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SOLITARY SANDPIPER

Tringa solitaria

Watch for a lone sandpiper working the mud along a pond or stream.

Field marks: Gray-streaked head and neck, straight bill, dark back with small white dots, white underside, dark rump, dark center of the tail, white outer tail feathers with black stripes, greenish legs. Nonbreeding plumage is grayer overall.

Size: L: 8"–9", WS: 17"–20"

Similar species: Spotted sandpiper is browner and shorter, with an orange bill and darkly spotted breast. Lesser yellowlegs is taller and slenderer, with a longer bill and yellow legs.

Season: Spring and fall migration

Habitat: Muddy areas along the edges of ponds and streams

Food source: Insects, spiders, small crustaceans, worms

Nest: In trees, in abandoned nests of other birds; Canada's lower provinces

Call: A very high *peet-weet*; also a continuous alarm call: *pit, pit, pit*

States: All

Hot spots: Solitary sandpipers are numerous in New England, so you may find one (usually alone) digging for food along the edge of any secluded pond. The following locations have records of this bird staying for an extended period, making them important migration stopovers. Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, Wells, ME, 43.2909708 / -70.5719903; Rochester Wastewater Treatment Plant, Rochester, NH, 43.2645499 / -70.967921; Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, South Wellfleet, MA, 41.8825315 / -69.995712; Norman Bird Sanctuary, Middletown, RI, 41.4994349 / -71.2529254; Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison, CT, 41.2619859 / -72.5548234

