

# Western Wood-pewee

*Contopus sordidulus*

Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes

**Review Status:** Peer-reviewed

**Version Date:** 29 January 2018

## Conservation Status

NatureServe:

Agency:

G Rank: G5

ADF&G: Species of Greatest Conservation Need

IUCN: Least Concern

Audubon AK: Red

S Rank: S4B

USFWS:

BLM:

<b>Final Rank</b>		
Conservation category: <b>II. Red</b>		
high status and either high biological vulnerability or high action need		
<u>Category</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Score</u>
Status	-20 to 20	10
Biological	-50 to 50	-30
Action	-40 to 40	12
<b>Higher numerical scores denote greater concern</b>		

**Status** - variables measure the trend in a taxon's population status or distribution. Higher status scores denote taxa with known declining trends. Status scores range from -20 (increasing) to 20 (decreasing).

**Score**

*Population Trend in Alaska (-10 to 10)*

10

Long-term (1993-2015) trends indicate significant, negative declines in Alaska's Northern Pacific Rainforest and Northwestern Interior Forest regions (Handel and Sauer 2017). Shorter-term (2003-2015) trends are harder to test for significance because this species is infrequently detected, especially in southeast Alaska, but roadside surveys in the interior suggest a negative trend (Handel and Sauer 2017). These declines are in line with continental trends: Western Wood-Pewees have been undergoing long-term declines across most of their North American range (Sauer et al. 2017).

*Distribution Trend in Alaska (-10 to 10)*

0

Unknown.

Status Total: 10

**Biological** - variables measure aspects of a taxon's distribution, abundance and life history. Higher biological scores suggest greater vulnerability to extirpation. Biological scores range from -50 (least vulnerable) to 50 (most vulnerable).

**Score**

*Population Size in Alaska (-10 to 10)*

-10

Uncertain, but >25,000 (PIF 2019).

*Range Size in Alaska (-10 to 10)*

-8

Breeds in central Alaska from the Kenai Peninsula east to the Canadian border (Van Hemert et al. 2006; Gibson 2011; DuBour and Wells 2015; Phillips et al. 2017). Northern range extent is

uncertain, though it occurs at least as far north as Kanuti NWR (Kanuti Bird List and eBird records from Chris Harwood, Avian Wildlife Biologist for the refuge). Surveys north of the Brooks Range have either not reported it or have noted its rarity (Kessel and Cade 1958; Maher 1959; Kessel and Schaller 1960; Hohenberger et al. 1994). Has not been detected during bird surveys on the Alaska Peninsula (Gill et al. 1981; Ruthrauff et al. 2007; Ruthrauff and Tibbitts 2009; Savage et al. 2018; though there is one unverified record in ARCTOS from Becharof Lake). Uncommon in southeast Alaska (Gibson and MacDonald 1975; Walsh 1993; Johnson et al. 2008b; Heinl and Piston 2009). Overwinters in South America (Bemis and Rising 1999). We tentatively estimate that breeding range size is between 100,000 and 400,000 sq. km.

*Population Concentration in Alaska (-10 to 10)* -10

Does not concentrate during breeding or migration (Bemis and Rising 1999; Heinl and Piston 2009; DeCicco et al. 2015b).

*Reproductive Potential in Alaska*

Age of First Reproduction (-5 to 5) -5

Unknown, but estimated to be <2 years based on data from closely related species (Altman and Sallabanks 2012; Watt et al. 2017).

Number of Young (-5 to 5) 1

Unknown for Alaska. Elsewhere in its range, typically lays one, 3-egg clutch per season (Bemis and Rising 1999).

*Ecological Specialization in Alaska*

Dietary (-5 to 5) 1

Feeds on a variety of flying insects including flies, bees, beetles, and moths (Bemis and Rising 1999; Johnson et al. 2008b). Invertebrates are an ephemeral and potentially unpredictable food source. We therefore rank this question as B- Moderately adaptable with key requirements common.

Habitat (-5 to 5) 1

Inhabits a variety of forested habitats (Bemis and Rising 1999; Van Hemert et al. 2006). In Alaska, this species seems to be associated with moist habitats (Handel and Sauer 2017) and is common in open forests, along forest edges, and along river corridors (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959; Gibson and MacDonald 1975; Johnson et al. 2008b). Large trees and snags may be an important habitat requirement (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959; Bemis and Rising 1999). Although few data are available, data suggest some degree of habitat specialization (reviewed in Bemis and Rising 1999). We therefore rank this species as B- Moderately adaptable.

Biological Total: -30

**Action** - variables measure current state of knowledge or extent of conservation efforts directed toward a given taxon. Higher action scores denote greater information needs due of lack of knowledge or conservation action. Action scores range from -40 (lower needs) to 40 (greater needs).

**Score**

*Management Plans and Regulations in Alaska (-10 to 10)* 2

Protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA 1918).

*Knowledge of Distribution and Habitat in Alaska (-10 to 10)* 2

Distirbution in southeast, eastern interior, and on the Kenai Peninsula are known from multi-species bird surveys (e.g. Van Hemert et al. 2006; Johnson et al. 2008b; Phillips et al. 2017). Limited knowledge of habitat associations (see Habitat Specialization section). Northern and western range limits are not well understood. Very little information on migration routes and overwintering grounds.

<i>Knowledge of Population Trends in Alaska (-10 to 10)</i>	-2
Trend data available for interior and southeast Alaska from the Breeding Bird Survey and the Alaska Landbird Monitoring Survey (Handel and Sauer 2017). These data are adequate for detecting population trends. In southeast Alaska, short-term trends are difficult to assess because this species is infrequently detected.	
<i>Knowledge of Factors Limiting Populations in Alaska (-10 to 10)</i>	10
Very little is known about the factors that limit this species in Alaska or elsewhere. The reasons for this species' long-term, continent-wide decline are unknown, but may be related to habitat loss and changes in the availability of aerial insects (Nebel et al. 2010; COSEWIC 2012b; Handel and Sauer 2017).	
<b>Action Total:</b>	<b>12</b>

**Supplemental Information** - variables do not receive numerical scores. Instead, they are used to sort taxa to answer specific biological or management questions.

<b>Harvest:</b>	None or Prohibited
<b>Seasonal Occurrence:</b>	Breeding
<b>Taxonomic Significance:</b>	Monotypic species
<b>% Global Range in Alaska:</b>	<10%
<b>% Global Population in Alaska:</b>	<25%
<b>Peripheral:</b>	No

## References

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