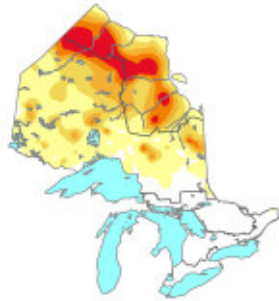


# Palm Warbler Factsheet

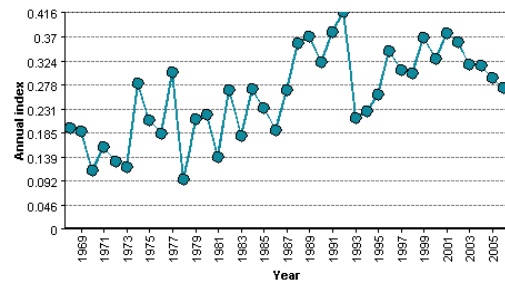
## Boreal Bird Toolkit



Palm Warbler



Relative Abundance



Breeding Bird Survey Index Trend 1968-2006 (Canada)

**Description and biology:** The Palm Warbler is a medium-sized warbler (13-14cm) with two subspecies occurring in Ontario, the “Western” Palm Warbler found in the north, and the “Yellow” Palm Warbler found in the southeast. Both subspecies have greyish olive-brown upperparts, reddish cap, yellow eyebrow, throat, and undertail-coverts, and brown streaks on the sides. The “Yellow” subspecies has a bright yellow breast and belly whereas the “Western” subspecies is whitish or pale yellow on these parts. The species continuously “wags” its tail as it searches for insect prey, often low to the ground.

**Habitat requirements:** The Palm Warbler breeds in open bogs and muskeg with scattered trees, dense shrubbery, and moss hummocks in which it hides its nest. Coniferous forests that have been clearcut or burned are occasionally used if there is dense regeneration.

**Natural history:** The Palm Warbler likely received its name because it was described from a wintering specimen collected on the tropical island of Hispaniola. Ironically, it is among the northernmost of a related group of warblers.

**Conservation status:** Virtually the entire North American and world population breeds in Canada’s boreal forest. Breeding Bird Surveys reveal that the Palm Warbler declined by 3.7% per year between 1968 and 2006 in Ontario, and during the same time period increased by a 2.3 per year across Canada, although neither is statistically significant. Results from the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (2001-2005) show the species increased significantly in both the Hudson Bay Lowlands and Northern Shield regions.

**Environmental threats:** While on migration, the Palm Warbler is one of the most frequent victims of collisions with tall, lighted structures. On the breeding grounds, wetland draining and peat harvesting of bogs degrade its preferred habitat. Loss and fragmentation of adjacent upland forest habitat may lead to increased nest predation.

**Conservation opportunities:** The Palm Warbler is among the most abundant bird species in the province according to the *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario, 2001-2005*, with an estimated provincial population of 7 million. The occurrence of 4 million of these birds in the Hudson Bay Lowlands highlights the significance of this region for conservation, and underlines the stewardship importance of protecting suitable wetland and taiga habitat in Ontario. Efforts to reduce mortality at human-made structures during migration would also benefit this and other species.

### Boreal Bird Toolkit:

Toolkit and factsheet: © Wildlife Conservation Society Canada and G.G. Beck Ecological Consulting 2008

Breeding Bird Survey: courtesy Canadian Wildlife Service, volunteers & coordinators; [www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/mgbc/trends](http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/mgbc/trends)

Abundance map and point count data: courtesy *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario, 2001-2005*; [www.birdsontario.org](http://www.birdsontario.org)

Photo: © Jeff Nadler. See toolkit for literature cited.