

Species Status Assessment

Common Name: Veery **Date Updated:** 2024-12-20
Scientific Name: *Catharus fuscescens* **Updated By:** Tgh, V. Bonaiuto
Class: Aves
Family: Turdidae

Species Synopsis

(a short paragraph which describes species taxonomy, distribution, recent trends, and habitat in New York):

Veery, *Catharus fuscescens*, is a common thrush species that breeds across southern Canada and North America including Oregon, Colorado, South Dakota, southern Great Lakes region, New Jersey, the Appalachians up to northern Georgia, as well as Arizona (NatureServe 2025). In New York, veeries breeding range covers much of the state. Veeries inhabit moist or wet lowland forest, both deciduous & coniferous. There are five recognized subspecies of veeries: *C. f. fuliginosus*, *C.f. fuscescens*, *C.f. levyi*, *C.f. salicicolus*, and *C.f. subpallidus*. Veeries feed primarily on insects and fruits.

I. Status

a. Current legal protected Status

i. Federal: **Candidate:**
ii. New York: Unlisted: protected native

b. Natural Heritage Program

i. Global: G5
ii. New York: S5B **Tracked by NYNHP?**

Other Ranks:

COSEWIC: Not listed in Canada
IUCN Red List: Least Concern
Northeast Regional SGCN: Watchlist [Assessment Priority]

Status Discussion:

Veery is widespread in New York during the breeding season and is described as secure (S5B) by the New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP). A majority of the northeast states list this species as secure (S5) or apparently secure (S4). The only exceptions being New Jersey and West Virginia describing the species as Vulnerable (S3) and Delaware describing it as imperiled (S2). The Canadian provinces that border New York also list the species as secure.

II. Abundance and Distribution Trends

Region	Present?	Abundance	Distribution	Time Frame	Listing status or S-Rank	SGCN?
North America	Yes	Declining	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend for US		
Northeastern US	Yes	Declining	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend		Watchlist [Assessment Priority]
New York	Yes	Declining	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend		Yes
Connecticut	Yes	Increasing	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend	S5B	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	Declining	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend	S5B	
New Jersey	Yes	Declining	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend	SC; S3B,S4N	Yes
Pennsylvania	Yes	Increasing	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend	S4B,S4M	
Vermont	Yes	Declining	Unknown	BBS 1966-	S5B	

Region	Present?	Abundance	Distribution	Time Frame	Listing status or S-Rank	SGCN?
				2022 trend		
Ontario	Yes	Declining	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend	S5B	
Quebec	Yes	Increasing	Unknown	BBS 1966-2022 trend	S5B	

Column options

Present?: Yes; No; Unknown; No data; (blank) or Choose an Item

Abundance and Distribution: Declining; Increasing; Stable; Unknown; Extirpated; N/A; (blank) or Choose an item

SGCN?: Yes; No; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item

Monitoring in New York

(specify any monitoring activities or regular surveys that are conducted in New York):

Trends Discussion

(insert map of North American/regional distribution and status):

