

Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii*



Photo by Martin Meyers

Habitat Use Profile

Habitats Used in Nevada	
Open Water Marsh	
Key Habitat Parameters ●	
Plant Composition	Cattail, bulrush, sedges, willow spp. along shorelines, pondweed and other aquatic plants
Plant Density	Fairly dense emergent vegetation, or pond weed mats for nesting ³
Mosaic	Mostly open water, with variable densities of emergent vegetation along the fringe for nesting, but no vegetation needed for migration, variable water depths ³
Water Depth	Unknown; dives deeper than Western Grebe ³
Water Quality	Sufficient to support fish ³
Response to Vegetation Removal	Negative in breeding sites, otherwise neutral ^{EO}
Area Requirements ●	
Minimum Patch Size	Unknown
Recommended Patch Size	Several km ² (mi ²) of open water ³
Home Range	Unknown

Conservation Profile

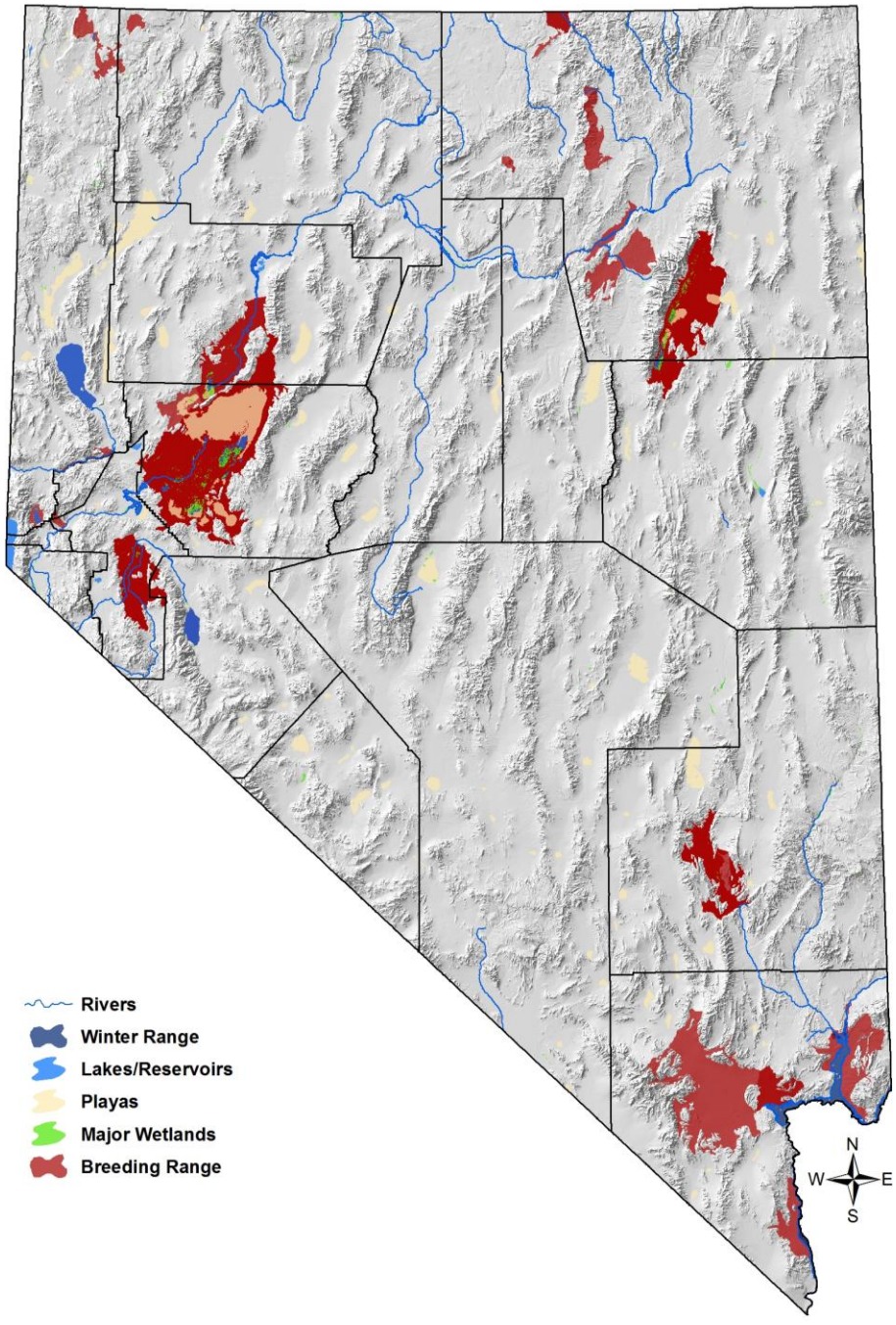
Priority Status	
Conservation Species	
Species Concerns	
Small population size Habitat threats	
Other Rankings	
Continental PIF	None
Audubon Watchlist	None
NV Natural Heritage	S4B
USFWS	Migratory Bird
BLM	None
USFS	None
NDOW	Conservation Priority
IW Waterbird Plan	High Concern
Trends	
Historical	Unknown
Recent ●	Considered stable ¹
Population Size Estimates	
Nevada ●	300 ¹
Global ●	10-20,000 ²
Percent of Global ●	2%
Population Objective	
Maintain/Increase ^{EO}	
Monitoring Coverage	
Source	Aquatic Bird Count
Coverage in NV ●	Fair/poor
Key Conservation Areas	
Protection	Ruby Valley, Lahontan Valley, Pyramid and Walker Lakes
Restoration	Fisheries in all Great Basin open water

