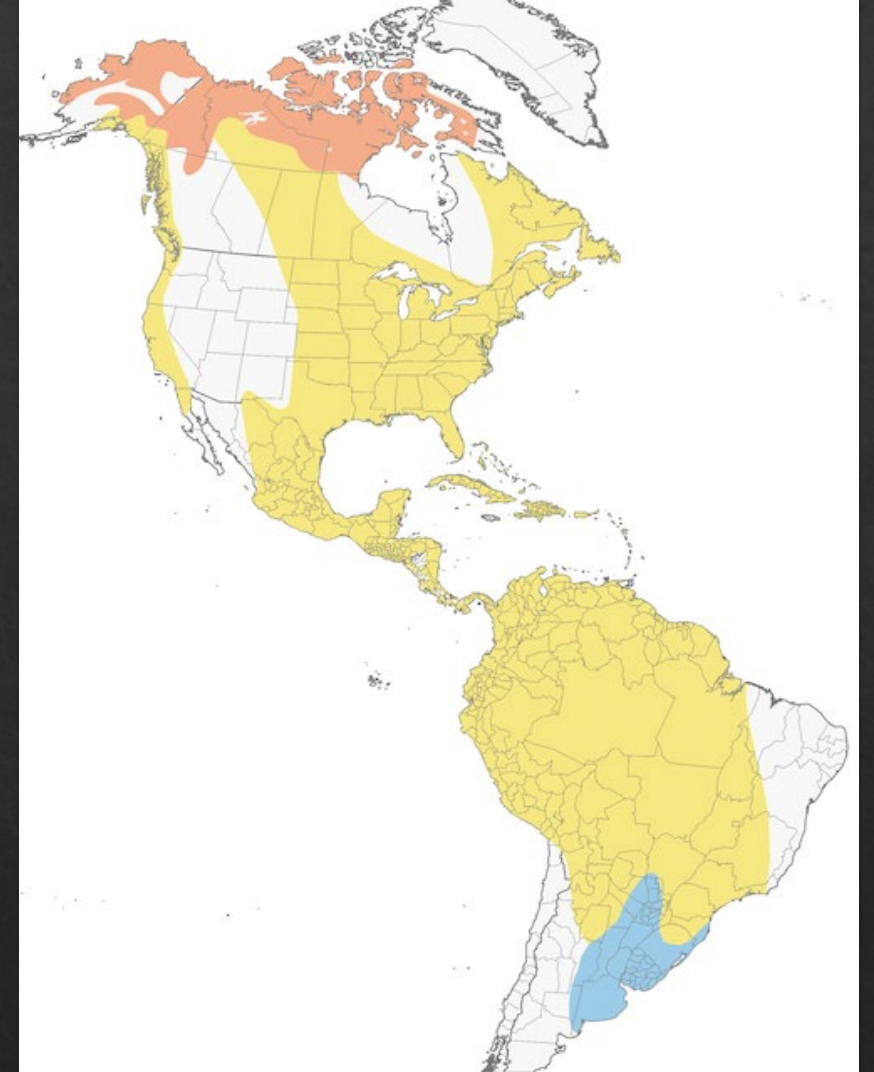


American Golden-Plover



American Golden-Plover

- ⑥ Spring migrant in Central TX
- ⑥ Pond and lake shores, fields, sod farms, pastures





- ◇ Slender athletic structure
- ◇ Small head, slim neck
- ◇ Thinner bill
- ◇ Long tapered rear body
- ◇ Long legs