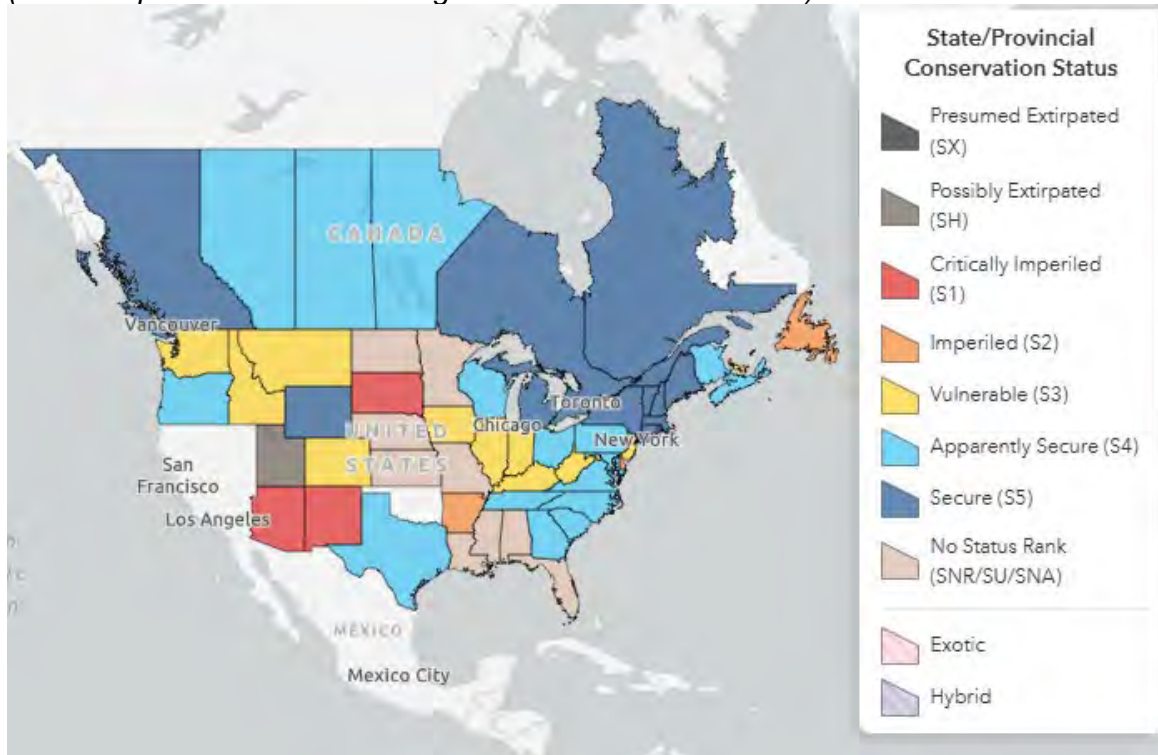


Figure 1. Conservation status of veery in North America (NatureServe 2025).

