

International Shorebird Survey

Special Latin America and Caribbean Edition
Newsletter August 2019

In the beginning...

In 1974, Manomet launched the volunteer-based International Shorebird Survey (ISS) to gather information on shorebirds and the habitats they depend on. With dedicated volunteers conducting surveys during spring and fall migrations, this monitoring network has completed over 100,000 surveys with counts surpassing 100 million shorebirds. The data compiled have been fundamental for population size and trend analyses, identification of many key stopover sites, and formed the principle data source documenting wide-scale shorebird population declines. This newsletter will focus on recent efforts to increase ISS in Latin America and the Caribbean.



Increasing ISS in Latin America and Caribbean

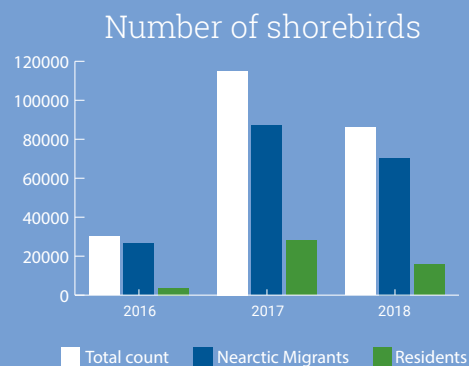
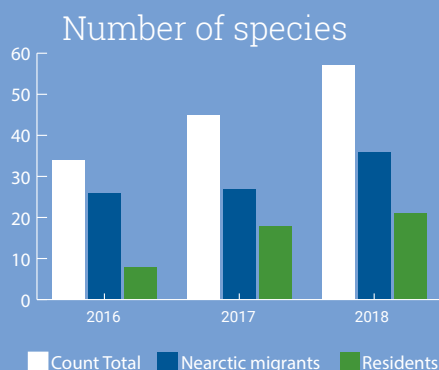
Numbers are up with targeted recruitment

Over the last three years the number of ISS participants has increased significantly with 106 volunteers participating from 2016-2018. That has led to 144 sites in 2018 and doubled the eBird lists from 2016 to 2018. With the growth of volunteers, there was also a geographic expansion of ISS locations, with four participating countries in 2016, five in 2017 and 12 in 2018.