American Golden-Plover

American Golden-Plover

Nonbreeding Plumage

- ◆ Bold face pattern
- ◆ White supercilium
- ◆ Dark eye line
- ◆ Dingy belly



American Golden-Plover



Breeding Plumage

- ◆ Dark cap
- ◆ White supercilium
- ◆ Dark belly and undertail

American Golden-Plover

Flight

- ◇ Dark rump and tail
- ◇ Inconspicuous wing stripe

Call high *plee-dle*



American Golden-Plover



Uniform underwing



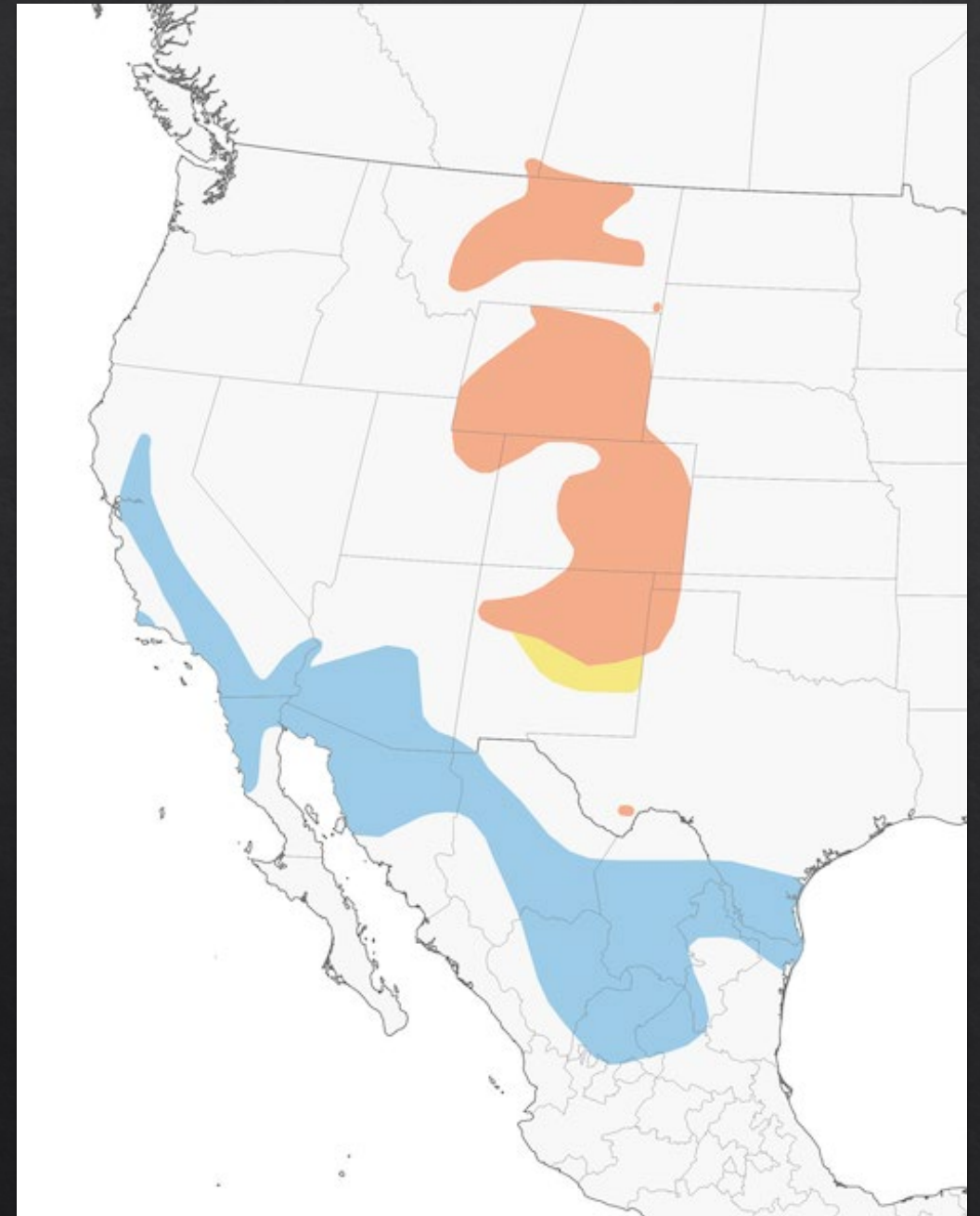


Mountain Plover



Mountain Plover

- Uncommon and local winter resident
- Bare agricultural fields



Mountain Plover



- ◆ Large head
- ◆ Thin bill
- ◆ Whitish face
- ◆ Very plain
- ◆ Fawn brown above, white below

Mountain Plover

Barren dry fields



Mountain Plover

Barren dry fields



Large Plover Quiz

















Joseph M. Hood, D.C.



