

## *Ammodramus nelsoni* (Nelson's Sparrow)

### Priority 2 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

**Class:** *Aves* (Birds)  
**Order:** *Passeriformes* (Perching Birds)  
**Family:** *Emberizidae* (Bunting, Juncos, Longspurs, Sparrows And Towhees)

#### General comments:

Regionally endemic subspecies with many threats to breeding population; known to occur at 50+ sites; hybridizes at southern range edge with Saltmarsh Sparrow. High vulnerability to climate change (with high confidence); based on 3 reviewers

#### Species Conservation Range Maps for Nelson's Sparrow:

Town Map: [Ammodramus nelsoni\\_Towns.pdf](#)  
 Subwatershed Map: [Ammodramus nelsoni\\_HUC12.pdf](#)

#### SGCN Priority Ranking - Designation Criteria:

**Risk of Extirpation: NA**

**State Special Concern or NMFS Species of Concern:**

*Ammodramus nelsoni* is listed as a species of Special Concern in Maine.

**Recent Significant Declines: NA**

**Regional Endemic: NA**

**High Regional Conservation Priority:**

**United States Birds of Conservation Concern:**  
 Bird of Conservation Concern in Bird Conservation Regions 14 and/or 30: Yes

**High Climate Change Vulnerability:**

Vulnerability: 3, Confidence: High, Reviewers: 3

**Understudied rare taxa: NA**

**Historical: NA**

**Culturally Significant: NA**

#### Habitats Assigned to Nelson's Sparrow:

##### Formation Name      Freshwater Marsh

Macrogroup Name      Wet Meadow-Shrub Marsh

Habitat System Name: Laurentian-Acadian Wet Meadow-Shrub Swamp      **Notes:** *Occasionally*

##### Formation Name      Intertidal

Macrogroup Name      Intertidal Tidal Marsh (peat-forming)

Habitat System Name: Acadian Coastal Salt Marsh      **\*\*Primary Habitat\*\***

Habitat System Name: Coastal Plain Tidal Marsh      **\*\*Primary Habitat\*\***

#### Stressors Assigned to Nelson's Sparrow:

<b>Stressor Priority Level based on Severity and Actionability</b>		Moderate Severity	High Severity
	Highly Actionable	Medium-High	High
	Moderately Actionable	Medium	Medium-High
	Actionable with Difficulty	Low	Low

**IUCN Level 1 Threat**      **Climate Change and Severe Weather**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat:**      Habitat Shifting or Alteration

**Severity:** Moderate Severity      **Actionability:** Highly actionable

**Notes:** Loss of saltmarsh to sea level rise

## *Ammodramus nelsoni* (Nelson's Sparrow)

### Priority 2 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

**Class:** Aves (Birds)

**Order:** Passeriformes (Perching Birds)

**Family:** Emberizidae (Bunting, Juncos, Longspurs, Sparrows And Towhees)

**IUCN Level 1 Threat**      **Climate Change and Severe Weather**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat:**      Storms and Flooding

**Severity:** Moderate Severity      **Actionability:** Highly actionable

**Notes:** Reduced nesting success

**IUCN Level 1 Threat**      **Invasive and Other Problematic Species, Genes and Diseases**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat:**      Invasive Non-native-Alien Species-Diseases

**Severity:** Moderate Severity      **Actionability:** Highly actionable

**Notes:** Green Crab

**IUCN Level 1 Threat**      **Pollution**

**IUCN Level 2 Threat:**      Air-Bourne Pollutants

**Severity:** Moderate Severity      **Actionability:** Highly actionable

**Notes:** Hg: Susceptible though not as bad a SALS. Both are top predators of inverts in saltmarshes

**IUCN Level 2 Threat:**      Industrial and Military Effluents

**Severity:** Moderate Severity      **Actionability:** Highly actionable

**Notes:** Oil spills; booming strategies

### Species Level Conservation Actions Assigned to Nelson's Sparrow:

*\*Only species specific conservation actions that address high (red) or medium-high (orange) priority stressors are summarized here.*

<b>Conservation Action</b>	<b>Category:</b> Survey and Monitoring	<b>Biological Priority:</b> high	<b>Type:</b> new
----------------------------	--	----------------------------------	------------------

Develop a long-term monitoring program which allows for evaluation of effects of human perturbations, natural changes to habitat and management actions to reverse/mitigate such actions.

#### **Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

Air-Bourne Pollutants

<b>Conservation Action</b>	<b>Category:</b> Research	<b>Biological Priority:</b> moderate	<b>Type:</b> new
----------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------

Assess whether Mercury is a problem at marshes across Maine and whether certain marshes pose a higher risk

#### **Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

Air-Bourne Pollutants

<b>Conservation Action</b>	<b>Category:</b> Research	<b>Biological Priority:</b> moderate	<b>Type:</b> new
----------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------

Determine the relative impacts of point source (landfills) vs non-point source (atmospheric) contamination by Mercury on post-fledgling survival

#### **Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

Air-Bourne Pollutants

<b>Conservation Action</b>	<b>Category:</b> Research	<b>Biological Priority:</b> high	<b>Type:</b> new
----------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------

Investigate what role, if any, non-native invasive species have in habitat loss or reduction in habitat quality. Determine mitigation measures appropriate for Maine saltmarshes.

#### **Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**

Invasive Non-native-Alien Species-Diseases

### Guild Level Conservation Actions:

***Ammodramus nelsoni* (Nelson's Sparrow)**  
**Priority 2 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)**

**Class:** *Aves* (Birds)

**Order:** *Passeriformes* (Perching Birds)

**Family:** *Emberizidae* (Bunting, Juncos, Longspurs, Sparrows And Towhees)

This Species is currently not attributed to a guild.

**Broad Taxonomic Group Conservation Actions:**

Additional relevant conservation actions for this species are assigned within broader taxonomic groups in Maine's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4, Table 4-1.

**Habitat Based Conservation Actions:**

Additional conservation actions that may benefit habitat(s) associated with this species can be found in Maine's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4, Table 4-15. Click on the Habitat Grouping of interest to launch a habitat based report summarizing relevant conservation actions and associated SGCN.

*The Wildlife Action Plan was developed through a lengthy participatory process with state agencies, targeted conservation partners, and the general public. The Plan is non-regulatory. The species, stressors, and voluntary conservation actions identified in the Plan complement, but do not replace, existing work programs and priorities by state agencies and partners.*