

The American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*), sometimes colloquially referred to as the timberdoodle, the bogsucker, the hokumpoke, and the Labrador twister,[2] is a small shorebird species found primarily in the eastern half of North America. Woodcocks spend most of their time on the ground in brushy, young-forest habitats, where the birds' brown, black, and gray plumage provides excellent camouflage.

The American woodcock is the only species of woodcock inhabiting North America.[3] Although classified with the sandpipers and shorebirds in the family Scolopacidae, the American woodcock lives mainly in upland settings. Its many folk names include timberdoodle, bogsucker, night partridge, brush snipe, hokumpoke, and becasse.[4]

The population of the American woodcock has fallen by an average of slightly more than 1% annually since the 1960s. Most authorities attribute this decline to a loss of habitat caused by forest maturation and urban development. Because of the male woodcock's unique, beautiful courtship flights, the bird is welcomed as a harbinger of spring in northern areas. It is also a popular game bird, with about 540,000 killed annually by some 133,000 hunters in the U.S.[5]

In 2008, wildlife biologists and conservationists released an American woodcock conservation plan presenting figures for the acreage of early successional habitat that must be created and maintained in the U.S. and Canada to stabilize the woodcock population at current levels, and to return it to 1970s densities.[6]