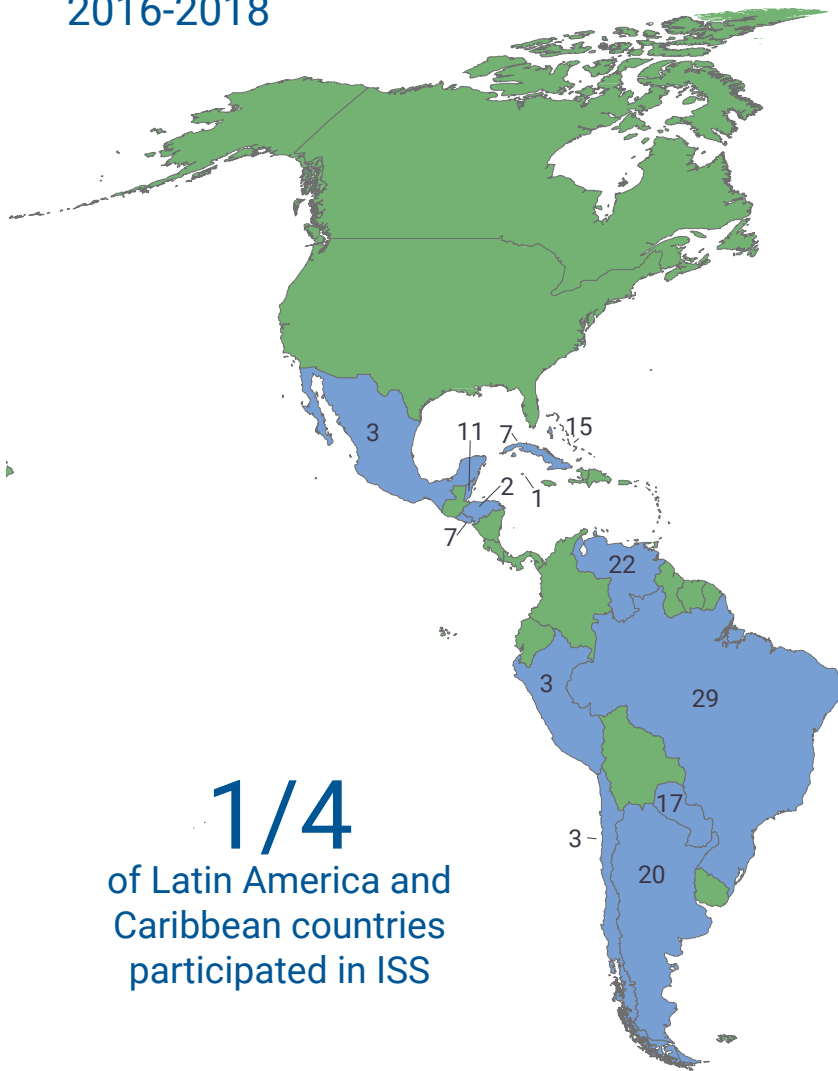
Diversity and Abundance

From 2016-2018, 57 species of shorebird and a total of 231,348 individuals were recorded in Latin America and the Caribbean by ISS volunteers. The number of species, Nearctic migrants and resident species, increased during the three years. The highest number of shorebirds was counted in 2017, which had the highest numbers of sites participating (156).



Volunteers by Country

Latin America and Caribbean
2016-2018



1/4

of Latin America and Caribbean countries participated in ISS

Volunteers by Year



2019 Goals

- » Over 100 Volunteers
- » Over 100 Sites
- » 40% of countries with ISS sites
- » 50% of sites are surveyed 3 or more times
- » 50% of WHSRN sites participate



Tools and Tips How to Choose your Site

When you join ISS as a volunteer, you likely have a site in mind that you want to monitor. It is very important to make sure you have your site well defined. This is in order to ensure you always survey the same area, but also, that somebody else can take over and survey the same area. If not, the gathered data will be biased and have less potential to be used for analysis. The best way is to draw a polygon of the area you survey using Google Earth, and stick to that. We can help define your site if you need assistance.

The Top Five

Of all 57 species counted in Latin America and the Caribbean during 2016-2018, five species occurred in each of the annual top 10 lists.



Calidris fuscicollis



Himantopus mexicanus



Calidris pusilla



Calidris alba



Charadrius semipalmatus

Putting your data to work

ISS was founded to:

1. Understand timing and duration of migration.
2. Increase knowledge on the distribution of species at the hemispheric level.
3. Identify key sites for shorebirds.

These objectives set the foundation for this program and the dedication of volunteers has achieved great progress for these objectives. Some of the earliest population estimates set for Nearctic shorebirds were partly based on ISS data and many [Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network](#) (WHSRN) sites in North America were identified based on ISS data. Thanks to ISS data we know much more about the flyways of migratory species, their key stopover areas, and their final destinations.

However, there is still much to learn in Latin America and the Caribbean. Data gathered at regular intervals over years can be used to show long term changes and understand shifts in migration timing and routes which can highlight threats and needs for conservation action. Regular monitoring at a site might show birds starting to arrive later or earlier, a possible indicator of climate change. Or data may show that birds stop using a site due to a specific change (i.e. disturbance, change in water levels, etc.). Improved data from Latin America and the Caribbean will improve overall understanding of shorebird populations trends. The key is for you to go out as many times as you can to build a large and consistent data set for your site or sites.

As easy as using eBird

Just use the ISS eBird protocol! You can find the ISS survey protocol on both ebird.org and the eBird Smartphone app. Choose "International Shorebird Survey" from the "Other" drop-down menu under "OBSERVATION TYPE". Further info on the ISS website.



