SPECIES INFORMATION SHEET *Actitis hypoleucos*

English name: **Common sandpiper**	Scientific name: ***Actitis hypoleucos***	
Taxonomical group: Class: Aves Order: Charadriiformes Family: Scolopacidae	Species authority: Linnaeus, 1758	
Subspecies, Variations, Synonyms: –	Generation length: 5 years	
Past and current threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Potentially overgrowth of open areas (A04.03, K02), Alien species (I01), Tourism (G01), Extra-regional threats (XE)	Future threats (Habitats Directive article 17 codes): Overgrowth of open areas (A04.03, K02), Alien species (I01), Tourism (G01), Extra-regional threats (XE)	
IUCN Criteria: **A2ab**	**HELCOM Red List Category:**	**NT Near Threatened**
Global / European IUCN Red List Category LC / LC	Annex I EU Birds Directive - no Annex II EU Birds Directive - no	
Red List status in HELCOM countries: Denmark: –, Estonia: –, Finland: NT, Germany: 2 (Endangered), Latvia: –, Lithuania: –, Poland: –, Russia: –, Sweden: NT		

Range description and general trends

The common sandpiper is a widespread breeding bird across much of Europe. The European breeding population counts >720 000 bp. Although the population has been stable in much of its range, it has suffered significant declines in some of the key areas, especially Sweden and Finland.

Actitis hypoleucos. Photos by Christoph Moning (above) and Andrei Frenkel (below).

Distribution and status in the Baltic Sea region

In the western Baltic (Denmark, German Federal states Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) the common sandpiper is only a sporadic and rare breeder. The largest populations are found in the eastern and northern parts of the Baltic Sea (Estonia, Russia, Finland, Sweden), where the species inhabits inland waters as well as the coast.

In **Sweden**, the common sandpiper has suffered a long-term decline. According to Ottvall *et al.* (2009), the species has declined by 30–49% during the last 30 years, and 10–19% during the last 10 years.

Finland hosts by far the largest number of breeding pairs in the Baltic Sea area. According to BirdLife International (2004), the species was declining during 1990–2000 by *c*. 20%, and by 2009 the decline

amounts to 33% for the previous 15 years. The decline was revealed by line transect censuses (an annual mean decrease of 1.4% during 1975–2008), but is supported by the Archipelago Bird Census scheme as well, based on nest counts (decreased by 1.8% per annum in 1986–2010, being now 1,800 bp).

In **Russia, Estonia**, **Latvia** and **Lithuania**, the common sandpiper is a common breeding bird with several thousand pairs. The populations in Russia, Estonia and Latvia seem to be stable, whereas for Lithuania the trend is unknown.

In **Poland**, the common sandpiper is a widespread, but scarce breeder. The largest populations are recorded in the lower parts of the Narew (100 bp), Pilica (90 bp) and Bug (70 bp). In the Przemyśl region the species has been recorded with densities of up to 6–16 bp / 10 km river. The highest breeding sites are found in the Tatra Mountains at 1200 m altitude (Sikora *et al.* 2007). There is no clear evidence for a recent decrease, but on a long run it must have declined (Tomiałojć & Stawarczyk 2003).

In the south-western Baltic (**Germany, Denmark**), true breeding records are rare, the common sandpiper is obviously a rare, probably only sporadic breeder (Berndt *et al*. 2002, Prill 2006).

Table 1: Population numbers of the common sandpiper in the Baltic Sea area. For population trends 0=stable, -=decreasing, ?=unknown.

Country	**Population size**		**Short-term population trend (10 years)**	**Long-term population trend (50 years)**
	Breeding pairs	**Year**		
Sweden	77 000–144 000	2010	-	-
Finland	100 000–200 000	2009	-	?
Russia, PET	common	2010	0	0
Russia, KAL	200–300	2010	0	0
Estonia	5 000–10 000	2003–2008	0	0
Latvia	3 500–5 000	1990–2000	0	0
Lithuania	1 500–2 000	1999–2001	?	?
Poland	1 000–2 000	1995–2002	?	-
Germany - SH	Sporadic, single pairs			
Germany - MV	Sporadic, single pairs			
Denmark	Sporadic, single pairs			
Baltic Sea	**189 000–363 000**			