Ringed Plovers

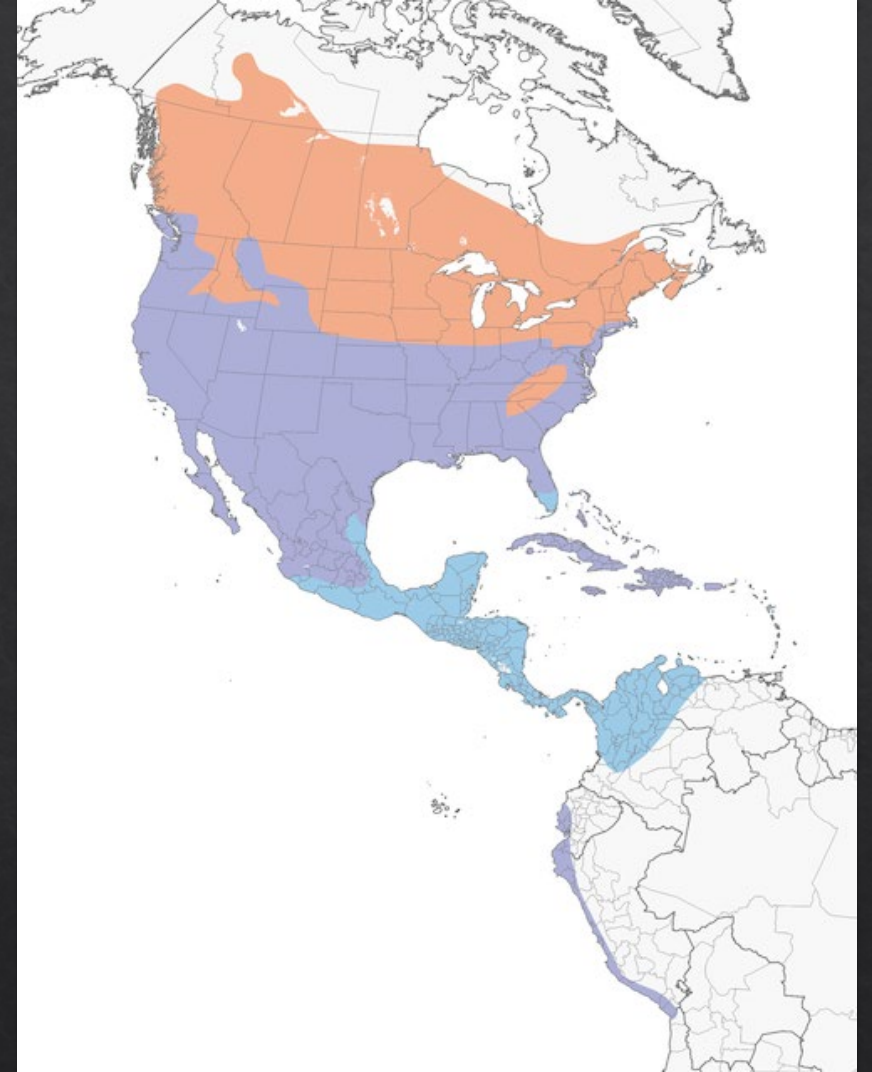


Killdeer



Killdeer

- Common permanent resident
- Widespread in grasslands, pastures, lake and pond shores



