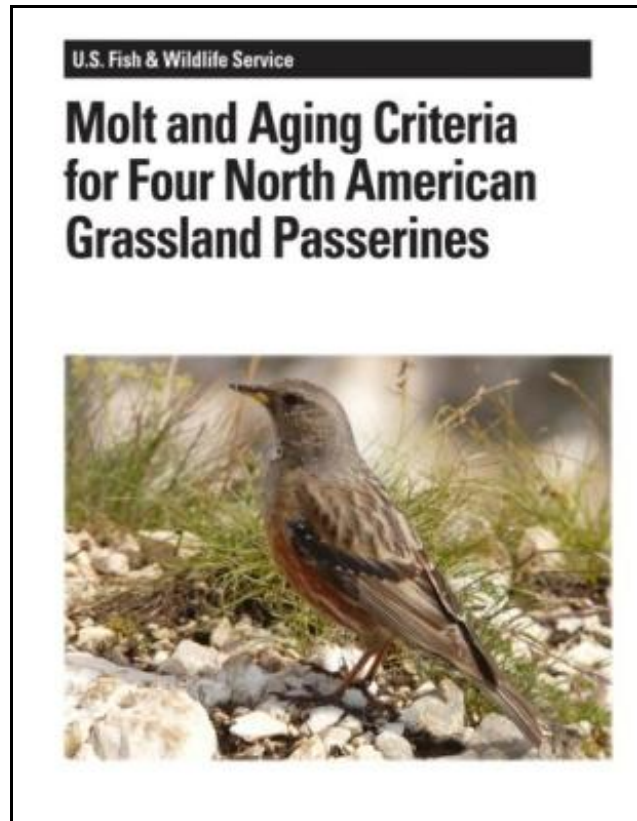


Molt and Aging Criteria for Four North American Grassland Passerines



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(Sherwood Kshlerin IV)*

MOLT AND AGING CRITERIA FOR FOUR NORTH AMERICAN GRASSLAND PASSERINES

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CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 28 pages. Dimensions: 11.0in. x 8.5in. x 0.1in. Prairie and grassland habitats in central and western North America have declined substantially since settlement by Europeans (Knopf 1994) and many of the birds and other organisms that inhabit North American grasslands have experienced steep declines (Peterjohn and Sauer 1999; Johnson and Igl 1997; Sauer, Hines, and Fallon 2007). The species addressed here, Spragues Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*), Grasshopper (*Ammodramus savannarum*) and Bairds (*A. bairdii*) sparrows, and Chestnut-collared Longspurs (*Calcarius ornatus*), are grassland birds that are of special conservation concern throughout their ranges due to declining populations and the loss of the specific grassland habitats required on both their breeding and wintering ranges (Knopf 1994, Davis and Sealy 1998, Davis 2003, Davis 2004, Jones and Dieni 2007). Population-trend data on grassland birds, while clearly showing declines, provides no information on the causes of population declines. Without demographic information (i. e. , productivity and survivorship), there are no means to determine when in their life cycle the problems that are creating these declines are occurring, or to determine to what extent population trends are driven by factors that affect birth rates, death rates, or both (DeSante 1995). For migratory birds, population declines may be driven by factors on breeding grounds, during migration, and/or on wintering grounds. Lack of data on productivity and survivorship thus impedes the formulation of effective management and conservation strategies to reverse population declines (DeSante 1992). Furthermore, if deficiencies in survivorship are revealed, management strategies may need to address habitats on both breeding and non-breeding grounds, as well as along migratory pathways. One technique that helps inform management strategies is the biochemical analysis of isotopes and genetic markers, from the sampling of individual feathers from live birds...



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