

Identification: Red knots are a chunky, medium-sized shorebird about 9-10 inches in length. They are the 2nd largest member of the sandpiper genus *Calidris*. Their breeding plumage is mottled gray on top with a cinnamon to rusty red face, throat, and breast. The winter plumage is a uniform pale gray. It is easily identifiable in flight due to its size, white wing bar and gray rump and tail. Wingspan is approximately 20 inches.



The red knot breeds in the tundra and arctic regions of Canada, Europe, and Russia. Winters are spent in coastal regions around the world situated from 50° N to 58° S. They have one of the longest migration routes of any bird. Some individuals fly more than 9,300 miles twice a year to reach their breeding or wintering grounds. The *rufa* subspecies present in Alabama winters from the southern tip of South America north to coastal regions of Texas to North Carolina. It breeds in the tundra of the central Canadian Arctic.

Life history and ecology studies indicate this species feeds on spiders, arthropods, and larvae while on the breeding grounds. Wintering and migration diet consists of a variety of hard-shelled snails, mollusks and small crabs that are ingested whole and crushed with their muscular stomach/gizzard.

The [red knot was listed as threatened](#) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 on January 12, 2015. Threatened species are species that are likely to become endangered in the future. Endangered species are those that are in danger of becoming extinct. In Alabama, red knots are most commonly seen in small numbers in the coastal areas of Dauphin Island or the Fort Morgan area.

Forestry Considerations: The lack of trees in red knot habitat rightfully implies that forest management activities would be highly unusual. Adhering to Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry on lands adjacent to red knot habitat would be critical if forest management activities are conducted on or adjacent to the highly sensitive habitat red knots inhabit in Alabama.

Distribution by County: Baldwin and Mobile

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This information has been provided by the Alabama Forestry Commission.
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