Breeding range map for Veery

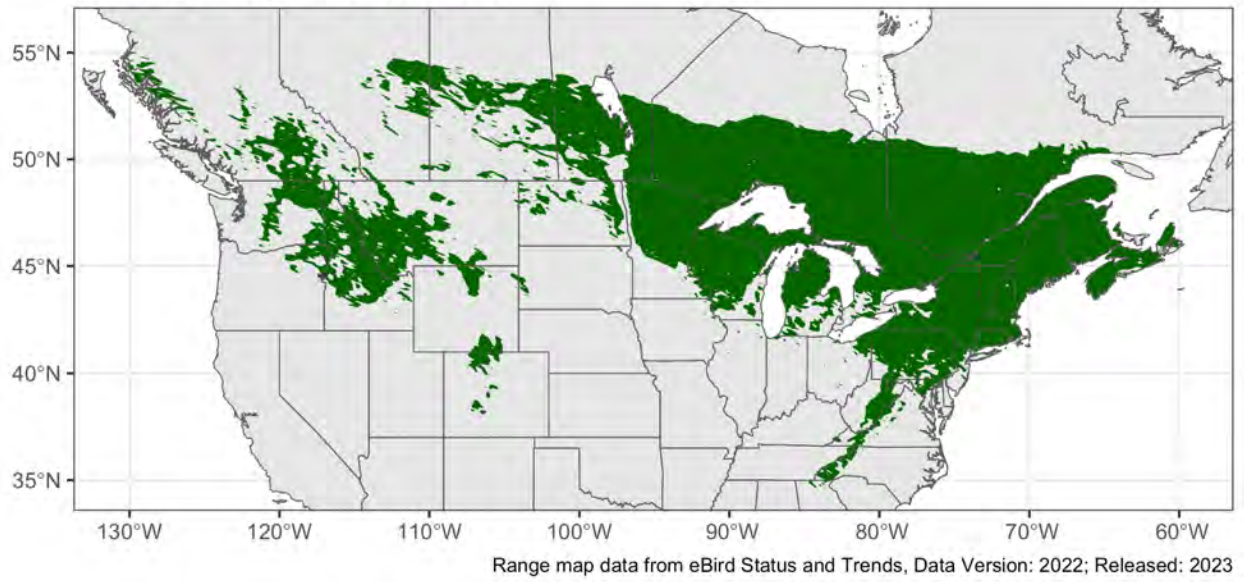
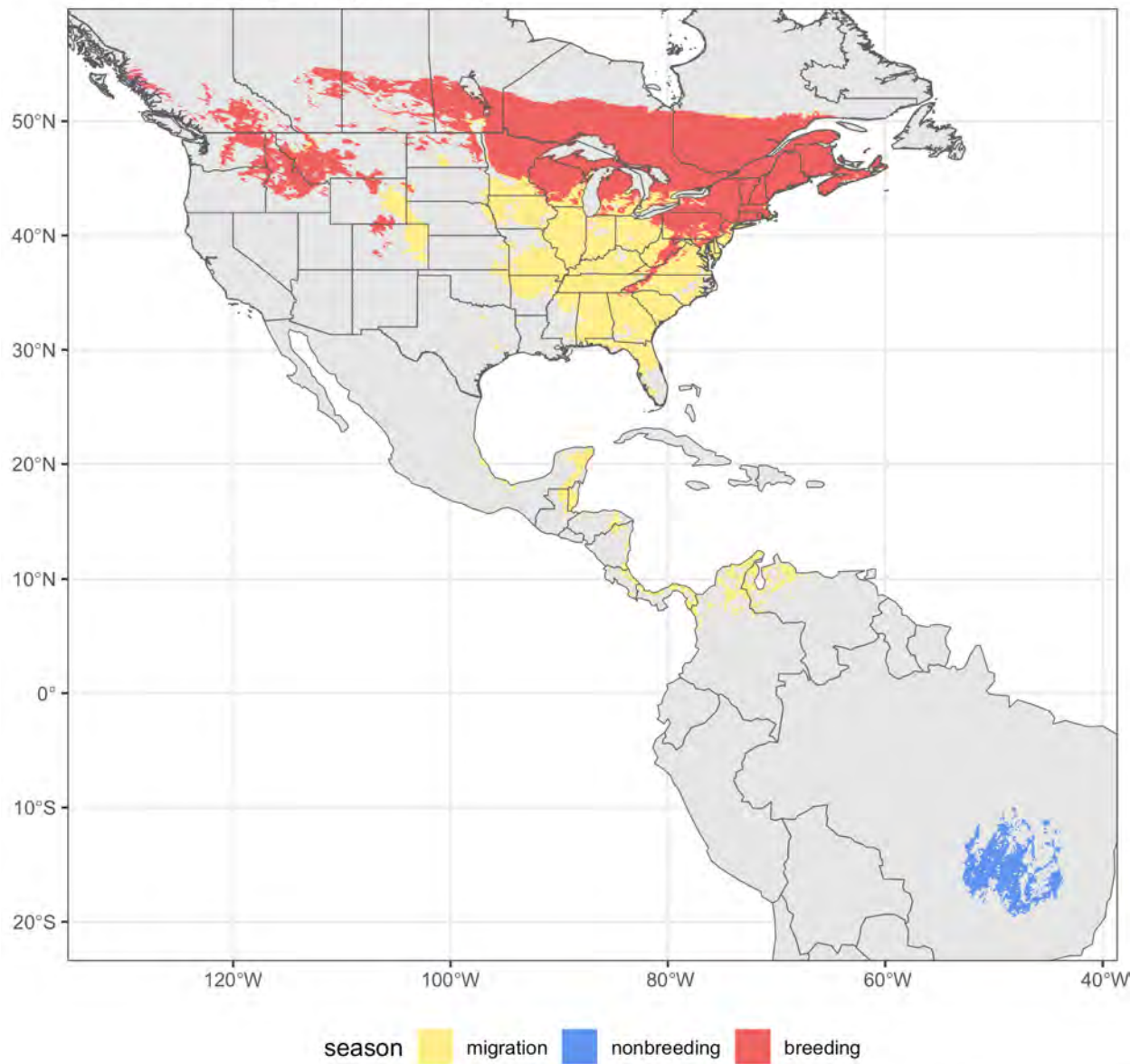


