

Determining Priority Species

Priority species for landbirds, shorebirds, and waterbirds have been identified in each major bird initiative's national and/or regional plans; Partners In Flight (Pashley et al. 2000, Hunter et al. 2001), United States Shorebird Conservation Plan (Brown et al. 2001, Hunter et al. 2002), and the Waterbird Conservation for the Americas (Kushlan et al. 2002). The prioritization process for determining priority species for each bird group is outlined in each of the individual national and regional bird conservation plans ([NABCI](#)). Additionally, priority waterfowl species were selected based upon annual population analyses at the continental level, regional knowledge of waterfowl populations and habitat, local knowledge of waterfowl issues, and North American Waterfowl Management Plan priorities (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1998a, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2004, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 2005). The BCR Technical Committee concurred with the list of priority species outlined in the various bird plans, adjusting priorities where applicable, and designating species of special management concern for the SAMBI planning area. Initially, species were not grouped into different categories of priority. However, to be consistent with priority species list in other BCR planning efforts, we have revised the original priority species list using three categories of priority – *Highest*, *High*, and *Moderate* ([Table 1](#)).

Highest priority species are those of High Continental and/or Regional Concern in need of **IMMEDIATE** Management Attention, *High* priority species are species of Continental or Regional Concern in need of Management Attention, and *Moderate* priority species are species where monitoring is needed to ensure population persistence, and which may also include additional Federally endangered species, State listed species, and other species of conservation or management interest. Additionally, two other categories are presented, *Nuisance or Depredating Species* and *Game Species Of Local Or State Management And/Or Economic Interest*, both of which are self-explanatory. Species of local or state management interest are primarily species that are important from a harvest standpoint. Priority species outlined for SAMBI generally occupied priority habitats, therefore encompassing the conservation needs of suites of species. Additionally, regional responsibilities and areas of importance for some species were identified. For example, eastern North Carolina was identified as having both regional responsibility and supporting a highly significant wintering area for Tundra Swan for the entire Atlantic Flyway. Finally, species that were not identified in any regional bird conservation plan, yet identified by the State Working Groups as of importance, were added as high priority species.

TABLE 1. Priority Species List for the South Atlantic Migratory Bird Initiative		
Highest Priority		
Ivory-billed Woodpecker (B,E)	Bachman's Warbler (B,E)	Kirtland's Warbler (M)
Red-cockaded Woodpecker (B)	Henslow's Sparrow (B,N)	Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow (N)
Cerulean Warbler (B) NC	Painted Bunting (B)	Common Ground-Dove (B)

Loggerhead Shrike (B,N)	Black-throated Green Warbler (B)	Whooping Crane (N)
Bermuda Petrel (N, pelagic)	Audubon's Shearwater (N, pelagic)	Wood Stork (B,N)
Sandhill Crane (B) GA	Purple Gallinule (B)	Common Tern (B,M)
Limpkin (B,N)	American Coot (B)	American Woodcock (B,N)
Piping Plover (B,N)	Snowy Plover (B,N)	Buff-breasted Sandpiper (M)
Whimbrel (N)	Long-billed Curlew (N)	Red Knot (N)
Canada Goose (non-residents, N)	American Black Duck (B,N)	Northern Pintail (N)
Lesser Scaup (N)	Snow Goose (N)	Canvasback (N)
Black Scoter (N)	Redhead (N)	Brant (N)
<u>High Priority</u>		
Bicknell's Thrush (M)	Bachman's Sparrow (B, N)	Brown-headed Nuthatch (B, N)
Prairie Warbler (B)	Swainson's Warbler (B)	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (N)
Rusty Blackbird (N)	Le Conte's Sparrow (N)	Northern Bobwhite (B)
Swallow-tailed Kite (B)	Chuck-will's-widow (B)	Eastern Towhee (B,W)
Short-eared Owl (N)	Wood Thrush (B)	Yellow-billed Cuckoo (B)
Chimney Swift (B)	Northern Flicker (B,N)	Field Sparrow (N)
Eastern Kingbird (B)	Brown Thrasher (B)	Grasshopper Sparrow (N)
Northern Harrier (N)	American Kestrel (B)	Eastern Wood-Pewee (B,N)
Vesper Sparrow (N)	White-throated Sparrow (N)	Eastern Meadowlark (B,N)
Seaside Sparrow (B,N)	Prothonotary Warbler (B)	Kentucky Warbler (B)
Red-headed Woodpecker (B,W)	Worm-eating Warbler (B)	Black Rail (B,N)
Black-capped Petrel (N, pelagic)	Yellow Rail (N)	Black Skimmer (B,N)
Horned Grebe (N)	Least Tern (B)	Red-throated Loon (N)
King Rail (B,N)	Gull-billed Tern (B)	American Bittern (N)
Tricolored Heron (B,N)	Sandwich Tern (B)	Black Tern (M)
Northern Gannet (N)	White Ibis (B,N)	Razorbill (N, pelagic)
Common Loon (N)	Little Blue Heron (B,N)	Black-crowned Night-Heron (B,N)
Pied-billed Grebe (B)	Least Bittern (B)	Snowy Egret (B,N)
Yellow-crowned Night-heron (B,N)	Glossy Ibis (B,N)	Common Moorhen (B,N)
Greater Shearwater (N, pelagic)	Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (N, pelagic)	Bridled Tern (N, pelagic)
Cory's Shearwater (N, pelagic)	Manx Shearwater (N, pelagic)	Brown Pelican (B)