Killdeer

- Dark brown back

- ◇ Large and slim
- ◇ Long tail
- ◇ Small head
- ◇ Double breast band





Killdeer

◆ Downy young have single breast band

Killdeer



Flight

- ◆ Long tail
- ◆ Rufous rump
- ◆ Bold white stripe

Call rising *deeeee*

Alarm *kill-deeee*

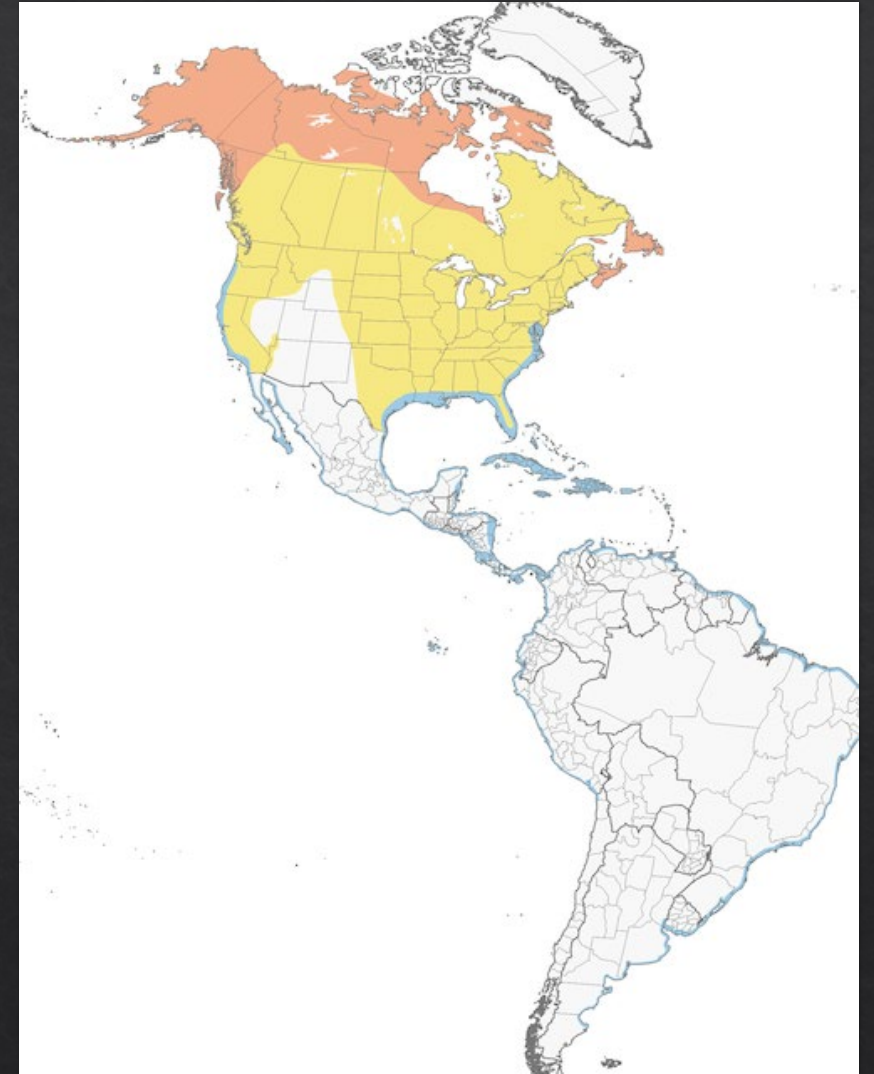


Semipalmated Plover



Semipalmated Plover

- Fairly common migrant in Central TX
- Common migrant, uncommon in winter on Texas coast.
- Sand and mudflats, coastal wetlands, rice fields



Semipalmated Plover

- Dark brown back
- Small rounded head
- Small slender bill with orange base
- Long narrow rear body, long wings



- Orange legs

Semipalmated Plover

Nonbreeding Plumage

◆ Dark bill with some orange



Semipalmated Plover

Breeding Plumage

- ◆ Black mask
- ◆ Orange base to bill



Semipalmated Plover

Flight

- ◆ Dark tail tip
- ◆ Prominent wing stripe

Call whistled *chu-WEEP*



Wilson's Plover



Wilson's Plover

- Strictly coastal
- Common breeder, uncommon in winter on Texas coast
- Sandy beaches



Wilson's Plover

- ◇ Long thick black bill
 - ◇ Big blocky head
 - ◇ Bull neck
 - ◇ Front-heavy
- Dark brown back