Figure 2. Breeding range of veery (eBird).

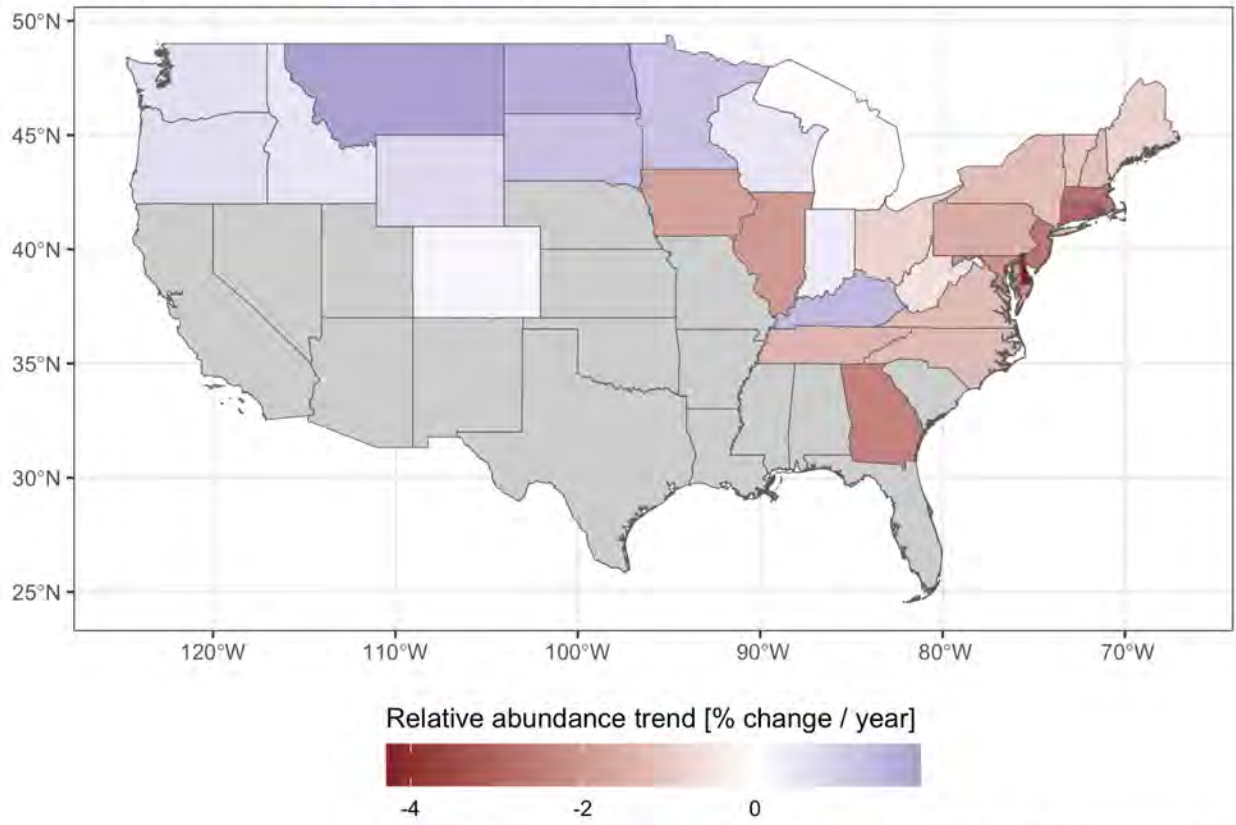
Year-round range map for Veery



Range map data from eBird Status and Trends, Data Version: 2022; Released: 2023

Figure 3. Full (year-round) range of veery (eBird).

