

# FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL

## The Sprague's Pipit



Photo: Doug Blacklund

### PLIGHT OF THE SONGBIRD

The Sprague's pipit is one of the fastest declining songbirds in North America. This bird has experienced a 79% population decline, losing over 4% of its populations yearly since 1966. With irresponsible land management, this grassland bird is at grave risk. Without federal protection, we may lose the Sprague's pipit and its contributions to the web of life forever.

### PROTECTING GRASSLANDS AND WETLANDS

The Sprague's pipit resides in the mixed-grass prairies of the northern Great Plains during the breeding season and winters in the desert grasslands of the American southwest and northern Mexico and scrublands in Texas and Louisiana. Plowing prairies for crops has destroyed 72-99% of habitat in the pipit's breeding range. Oil and gas extraction is destroying songbird habitat in both its breeding and wintering ranges. If listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Sprague's pipit should be given habitat protections that will not only ensure its survival, but also preserve crucial grasslands and wetlands.

### KNOW YOUR PIPIT

- **Land Legs:** Like many grassland birds, Sprague's pipits dwell on the ground. But unlike most birds, they run, hide, or stand still instead of flying when disturbed.
- **Alpha Tendencies:** Sprague's pipit males are renowned for their unique territorial displays - the longest of any bird species - lasting from 30 minutes to three hours.
- **Love:** Scientists believe Sprague's pipits are monogamous. However, only the female builds the nest and incubates the eggs.

### CLIMATE CHAOS

Sprague's pipits' native grassland habitat is threatened from vegetation changes resulting from climate change.



# Sprague's Pipit Historic Range