- Long pinkish legs
- Compact rear body with short wings

Wilson's Plover



Nonbreeding Plumage

- ◆ Brown face and breast band

Wilson's Plover



Breeding Plumage

◆ Black breast band

Wilson's Plover

Flight

- ◆ Short stripe on inner primaries

Call *pip* or *pweet*

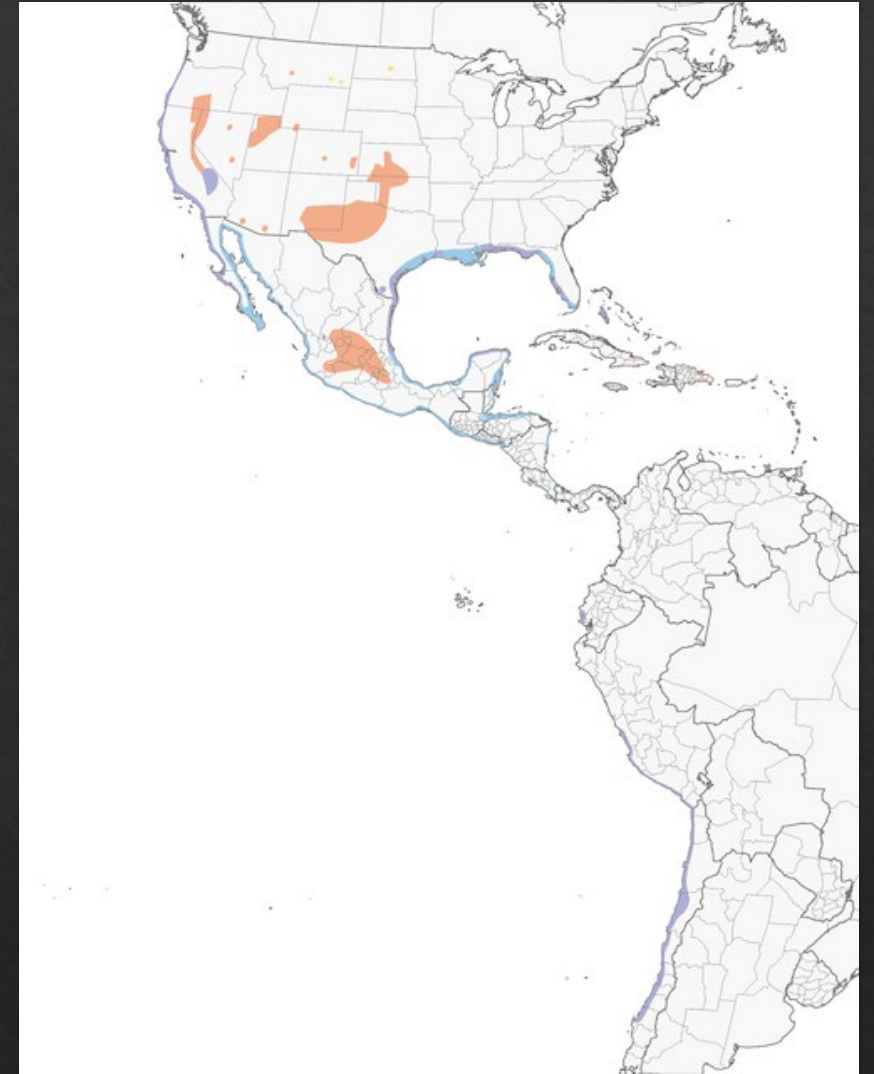


Snowy Plover



Snowy Plover

- Near threatened
- Uncommon migrant in Central TX, mostly in fall
- Rare and local breeder on TX coast, uncommon winter resident
- Open sandy beaches and tidal flats