American White Pelican (W))	American Golden Plover (T)	Red Phalarope (N, pelagic)
American Oystercatcher (B,N)	Wilson's Plover (B)	Semipalmated Sandpiper (M)
Short-billed Dowitcher (W)	Solitary Sandpiper (N)	Upland Sandpiper (M)
Marbled Godwit (M,N)	Least Sandpiper (N)	Stilt Sandpiper (M)
Wilson's Phalarope (M)	American Avocet (N)	Lesser Yellowlegs (N)
Sanderling (N)	Willet (B,N)	Western Sandpiper (N)
Ruddy Turnstone (N)	Dunlin (N)	Wilson's Snipe (N)
Roseate Tern (M)	American Wigeon (N)	Blue-winged Teal (M,N)
Common Goldeneye (N)	White-winged Scoter (N)	White-tailed Tropicbird (M)
<u>Moderate Priority</u>		
Red-shouldered Hawk (B,N)	Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow (N) NC, VA	Acadian Flycatcher (B)
White-eyed Vireo (B)	Yellow-throated Vireo (B)	Marsh Wren (B,N)
Sedge Wren (N)	Yellow-throated Warbler (B)	Cape May Warbler (M)
Northern Parula (B)	Pine Warbler (B,N)	Blackpoll Warbler (M)
Black-throated Blue Warbler (M)	Hooded Warbler (B)	Summer Tanager (B)
Connecticut Warbler (M)	Bobolink (M)	Orchard Oriole (B)
Indigo Bunting (B)	Bald Eagle (B,N)	Black Vulture (B,N) NC
Northern Harrier (B) VA, NC	Cooper's Hawk (B) NC, SC	Mississippi Kite (B) NC, SC
Barn Owl (B, N) NC, SC	Burrowing Owl (B) FL	Peregrine Falcon (M, N)
Louisiana Waterthrush (B)	Clapper Rail (B,N)	Bonaparte's Gull (N)
Royal Tern (B,N)	Forster's Tern (B,N)	Great Egret (B) VA
Reddish Egret (N)	Sandhill Crane (W)	Black-bellied Plover (N)
Semipalmated Plover (N)	Greater Yellowlegs (N)	Spotted Sandpiper (N)
Pectoral Sandpiper (M)	Mottled Duck (B,N)	
<u>Nuisance or Depredating Species</u>		
Canada Goose (resident populations)	Double-crested Cormorant (non-breeding)	Cattle Egret (replacing other species, health, etc.)
Laughing Gull (where threatening stability of other waterbirds)	Herring Gull (where threatening stability of other waterbirds)	Great Black-backed Gull (where threatening stability of other waterbirds)
<u>Game Species of Local or State Management and/or Economic Interest</u>		

Eastern Wild Turkey (B)	Mourning Dove (B,N)	Virginia Rail (N)
Sora (N)	American Coot (N)	Snow Goose (N)
Gadwall (N)	American Wigeon (N)	Mallard (N)
Blue-winged Teal (N)	Ring-necked Duck (N)	Greater Scaup (N)
Common Goldeneye (N)	Bufflehead (N)	Mallard (N)
Wood Duck (B,N)		

**(B=Breeding, N=Non-breeding or Wintering, M=Migrant or Transient,
E=Endangered, VA=Virginia, NC=North Carolina, SC=South Carolina,
GA=Georgia, FL=Florida)**