

American Golden-Plover

Pluvialis dominica

A large shorebird of pastures, open ground, and mudflats, the American Golden-Plover makes one of the longest migratory journeys of any shorebird. It breeds on the high Arctic tundra of Alaska and Canada and winters in the grasslands of central and southern South America.

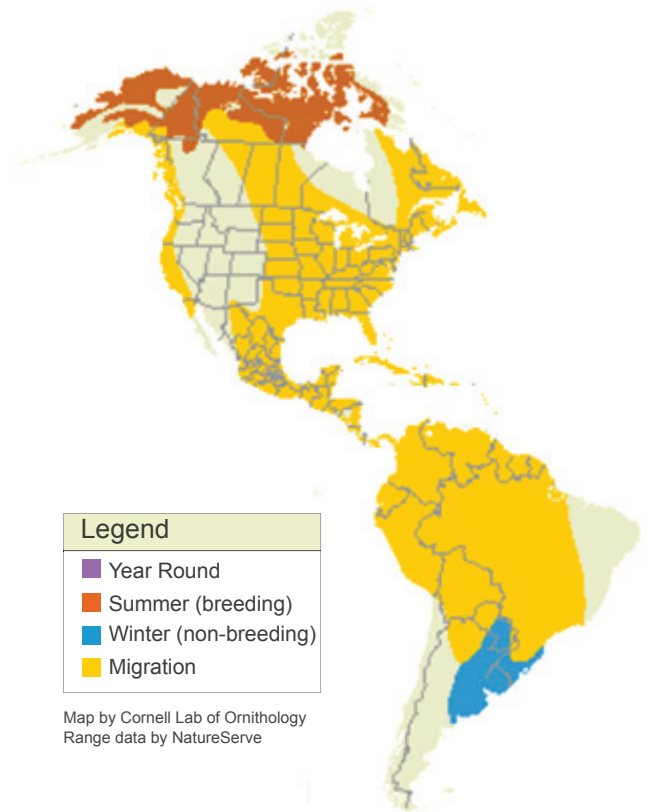
Keys to Identification

Adult Description

- Medium-sized to large shorebird.
- Legs moderately long.
- Neck short.
- Bill short.
- Head large and rounded.
- Golden and black speckled back.
- In breeding plumage, black from face to tail.

Immature Description

Juvenile similar to winter adult, but with light barring on chest, sides, and flanks, and more distinct yellow edges and spots on feathers of crown, back, and wings.



Cool Facts

- The American Golden-Plover has a long, circular migration route. In the fall it flies offshore from the East Coast of North America nonstop to South America. On the return in the spring it passes primarily through the middle of North America to reach its Arctic breeding grounds.
- Adult American Golden-Plovers leave their Arctic breeding grounds in early summer, but juveniles usually linger until late summer or fall. Some adults arrive on the wintering grounds in southern South America before the last juveniles have left the Arctic.

Measurements

Both Sexes

- Length - 9.4 - 11.0 inches
- Wingspan - 22.4 inches
- Weight - 4.3 - 6.8 ounces