

# HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL PIPING PLOVER CENSUS AND PLANS FOR THE 2006 CENSUS



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## The First Census

- Conducted in 1991
- Focus on distribution
- Particularly on the breeding grounds
- Complete species census' were rare at the time and still extremely rare today



## Subsequent Census'

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- **Second Census in 1996**
- **Winter distribution and breeding population estimate**
- **Snowy Plovers included in the 2001 Winter Census**
- **Evaluate population trends and recovery progress**



### 2006 Census Goals

- **Evaluate long term trends.**
- **Improve accuracy of population estimates by examining and accounting for detectability.**

## Census Methods

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- Generally the same in 1991, 1996, 2001
- 2 weeks in February
- 2 weeks in June
- All sites known to be occupied or contain habitat in last 5 years
- Count all adults exactly once



## Census Methods

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- Location
  - Name
  - Coordinates
  - Body of Water
- General habitat type is recorded
  - Mainland, barrier island, spoil island, etc.
- Substrate type is also recorded
  - Sand beach, mudflat, gravel shore, etc.



# INTERNATIONAL PIPING PLOVER CENSUS



## 2001 International Piping Plover Census: Summary

	Winter	Breeding
<b>Census period</b>	Jan 29 – Feb 12	June 3-16 (Atl U.S. May 26-Jun 3)
<b>Participants</b>	387	1000+
<b>Coverage</b>	8 states, PR, CU, BH	25 states, 9 provinces + SPM
<b>Linear km</b>	3,142+	8,681+
<b>Census hrs</b>	801+	4,276+
<b>Survey sites</b>	352	1937
<b>Sites w/PPL</b>	118 (33% all sites)	776 (40% all sites)
<b>Total birds</b>	2,389 (40% brd census)	5,938

## 2001 International Piping Plover Census Participants

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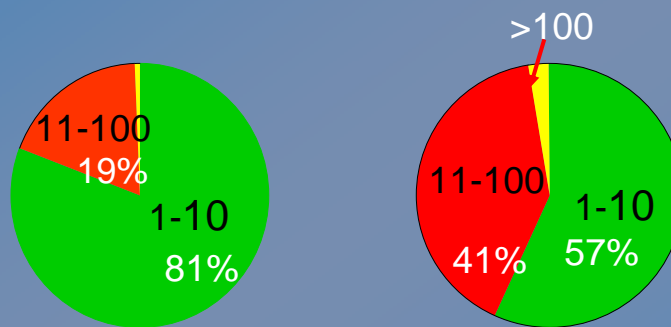
Federal agencies (8)  
Provincial/State agencies (32)  
Academic Institutions (10)  
Private Businesses (6)  
NGO (18)

**\*\*1400+ individuals\*\***

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## Site Density in Breeding and Winter

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Breeding

Winter

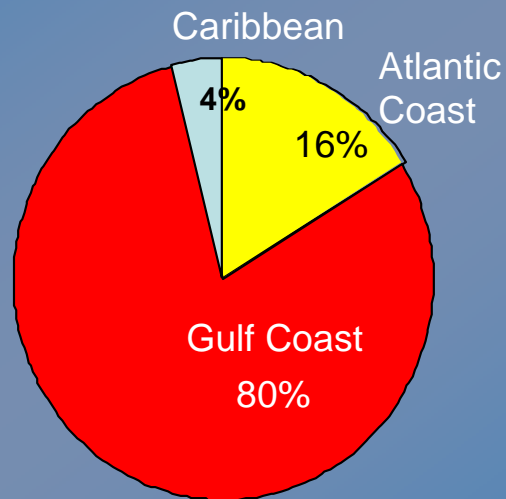
## Census Results

Year	Observers	Breeding Count	Winter Count
1991	1,052	5,484	3,451
1996		5,931	2,515
2001	1,400+	5,945	2,389

### 2001 International Piping Plover Breeding Census

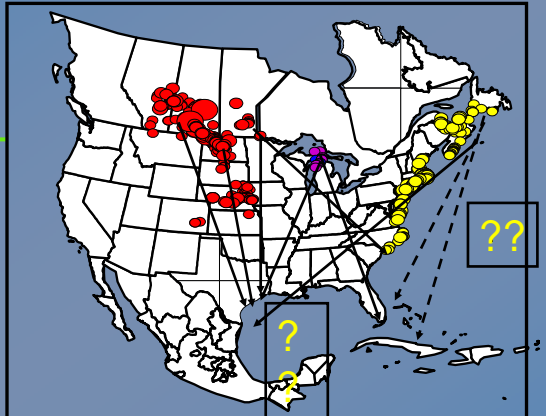
	1991	1996	2001
Grand Total	5,484	5,931	5,945
Great Plains/Prairie	3,469	3,286	2,953
Great Lakes	40	48	72
Atlantic	1,645	2,597	2,920
	Since 1991	Since 1996	
Grand Total	8.4%	0.2%	
Great Plains/Prairie	-14.9%	-10.1%	
Great Lakes	80.0%	50.0%	
Atlantic	77.5%	12.4%	

## 2001 Piping Plover Winter Census



### Wintering Piping Plovers

- Piping Plover winter range is still uncertain.
- Detectability is a major problem.
- There are serious threats in the known winter range.



## Summary

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- **Monumental effort**
  - Geographic area
  - Two seasons
  - Number of kilometers
  - Number of hours
  - Number of people involved



## Is It Worth It?

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- **Determine trends in species distribution and abundance.**
- **Assess progress of recovery efforts toward downlisting and delisting.**
- **Quantify habitat use in breeding and winter.**
- **Indicate areas of special concern.**
- **Provide input data for population models.**



## 2006 Census Planning

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- Effort requires that planning begin today.
- Some funds have been secured for planning but we must seek more to
  - Assess detectability
  - Expand winter census into Mexico and Caribbean
- Coordination needs to begin at the regional and local levels.

