



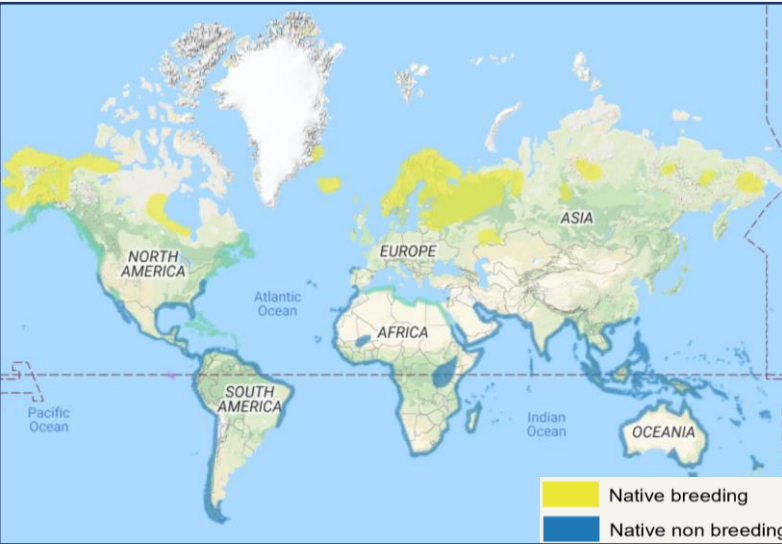
Eurasian whimbrel

(*Numenius phaeopus*)



Anatomy

Male and female plumage of breeding and non-breeding adult whimbrels are almost identical. They are fairly large waders, pale grey with heavy brown streaking. The rump is white, as well as the back and upper tail. The legs are grey. Finally, the most recognizable feature of the whimbrel is its dark brown bill, which is long, slender, and curved down.



Distribution

The whimbrel breeds in different patches around the arctic: in Iceland, eastern Greenland, Scandinavia, the Faroe Islands, five separate areas in northern Russia, western and northern Alaska, and the eastern US. It is absent from Svalbard, except as a vagrant. The whimbrel is migratory and winter almost all over the coasts of Africa, South America, southern Asia, and Oceania.

Fun facts

The whimbrel has an extremely varied diet. It eats mostly large crabs in the winter, as well as mollusks and small fish. In summer, it eats mostly insects and crowberries.

Why this species?

- Beautiful, easy to identify, and large
- Global population decreasing
- Part of the curlew family. Out of nine species of curlews, two are extinct (the eskimo curlew *Numenius tenuirostris* and the slender-billed curlew *Numenius borealis*). Two more are threatened. This shows the importance of monitoring and protecting curlew species.

Population

Between 1,000,000 and 2,300,000 individuals (2015) but decreasing



Residence period in different Arctic regions