Veery state-level breeding trends 2012-2022



Trend data from eBird Status and Trends, Data Version: 2022; Released: 2023

Figure 4. Breeding trends, by state, of veery (eBird).

III. New York Rarity

(provide map, numbers, and percent of state occupied)

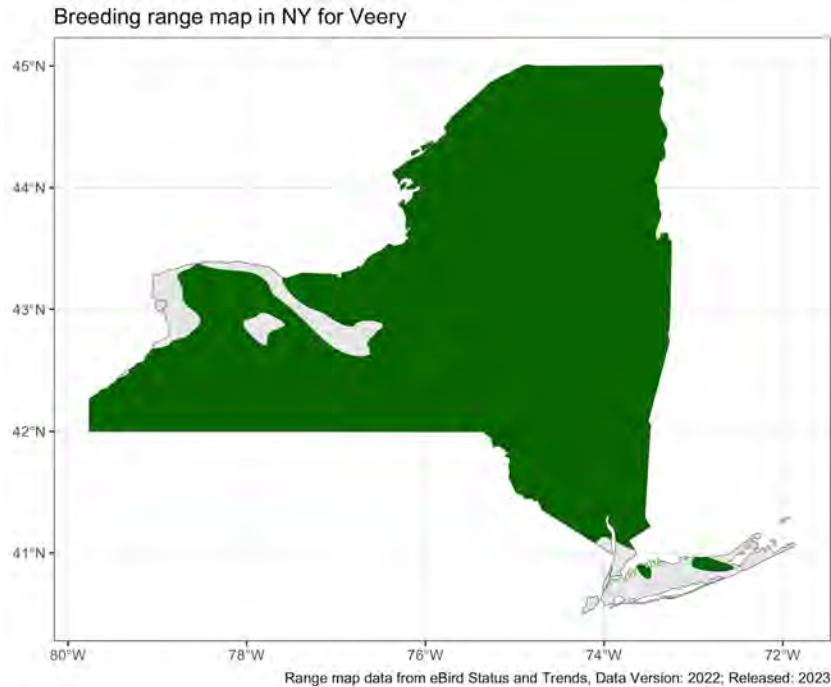


Figure 5. NYS breeding range of veery (eBird).

Details of historic and current occurrence:

The first Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) (1980-85) documented occupancy in 4265 blocks, 79.9% of the survey blocks statewide (Andrle and Carroll 1988). The second BBA (2000-05) documented occupancy in 4159 blocks, 78% of the survey blocks statewide (McGowan and Corwin 2008).

The third BBA (2020-25) is currently underway and utilizes a different number and layout of survey blocks across New York, making direct comparison with the first two Atlases difficult. There were 5,333 blocks in the first and second BBAs, and there are 5,710 blocks in the current BBA, of which 1,815 are considered priority blocks. To date, veery has been documented in 2702 priority blocks, 72.8% of all priority blocks statewide during the third BBA (NY BBA III Overview, 2024).

New York’s Contribution to Species North American Range:

Based on eBird data, 6.21 percent of the population breeds in New York, while 0 percent of the non-breeding population occurs in New York. Among all states with breeding populations, New York ranks 2 of 29.