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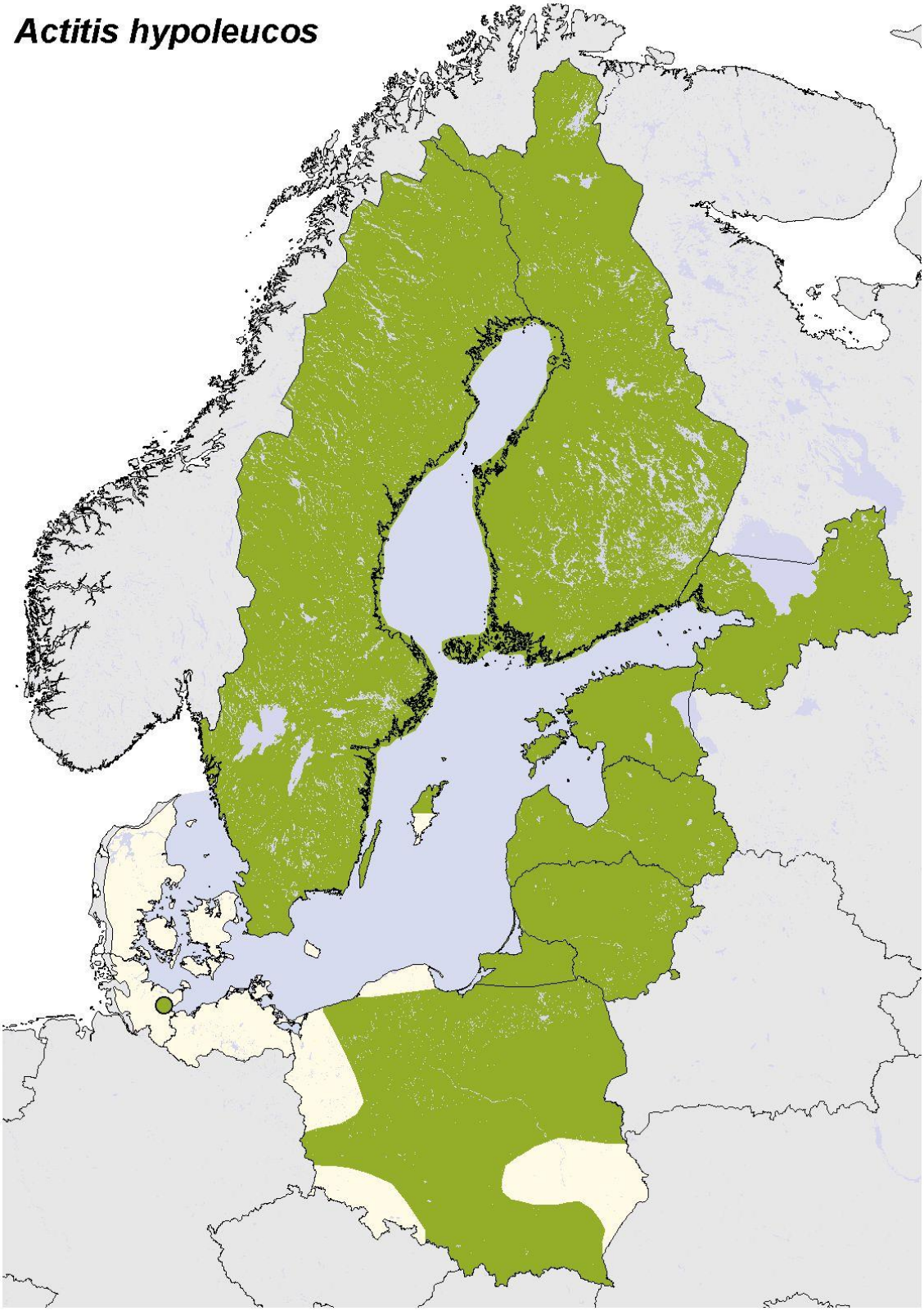
Distribution map



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Habitat and ecology

In Finland, the common sandpiper is still the most abundant wader and found in all kinds of freshwater habitats throughout the country. Along the shores of the Baltic brackish waters it is common in the inner archipelagos, but is scarce or lacking in the barren outer archipelago. There is no apparent change in the overall distribution in the country.

Description of major threats

Factors leading to the decline of the Baltic population of common sandpiper are largely unknown. There are no such habitat losses that could explain the numeric decline of the widespread species, and no systematic contraction in range can be seen either. Overgrowth in inner archipelagos may play a role, and locally the species might have suffered from waterway regulations. The increase of mammalian and avian predators probably bears an effect on breeding results. Yet, there are no population studies that could cast light on the possible long-term fluctuations of the species. European birds overwinter south of the Sahara, where birds can face the problems of vanishing marshlands and the increasing threat of being captured.

Assessment justification

Since Sweden and Finland host about 90% of the breeding population of the assessment area, the trend in these two countries is decisive for the Red List classification. The decline obviously exceeds 15% during the time span of 3 generations (15 years), but obviously does not reach 30%. Hence, the species classifies as *Near Threatened* (NT) according to criteria A2ab.

Recommendations for actions to conserve the species

Almost nothing is known about the natural fluctuations of common sandpiper populations. A proper monitoring programme aiming at discovering the variation in productivity and adult survival is needed both in Sweden and in Finland. As a first step, an analysis on the pan-Baltic ringing data should be conducted to pinpoint mortality factors, including the possible capture pressure outside the breeding range.

Common names

Denmark: oeverloper, Estonia: vihitaja e. jõgitilder, Finland: rantasipi, Germany: Flussuferläufer, Latvia: upes tilbīte, Lithuania: krantinis tilvikas, Poland: brodziec piskliwy, Russia: Перевозчик, Sweden: drillsnäppa

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