

2009

ANNUAL REPORT



AMERICAN BIRD
CONSERVANCY

The Future of Birds





ABC's President George Fenwick (left), and Board Chairman Jim Brumm (right). Photo: Gavin Shire

a MESSAGE from the Chairman and President

Thank you! In what was the worst year for the U.S. economy in decades, American Bird Conservancy's friends came through for birds in a most heartening way. We did not slow down a bit; in fact, we accelerated. Your support told us that – even in tight times – bird conservation is a priority, and that you trust ABC to use your generous gifts wisely. We are deeply appreciative of your confidence in us, and hope that this 2009 Annual Report encourages you to feel your money is well-spent. From our perspective, ABC enjoyed a banner year in conserving wild birds.

As this is written in early 2010, we are pleased to report the early and successful conclusion of ABC's five-year American Birds Campaign, a conservation campaign remarkable for both its many achievements and its role in developing ABC into a mature and effective force for birds. You have had front row seats for the all of the excitement, highlighted by the creation or expansion of 41 reserves for some of the world's rarest birds; protection of 700,000 acres of key bird habitat; development of the Alliance for Zero Extinction; creation of new programs to protect Hawaiian birds and seabirds, and to prevent bird collisions with man-made structures; and expansion of domestic bird conservation "Joint Ventures" to name a few.

All of these projects and programs have helped ABC hone its strategy and carry out its mission. Please have a look at the following page to understand our conservation framework. This approach will continue to guide ABC's efforts in the future and is the organizing principle for ABC's *Guide to*

Bird Conservation, slated for publication with the University of Chicago Press and Lynx Edicions this autumn. This will make an excellent holiday present for your birding friends!

Last year in this space, we noted that organizations can become complacent and less efficient as they grow, and in response, we wanted to develop "gold standards" for all operations to guard against this happening at ABC. We want to report that this work has been completed, and that our new standards will complement those of rating services such as Charity Navigator, which, once again, has recognized ABC with its highest

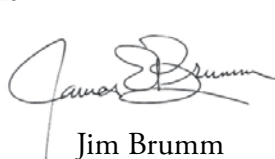
rating – our eighth straight year.

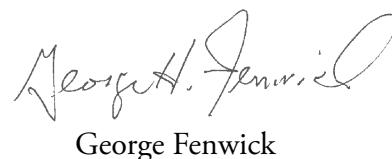
We have no intention of slipping, and letting either you – or the birds – down. Thank you very much again for helping American Bird Conservancy.

"In what was the worst year for the U.S. economy in decades, American Bird Conservancy's friends came through for birds in a most heartening way."



