



## Patuxent Wildlife Research Center Science Brief for Resource Managers

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## Painted Bunting Status in the Southeastern Atlantic Coastal United States

### Description:

Painted Bunting research on two Atlantic coastal islands (Sapelo Island, 1996-2000 and St. Catherines Island, 1998-1999) provided new information, which indicates that under proper management, barrier islands can provide source or optimum breeding habitat for the bunting. Most of Painted Bunting's breeding habitat, however, is found on the coastal mainland where major landscape changes have taken place during the last 30-40 years. Loss of habitat or habitat deterioration on the mainland may have caused losses of more than 50% of the bunting's population since 1966 (Breeding Bird Survey, BBS). Nesting areas of the Painted Bunting in the coastal states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida are scattered and reports are limited on the densities and status of Painted Bunting (limited to breeding atlas information and other local information). Available data on Painted Bunting's breeding habitat, range, and relative densities is scattered and limited (BBS, atlases, state surveys). A cooperative research effort is needed to provide information for recovery of the bird's population in the southeastern Atlantic coastal states. Before that research begins, however, a data base on the Painted Bunting is needed to provide information (preferably on GIS) on the breeding status, densities, ranges, and threats to the species in areas thought to be ideal for breeding habitat. My primary objective is to gather all available data for Painted Buntings for the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida and put it in a Geographical Information System. In addition, our secondary objective will be to collect Painted Bunting breeding density data

using point counts (possibly double observer for detectability and density), playback absence/presence data set), and breeding habitat conditions (threats) in these states in a GIS format, also. Boat, vehicle (road), and walking surveys will be used. Public land will be emphasized, but private land or wetlands adjacent to developed areas will also be surveyed as much as possible.

### Progress to Date:

No results at this time.

### Management Implications:

Information from this project will be used to guide research and management for the Southeast Atlantic Painted Bunting Conservation Initiative, a cooperative federal, state, and nongovernmental organization program to restore Painted Buntings in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

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