

Oregon Vesper Sparrow:
An Imperiled Pacific Northwest Bird

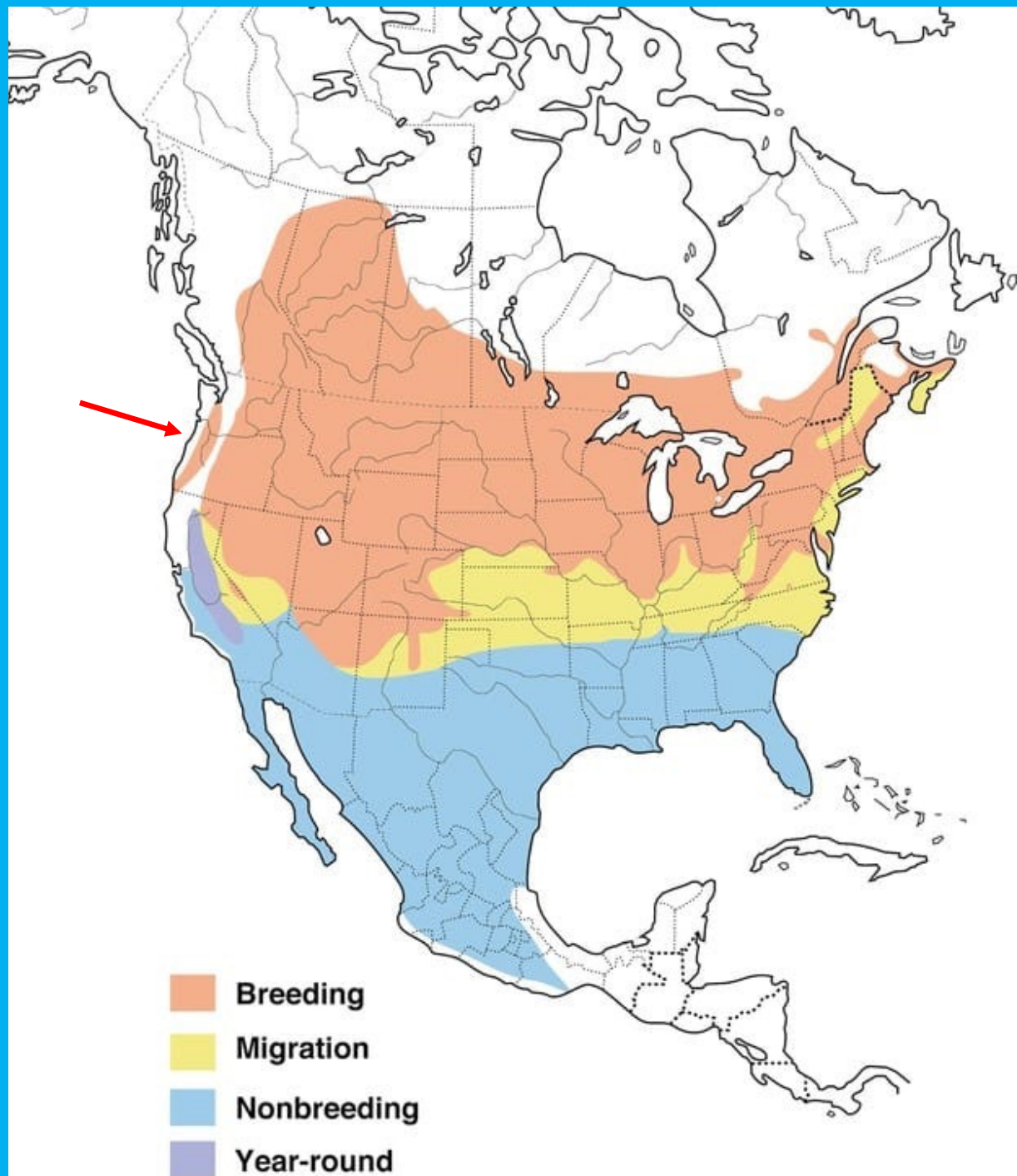


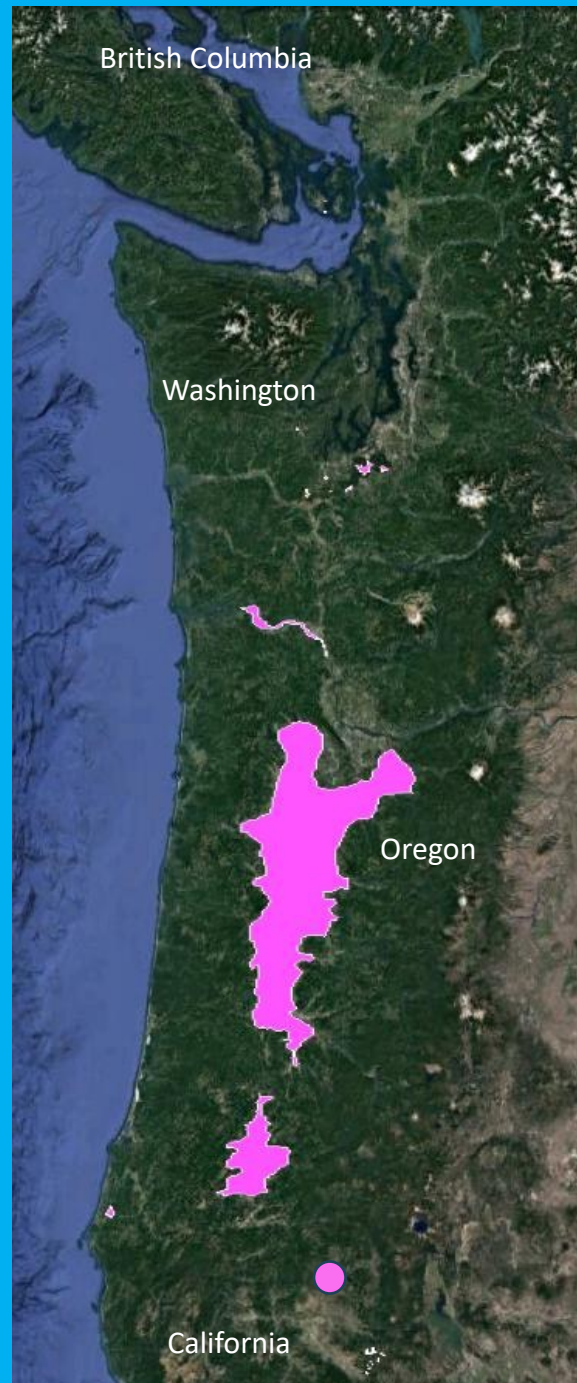
Widespread Range

4 subspecies



BBS Trend 1998-2018
Statistically Significant
-3.2%/year





Rare to **Occasional**
north of Seattle
south and central OR coast

Abundant or **Common**
south Puget and Willamette

Uncommon
Umpqua and Rogue



British Columbia

- Endangered in 2006, **probably extirpated** as a breeder

Washington

- Endangered in 2021
- Bird of Conservation Concern in SWAP

Oregon

- Sensitive-Critical (Imperiled with Extinction)
- Bird of Conservation Concern in SWAP