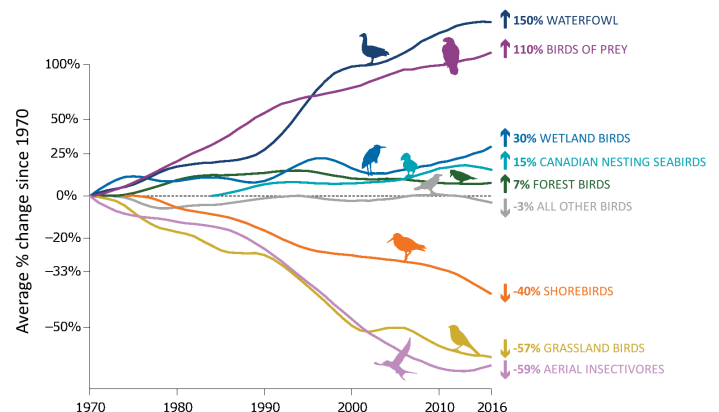
World Shorebirds Day

6 September

Make your surveys count even more! Count shorebirds for the Global Shorebird Counting Event on World Shorebirds Day.

ISS highlights shorebird declines

Used to drive action, ISS data was a significant contributor to this chart prepared by Environment and Climate Change Canada.



*North American Bird Conservation Initiative Canada. 2019. The State of Canada's Birds, 2019. Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ottawa, Canada. 12 pages. www.stateofcanadasbirds.org

Find the Data you Need

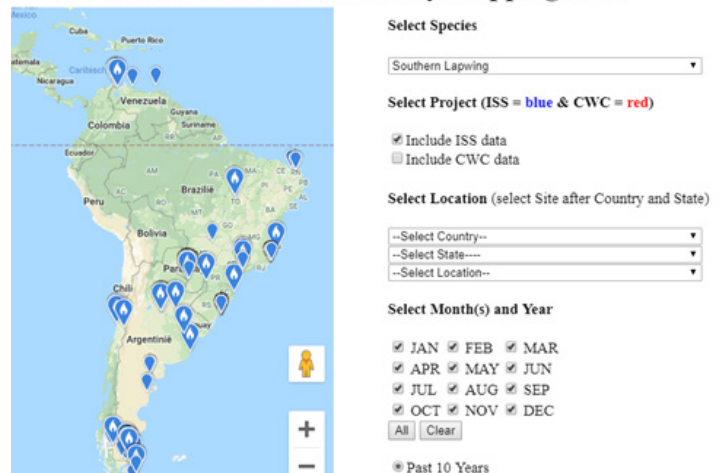
Manomet has a new tool to help you see your ISS data along with all ISS data. After you submit your data to eBird, Manomet compiles all submission in the new ISS Mapping Tool for easy visualization.

We have a number of features planned for roll out soon. You will be able to visualize population trends over time for species and sites, and we will create a number of top-level aggregation charts answering basic questions about shorebird populations for a site or collection of sites.

How to use it:

- » Select a shorebird from the drop-down list to see where a particular species has been recorded by ISS volunteers.
- » Select your Country and State to see what other ISS data are being submitted around you.
- » The default settings on the map select the past 10 years, but switch the first year to 1974 to see historical data.

International Shorebird Survey Mapping Tool



manomet.org/iss-map

This tool will give you an easy way to see a snapshot of your ISS data, help you find old sites that need volunteers, and get a better understanding of how this data can be used by scientists, habitat managers, and shorebird partners to help conserve our shorebirds.

If you have any questions about the tool, please contact Lisa Schibley lschibley@manomet.org.

Your data has provided us with information that is crucial to understand the status of this fascinating group of birds. As threats to shorebirds increase, like coastal development, pollution, and climate change, now more than ever your monitoring will provide us important data on shifting arrival dates, or ecological mismatch.

Interested in Joining?

Have a story to share? Or a question to ask?

Contact one of the coordinators below.

This is an update for the many volunteers and collaborators of ISS. In 1974, Manomet organized the International Shorebird Survey to gather consistent information on shorebirds and the wetlands they use. Staff at Manomet continue to recruit volunteers to perform regular shorebird surveys and/or coordinate regional volunteers.



Find us on [Facebook](#).



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Test your flock estimation skills!



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