Snowy Plover

- ◇ Very small
- ◇ Front heavy
- ◇ Big square head

- ◇ Thin black pointy bill



- Pale brown back

- Long gray or pink legs

Snowy Plover



Nonbreeding Plumage

◆ Bill always distinctive

Snowy Plover



Breeding Plumage

- ◆ Mascara mark behind eye
- ◆ Slash at breast

Snowy Plover



Flight

- ◆ Dark tail with white edges
- ◆ Thin wing stripe

Call low burry *drrrrp*

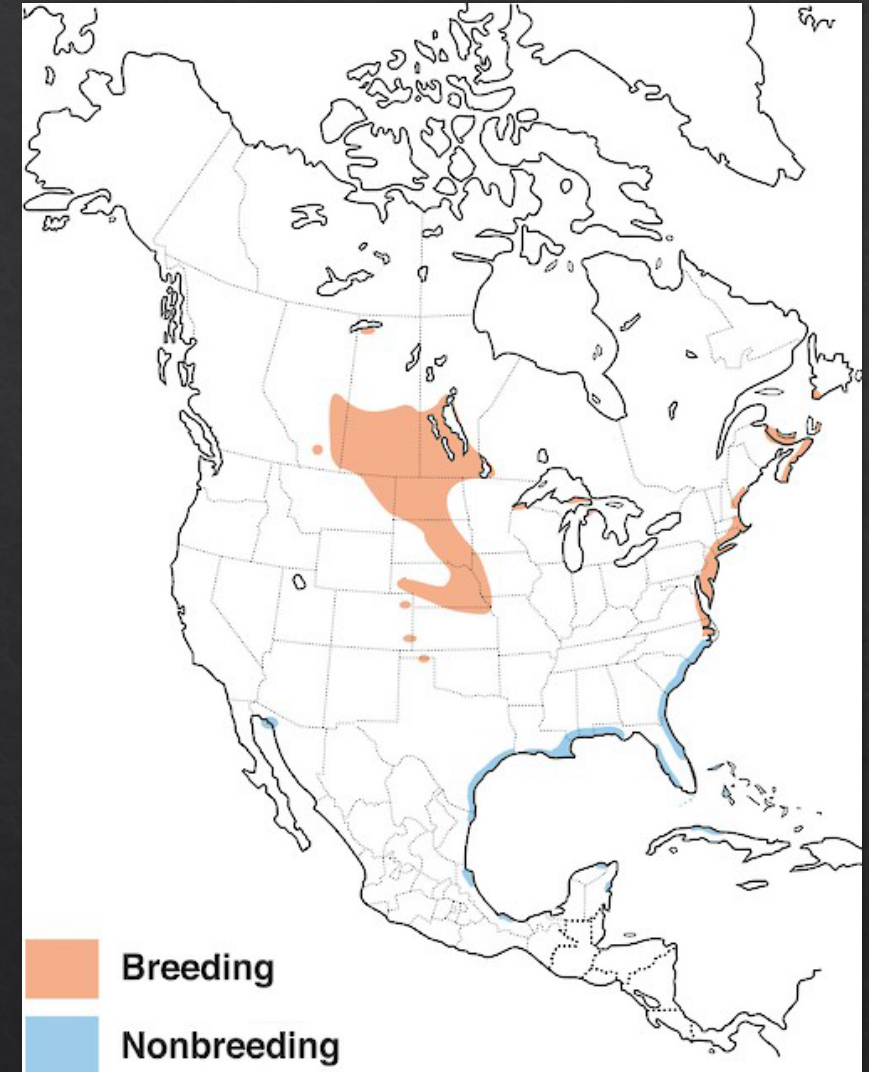


Piping Plover



Piping Plover

- Threatened
- Rare migrant in Central TX
- Uncommon wintering bird on Texas coast
- Open sandy beaches and tidal flats



Piping Plover

- Very pale brown back



- Yellowish legs

- ◇ Round body shape
- ◇ Big rounded head
- ◇ Short stubby bill
- ◇ Pale face
- ◇ Prominent round eye

Piping Plover



Nonbreeding Plumage

◆ Dark bill

Piping Plover



Breeding Plumage

- ◇ Orange-based bill
- ◇ Black forehead and breast band

Piping Plover



Flight

- ◆ Prominent wing stripe

Call whistled *peep*











Ringed Plover Quiz

















