

Atlantic Piping Plover

Range: nests in dunes and beaches along the Atlantic coast from Newfoundland to North Carolina, including ME, VT, RI, CT, MA, NY, NJ

Threatened species listing: 1985

Federal Recovery Plan: 1988

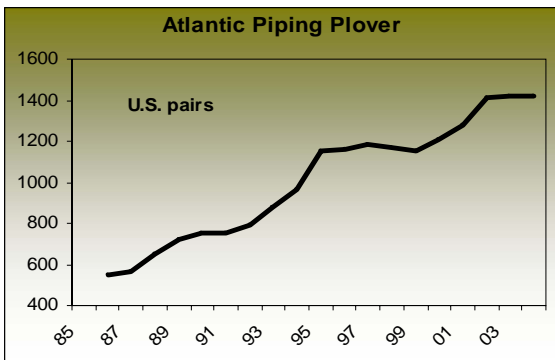
Critical Habitat Designation: 2002

Status: Increased



By the beginning of the 20th century the Atlantic population of the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) had plummeted due to hunting and egg collection. Numbers increased following the passage of the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act, but declined again after World War II, as development and population growth began to seriously impact the Atlantic Coast. Plover numbers began a second upswing when it was placed on the endangered list in 1985. Nesting pairs grew from 550 in 1986 to 1,423 pairs in 2004. Most occur in New England (659 pairs) and New York/New Jersey (519 pairs).

While many endangered species inhabit Atlantic coast beaches, the plover is the most widely protected, and this has benefited many less known species such as the seabeach amaranth and northeastern beach tiger beetle which have been introduced to or naturally found their way into protected plover sites.



Northeast Highlight: Crane Beach, MA is one of the most important piping plover nesting areas in the world. Their Piping Plover Protection Program, which includes fencing nesting areas and prohibiting the removal of natural debris so birds feed on and seek cover in it, has been very successful and received state and national acclaim.

