

69. POPULATION MONITORING OF PASSERINES IN ALASKA--WHAT'S BEEN DONE TO DATE

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The history of songbird monitoring efforts in Alaska is short, if not sweet. Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) were first run in 1968, but only three or fewer routes were run each year until 1982 when the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Nongame Program took over coordination locally. Participation in the program increased dramatically, but the BBS is of questionable utility in a large state with so few roads. More intensive studies in passerine-dominated communities, comparable to Breeding Bird Censuses, have been conducted at fewer than 25 scattered sites over the past 30 years. Winter bird studies include Christmas Bird Counts (conducted in 25 communities in 1988, but long-term data are available from only a few), and more recently initiated feeder counts. With such a small investment in traditional methodologies, Alaska is poised to develop a coordinated state-wide monitoring program using more efficient and effective techniques.

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