



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Ruddy Turnstone
*Arenaria interpres***

State Status: **None**
Federal Status: **None**

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: A squat, medium-sized member of the plover family, the Ruddy Turnstone is 8 to 10 inches in length. The breeding plumage is a harlequin pattern of russet on the back and a unique black and white pattern on the face and breast. The legs are orange. Young birds and winter adults are duller, but retain enough of the basic pattern to be recognized.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE: In Massachusetts, the Ruddy Turnstone is a locally abundant migrant and is locally uncommon in winter along coastal shorelines. Migration concentration areas in Massachusetts include the Monomoy islands and South Beach in Chatham, and the mouth of the North River in Scituate. The Ruddy Turnstone nests in northern Canada and winters coastally from Massachusetts to South America. NHESP does not track occurrences of Ruddy Turnstones in Massachusetts.

HABITAT DESCRIPTION: In Massachusetts, migrant and wintering Ruddy Turnstones inhabit sand, gravel, or cobble coastal beaches and intertidal areas.

THREATS: Disturbance caused by human recreational activities (pedestrians, off-road vehicles, dogs) and oil spills are threats to Ruddy Turnstones in Massachusetts.

REFERENCES:

- Nettleship, D. N. 2000. Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 537 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.
- Veit, R., and W.R. Petersen. 1993. *Birds of Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, Massachusetts.

Updated 2015

A Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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