Percent of North American Range in NY	Classification of NY Range	Distance to core population, if not in NY
1-25%		

Column options

Percent of North American Range in NY: 100% (endemic); 76-99%; 51-75%; 26-50% 1-25%; 0%; Choose an item

Classification of NY Range: Core; Peripheral; Disjunct; (blank) or Choose an item

IV. Primary Habitat or Community Type

(from NY crosswalk of NE Aquatic, Marine, or Terrestrial Habitat Classification Systems):

NatureServe broad habitat types: Shrubland/chaparral, Forest - Mixed, Forest - Hardwood, Woodland - Mixed, Woodland - Hardwood, FORESTED WETLAND, Riparian

Habitat or Community Type Trend in New York

Habitat Specialist?	Indicator Species?	Habitat/ Community Trend	Time frame of Decline/ Increase
Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Column options

Habitat Specialist and Indicator Species: Yes; No; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item.

Habitat/Community Trend: Declining; Stable; Increasing; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item.

Habitat Discussion:

Moist or wet lowland forest, both deciduous & coniferous, with understory of ferns or shrubs provides optimum conditions.

Nesting habitat includes swampy forest, especially in more open areas with shrubby understory, as well as second growth, willow or alder shrubbery near water; large tracts of forest are most suitable. Nests usually are on or near the ground, at the base of a shrub, in a clump of herbaceous vegetation, or in a shrub or low tree (Terres 1980). In migration and winter this species occurs also in lowland forest, woodland, and scrub.

V. Species Demographics and Life History

Breeder in NY?	Non-breeder in NY?	Migratory Only?	Summer Resident?	Winter Resident?	Anadromous/ Catadromous?
Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No

Column options

First 5 fields: Yes; No; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item.

Anadromous/Catadromous: Anadromous; Catadromous; (blank) or Choose an item.

Species Demographics and Life History Discussion

(include information about species life span, reproductive longevity, reproductive capacity, age to maturity, and ability to disperse and colonize):

Veeries begin breeding at 1 year of age. Clutches can range from 1-5 eggs, but typically is 4 eggs. Hatching success across its range is 64.6%, while nest success is 37.7% (Heckscher et al 2020).

VI. Threats

Threat Level 1	Threat Level 2	Threat Level 3	Spatial Extent	Severity	Immediacy	Trend	Certainty
1. Residential and Commercial	1.1 Housing & Urban Areas	(habitat loss/degradation/fragmentation)	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
5. Biological Resource Use	5.3 Logging & Wood Harvesting	(habitat loss/degradation/fragmentation)	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
8. Invasive & Other Problematic Species	8.2 Problematic Native Plants & Animals	(cowbird brood parasitism)	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
8. Invasive & Other Problematic Species	8.2 Problematic Native Plants & Animals	(nest predation by rodents)	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

Table 1. Threats to veery.

Habitat loss and fragmentation as a result of development or logging can impact veeries by reducing suitable breeding habitat and increasing likelihood of Brown-headed cowbird parasitism (Heckscher et al 2020). In Dutchess County, New York, nest predation by white-footed mice and eastern chipmunks has been correlated to high nest mortality (Schmidt and Ostfeld 2003 as cited in Heckscher et al 2020).

Are there regulatory mechanisms that protect the species or its habitat in New York?

Yes: ✓ **No:** **Unknown:**

If yes, describe mechanism and whether adequate to protect species/habitat:

This species is included in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-712) and is protected as a native species under the NYS Environmental Conservation Law.

Describe knowledge of management/conservation actions that are needed for recovery/conservation, or to eliminate, minimize, or compensate for the identified threats:

Action Category	Action	Description
A.1 Direct Habitat Management	A.1.1 Manage plants, animals, fungi, or bacteria	Invasive species control
C.6 Design and Plan Conservation	C.6.5.0.0 Conservation Planning	Site/area protection
C.6 Design and Plan Conservation	C.6.5.0.0 Conservation Planning	Resource/habitat protection
C.8 Research and Monitoring	C.8.1.0.0 Basic Research and Status Monitoring	Research behavioral ecology (Heckscher et al., 2020).

Table 2. Recommended conservation actions for *veery*.

VII. References

This SSA drew heavily from these resources:

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