Natural History Profile

Seasonal Presence in Nevada	
Spring through fall	
Known Breeding Dates in Nevada	
April – December ^{4,EO}	
Nest and Nesting Habits	
Nest Placement	Floating, attached to emergent vegetation ³
Site Fidelity	Moderate to colony sites ³
Other	Nests in small colonies most times ³
Food Habits	
Basic	Piscivorous; diver
Primary Prey	Small fish ³
Secondary Prey	Aquatic invertebrates ³

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References: ¹ Ivey and Herziger (2006), ² Kushlan et al (2002), ³ Storer and Nuechterlein (1992),
⁴ GBBO unpubl. atlas data, ^{EO} expert opinion

Overview

Clark's Grebe often co-occurs with the Western Grebe in Nevada. The two species are very similar in many respects, and little information exists to discern whether there are different conservation issues among them. Therefore, they are currently managed functionally as if they were the same species. In addition to their breeding presence across the state, Clark's Grebes are also known to stage for migration in large numbers in our large, fish-rich water bodies such as Walker and Pyramid Lakes. It is possible that Lake Mead regularly supports significant winter populations, though this needs clarification. Although Nevada's breeding population is fairly small, it appears to be stable. Most species-specific threats that were identified by the planning group were characterized as "low", with the exception of the possible loss or degradation of the Walker Lake fishery.

Abundance and Occupancy by Habitat

- Based on a recent Aquatic Bird Count, fall migration abundance on Pyramid Lake was around 750. Data summaries for other lake counts will be provided in a later draft.

Nevada-Specific Studies and Analyses

- None

Main Threats and Challenges

Habitat Threats

- Generalized loss of appropriate marsh or open water habitat with sufficient nearby fish prey base
- Increasing salinity in Walker Lake, and associated projected decline of fishery (WAP Team 2006)

Other Threats

- Disturbance from close approach of motorized watercraft (WAP Team 2006)

Species with Similar Conservation Strategies

- Western Grebe
- Common Loon

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Conservation Strategies

Habitat Strategies

1. Open Water and Marsh conservation strategies will benefit this species (see habitat accounts)
2. Educate recreationalists to minimize disturbance of nesting areas with watercraft
3. Continue to support efforts to halt or reverse the dewatering of Walker Lake

Public Outreach

1. Educate recreationalists to minimize disturbance of nesting areas with watercraft

Research, Planning, and Monitoring

1. Add survey coverage to better assess trends on Walker Lake and the region