California

- Bird Species of Special Concern, **probably extirpated** as a breeder

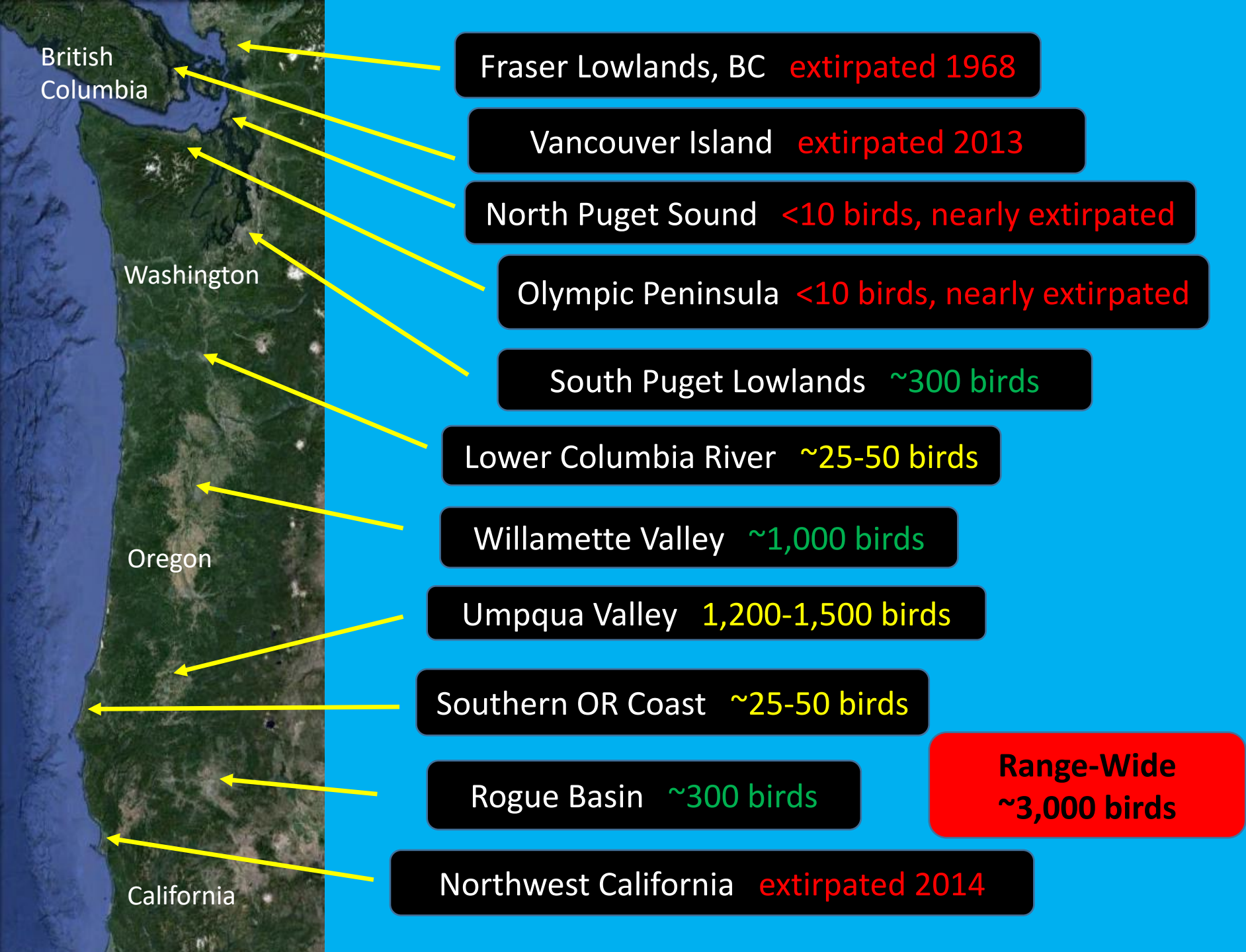
USFWS

- Candidate, Petitioned, and May be Warranted for Listing as Threatened

State of the Birds Watch List

- One of 22 subspecies “distinct population of high conservation concern and extremely high vulnerability”





Edge of Range Extirpations

Naniamo Airport BC
1990 – 2011 5-10 pairs
2012 three pairs
2013 single male



Crescent City CA
1976 – early 2000s 10-25 pairs
2015 gone

Natural History

- **Diet:** wide-variety of insects during breeding season, grass and forb seeds year-round
- **Appearance:** males and female same plumage
- **Migration/Winter:** short-distance to central and southern California
- **Breeding Season:**
 - Arrival: end of March early April
 - Timeframe: first of May to end of July
 - Migration Departure: end of September
 - Territory Size: ~ 4 acres/pair
 - Nest on ground
 - Clutch Size: 4 eggs
 - Renest if fail
 - Can have 2 broods/season



Quality Habitat: Working Definition

Type: Upland grassland and savannah structure (outlier xmas tree farms)

Characteristics: structurally diverse both within herbaceous layer and among all cover layers (i.e., tree, shrub, herbaceous, ground)

Size: >20 acres for occurrence; >100 acres for a small population

Conditions:

- tree cover <10%
- shrub cover <10% and scattered (not continuous)
- bare/sparsely-vegetated ground 5-15% and dispersed
- forb cover >25%
- herbaceous cover:
 - >15-25% (0-8 inches)
 - 45-60% (0-16 inches)
 - 20-30% (16-32 inches)
 - <5% (>32 inches)

NOTE: absence of the term *native vegetation*































Big Picture Conservation Issues



- Historic and ongoing habitat loss and degradation
- 80% of population on private lands; none on wildlife refuges
- Impacts and sustainability of land management/use
- Maintaining desired habitat conditions on restoration lands
- Many small, isolated, and declining populations

