

## BENEFICIAL HABITAT

Through a self-certified program, Robbins Rice Company growers focus on sustainable practices that benefit both our rice production and environment. By following the recommendations from biologists, we continue to integrate native habitat into a working agricultural landscape.



- More than **4,130** feet of hedgerows and nesting cover on field edges
- More than **5,000** acres of rice seasonally managed for shorebirds
- Over **475** acres of permanent wetlands managed for waterfowl, shorebirds, and Giant Garter Snake
- Nesting levees bordering fields and between checks
- **100+** bird boxes installed that provide nesting cavities for owls, Western Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, and Ash-throated Flycatchers
- More than **50** native bee stumps
- **3** in-field loafing islands and warm water checks
- Over **500** eggs salvaged from all fields planted to wheat, safflower and cover crops

Shorebirds flashing at Knaggs Ranch - Yolo Bypass



A Collaborative Effort With:



ROBBINS RICE COMPANY  
**WATERBIRD**  
RICELAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



# ROBBINS RICE COMPANY

Koshihikari rice comes from the Koshi region of Japan and means "Light of Koshi" named for its high polish and translucent quality. Koshi is widely considered the highest quality rice produced in Japan; favored for its appearance, firmness, consistency, aroma and natural sweetness.

In the heart of the Sacramento Valley, Robbins Rice Company specializes in the ecologically sustainable production of Koshihikari rice.

Some of our growers have been growing rice in California for over fifty years. They have been managing the rich resources of the valley to support a productive rice operation that maintains the land's ecological values.



Our collective group of growers takes pride in continuing a long tradition of good land stewardship and cultivation of delicious, local rice.



## SURROGATE WETLANDS

In California, over 95% of the natural lands migratory birds and other wildlife historically depended upon have been converted to agriculture and urban uses.

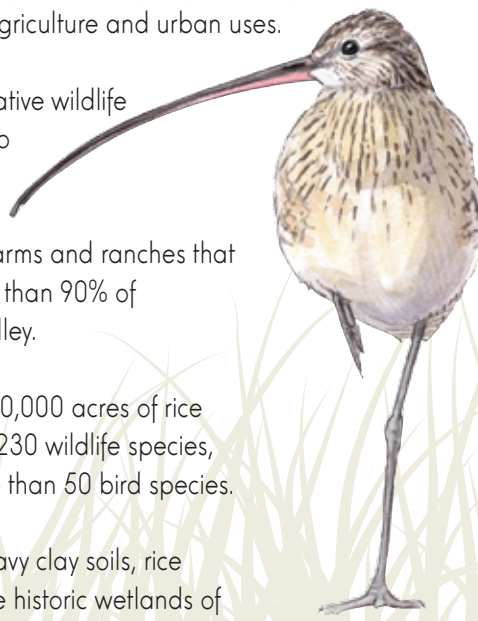
In response, native wildlife has adapted to the managed, but still resource-rich farms and ranches that make up more than 90% of the Central Valley.

California's 500,000 acres of rice fields support 230 wildlife species, including more than 50 bird species.

Planted on heavy clay soils, rice fields mimic the historic wetlands of the valley floor.

These "surrogate wetlands" provide nesting habitat, refuge, and ample amounts of food sources for shorebirds and waterfowl throughout the year.

For more information, visit our website:  
[www.robbsinsriceco.com](http://www.robbsinsriceco.com)



Long-billed Curlew  
-Courtesy of John Muir Laws

## MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Following the recommendations of bird scientists, Robbins Rice Company growers have increased the habitat value of their farmed acreage with a suite of field management practices proven to improve soil, water and air quality while providing critical resource for wildlife.

### OPEN MUDFLATS

After harvest, we chop and incorporate rice straw into our fields, then flood them to a depth of 2-4" deep. This creates mudflats that support shorebirds like Least Sandpipers and Long-billed Curlews.

### VARIABLE DRAWDOWN

Our growers stagger the draining of winter-flooded fields to create varying depths of water over a longer period of time. This increases the accessibility to seeds and insects for a variety of shorebirds with different feeding preferences.

### REPLACE BOARDS

We put boards back into water control structures after harvest fieldwork is complete, allowing the natural capture of winter rain to create wetlands without additional water use.

### WIDEN BERMS

By widening and flattening berms in the fields, our growers create ideal nesting habitat for birds like Killdeer, Black-necked Stilts and waterfowl.

### IN-FIELD ISLANDS

Similar to the widened berms, our in-field islands create protected nesting sites for birds like American Avocets.

### EARLY FLOOD-UP

Between July and September, the first shorebirds making their way down the Pacific Flyway find very little wetland habitat. During these months, we flood fallow or early harvested fields to provide rich feeding areas when little is available.

### HEDGEROWS

Our growers plant field edges with California natives like sedges, willows, and wild rose. Once established, these natives can out-compete weeds and support declining birds like the Tricolored Blackbird. Crisscrossing the farmed landscape, native hedgerows provide nesting sites, refuge, and food sources for birds like warblers and bluebirds. They also provide cover for the migration of mammals, support beneficial pollinators, and improve water quality by filtering run-off from fields.

### EGG SALVAGE

Before chopping winter cover crops, our growers check the fields for nesting waterfowl. The collected eggs are hatched and the ducks raised at rescue shelters in the area before they are released back into the wild.