

Instruction Manual : Pitch for Pipits and Plovers

Options for Introduction for Student(s):

Option A: Video and Game Show

Step 1. Watch the Introduction video on the PCAP YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bveDmBAIZUQ>)

Step 2. Launch the Game Show Power Point
You can download the pdf here:
Start on Slide 10.

Option 2: Game Show with Introduction from Educator.

Launch the Gameshow Power Point. Start at Slide 1. The educator can use this guide to talk about slides 1-9 with the student(s).

Playing the Game:

1. Start on Slide 10 (make sure you the presentation is full screen)
2. It is a jeopardy style game. The student can pick the category and the question. "A" questions are easier, "E" questions are the hardest. If playing in a classroom, there is the option to make teams. In playing virtually, one student at a time works.
3. The student will select a category and then A,B,C,D, or E.
4. Read the question on the screen to the student(s)
5. Questions and answers are included in this package. The right answers are highlighted in yellow!
6. Press the "Home" button on the bottom right corner to return to the game
7. Another student can select a question and try to answer. Answered questions will turn purple on the Home screen. Remaining questions are blue.
8. Repeat for about 10 questions, or as time allows.

Introduction

Slide 1: Critical Native Prairie Habitat:

- Critical habitat is what is needed for the survival of a species (Define habitat)
- Less than 25% native prairie remains in Prairie Canada, or 20% in Saskatchewan.
- It is home to a bird called the Sprague's pipit, rarely found in cultivated land or tame forages
- Need mixed grasses of medium height and density with few shrubs which may need to be maintained by light to moderate grazing or that are periodically hayed or burned (prescribed burns only)

Slide 2: Sprague's Pipit: Photo-bird

- Small bird, sparrow-sized
- Brown and white streaked feathers
- Thin bill (unlike a sparrow's thick bill)
- Sprague's pipits primarily eat insects (grasshoppers, spiders, mosquitos, etc)/
- Both the adult birds and the nests are very hard to see (the blend into the grasses).
- Males rarely sing from the ground (courtship flights).
- Males will sing a beautiful song, over 100m high in the sky for over 3 hours, trying to attract a female.

Slide 3: Sprague's Pipit: Photo-nest and young

- Sprague's Pipits build their nest on the ground with grasses. The nest is dome shaped and protect the young from predators
- The parents bring back food for the chicks to eat.
- They are known as the Goldilocks bird because they like grass that is not too tall or too short.
- You can find them in native prairie pastures with cattle or bison because they like land that has been grazed.

Slide 4: Critical Native Prairie Habitat

- The Critical Native Prairie Habitat is disappearing
- In Saskatchewan, less than 20% is left!
- When people build roads, they break up the nice big, wide open space that the pipits love into smaller and smaller pieces that aren't suitable for pipits
- Invasive Species are taking over the ecosystem and change the habitat
- Cities, farms and factories need land too and are always expanding. People are converting native prairie into cities, cropland and other forms of development. This means there isn't enough habitat left for wildlife like the Sprague's Pipit.

Slide 5: Critical Riparian Beach:

- Riparian refers to the land between water and the drier uplands where moisture-loving plants grow - the strip of green along rivers, lakes and wetlands

- The riparian habitat that is needed by plovers, however, is less than 50% vegetated, has sand, gravel or small rocks so is an uncommon habitat in SK.
- Frequent disturbances (high water, ice scour) or special conditions (salinity) are needed to maintain the habitat for plovers.

Slide 6: Piping Plover:

- Small bird, sparrow-sized
- Have orange legs, an orange bill with a black tip, a black band between the eyes and one black ring around the neck (colours fade in fall plumage); sand-coloured bodies help them hide
- Has a “pipe-like” call
- Run along beaches in search of food

Slide 7: Piping Plover:

- The male Piping Plover does most of the work!
- A piping plover nest is built on the ground in the sand and gravel.
- The parents don't bring food for the young chicks, they need to fend for themselves.
- The young chicks are about the size of a cotton ball and need to start looking for food!

Slide 8 and 9: Piping Plover:

- Cows create pugs (deep foot prints in the mud) that Piping Plovers chicks can fall into and get stuck and die
- ATVs and walking your dog on the riparian beach area can disturb the nests and young
- Keeping people, pets and livestock off the riparian beach habitat when plovers are nesting is one of the best things we can do!
- Draining wetlands or damming can change the landscape. They need water and beach. When we get rid of one or both, there isn't any suitable habitat left!

Pitch for Pipits and Plovers!

Game Questions and Answers

Sprague's Pipit

The Sprague's pipit is a threatened bird. This means:

1. It will likely become endangered if nothing is done
2. Other animals bully it
3. Other animals want to eat it

What would you do if you saw a nest like this?

1. See what was inside it
2. Carefully walk away without touching it
3. Bring your friends to see it

These pretty babies eat:

1. Cheesies (It makes their mouths orange.)
2. Big tall grasses
3. Grasshoppers, caterpillars and spiders

True or false?

Males can fly 100 meters up and sing for over three hours to attract a mate!

Which one is the Sprague's pipit?

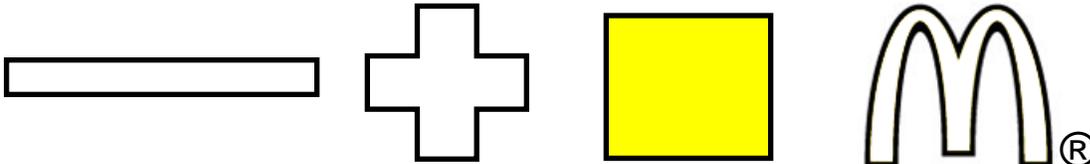
(Pictures of Sprague's pipit and horned lark)

Native Prairie Habitat

True or false?

Sprague's Pipits need native prairie that is not too tall or too short.

The best habitat shape for Sprague's pipit is:



Which **THREE** alien plants destroy Sprague's pipit habitat?

1. **Smooth brome**
2. Corn
3. **Alfalfa**
4. **Sweet clover**
5. Carrots

A built-up road through native prairie stops Sprague's pipits from using habitat on the other side.

How much native prairie is left in Canada?

1. None
2. **Less than 20%**
3. More than 75%

Piping Plover

The piping plover is endangered. It could become extinct if nothing is done.

Find a home, attract a mate, make a nest and raise the chicks. Which does most of the work?

1. The female piping plover
2. The male piping plover

Why are these eggs on the beach?

1. Someone took the eggs from the nest
2. This is what a piping plover nest looks like
3. The bird hasn't put them in a nest yet

How do piping plovers find insects to eat?

1. Drill, poke, grab, slurp
2. Fly, look, plunge, stab
3. Look, run, stop, snatch

Which one is the piping plover?

(Pictures of piping plover and killdeer)

Riparian Habitat

True or false:

The ground in a riparian habitats have moist (damp or wet)

You might see a piping plover:

1. **Standing on a sandy beach**
2. Hiding in some cattails
3. Perched in the willow bushes

Which habitat should NOT be picked by a piping plover?

1. Sandbars in a river
2. Gravel beaches on freshwater lakes
3. **A gravel parking lot**
4. Shorelines of salty sloughs or lakes

True or false?

Draining water from ponds or damming to increase water levels can destroy Piping Plover habitat.

Piping plovers pick beaches with few plants. Why are there not more plants?

1. The salty water of some lakes kills most plants
2. In high-water years plants drown
3. Ice pushed up on the beach scrapes away plants
4. **All the above**

Cows and Birds

When cows make pugs they are

1. Having puppies
2. Leaving deep footprints
3. Leaving cow pies

True or false?

Too little or too much grazing can damage Sprague's pipit habitat.

Harvest hay after the Sprague's pipit breeding season ends on July 21, to:

1. Protect nests from bad weather
2. Protect the babies from predators
3. Prevent killing birds
4. All the above

When should cattle NOT graze along the beaches?

1. From May to July when piping plovers are breeding
2. In early spring, late summer or fall
3. When the shoreline is dry

True or false?

Providing a water trough away from piping plover beaches is good for cows and plovers.

Stewardship

True or false?

There's nothing kids can do to help save piping plovers or Sprague's pipits.

If you told 10 people about the Sprague's pipit and piping plover and they each told 10 others, how many new people would know? 100 people

Which activities could harm piping plovers or their beach habitat?

1. Driving a quad
2. Letting dogs run free
3. Taking a walk
4. All the above

Planting trees in piping plover or Sprague's pipit habitat will

1. Destroy the habitat
2. Give the birds a place to perch
3. Give the birds a place to nest

True or false?

Changing native prairie pastures to crops or forages is the biggest threat to Sprague's Pipits.