Golden-winged Warbler: Greg Lavaty

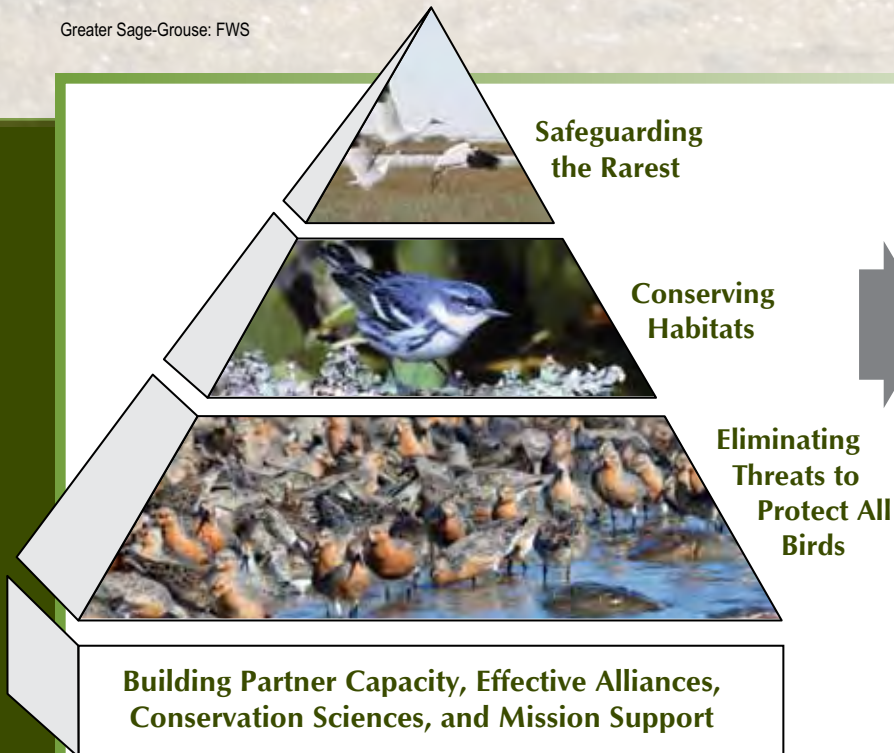

Jim Brumm
Chairman, ABC


George Fenwick
President, ABC

A Framework for Bird Conservation

The problems facing birds today are myriad and complex, requiring a far-reaching, bold vision for conservation. ABC has developed a unique and successful strategy to preserve bird diversity and maintain or increase wild bird populations.

Greater Sage-Grouse: FWS



Red Knots: FWS; Cerulean Warbler: Barth Schorre; Whooping Cranes: Al Perry

ABC'S MISSION:

American Bird Conservancy is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to conserve native birds and their habitats throughout the Americas.



Safeguarding the Rarest

ABC aims to halt imminent bird extinctions throughout the Americas by working with partners in Latin America to create a network of sustainable reserves that protect the last remaining habitats for the most endangered species, and by strengthening domestic legislation and regulations.

Conserving Habitats

ABC works in the U.S. and internationally to improve habitat conditions at discrete sites and across large landscapes for birds identified on the U.S. WatchList.

Eliminating Threats

ABC works to influence policy, laws, regulations, and harmful practices to ensure that major threats to birds are reduced or eliminated. ABC is also at the forefront in developing and promoting innovative solutions to major, human-induced bird mortality threats.

Building Bird Conservation Capacity

ABC strengthens scientific knowledge to further bird conservation goals, builds effective partnerships, and increases understanding of and engagement in bird conservation issues. ABC increases conservation resources by securing public funding for both government agencies and private entities.

SAFEGUARDING *the* RAREST



Prairie Warbler: Greg Lavaty

Over the course of 2009, ABC led or participated in more than 40 projects in the Western Hemisphere aimed at stabilizing or improving the populations of globally endangered bird species—with exciting results. Though many bird conservation projects require ten years or more to achieve a population change, conservation work with extremely rare species can yield positive results in a single season. Building on and sustaining these gains is a long-term ABC goal. The following are just a few of the endangered birds that benefitted from ABC's work in 2009:

- ABC and its partners succeeded in reversing poor federal decisions impacting Critical Habitat for the endangered Northern Spotted Owl, and in getting a flawed Owl Recovery Plan revised. In addition, the Bureau of Land Management withdrew a controversial logging plan for old-growth forests in Oregon that would have been detrimental to the owl and the threatened Marbled Murrelet.
- Working with in-country partners, ABC succeeded in protecting the largest nesting colony of the endangered Peruvian Tern in Paracas National Reserve, Peru. ABC engaged local fishermen in erecting signs and developing a road system that directs vehicle traffic away from nests to prevent them from being crushed or disturbed.
- ABC and Grupo Jaragua advocated for a new 43,000-acre reserve in the Dominican Republic to protect the endangered Bay-breasted Cuckoo, White-necked Crow, and more than 20 migratory bird species including the Cape May Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Prairie Warbler.
- ABC and Colombian partner Fundación ProAves created two new reserves to protect the critically endangered Niceforo's Wren and the endangered Gold-ringed Tanager.
- ABC expanded protection for globally threatened and endangered birds by adding 13,905 acres to existing reserves in Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Brazil for the Stresemann's Bristlefront, Banded Cotinga, Brown-backed Parrotlet, Red-browed Parrot, Bahia Tyrannulet, Hook-billed Hermit, Fuertes's Parrot, Yellow-eared Parrot, Long-whiskered Owlet, Ochre-fronted Antpitta, Pale-headed Brush-Finch, and others.
- ABC worked with two indigenous communities in Peru to designate portions of their lands as Private Conservation Areas, protecting threatened *Polylepis* forest for specialists such as the Royal Cinclodes.
- Thanks to conservation efforts by ABC and its Brazilian partner Fundação Biodiversitas over the last five years, the Lear's Macaw was this year downlisted from critically endangered to endangered due to an increase in its population and the protection of its primary habitat.
- Working with the Municipality of Aiquile, Bolivia, ABC and Centro de Biodiversidad y Genética helped create a new 74,891-acre community protected area for the Red-fronted Macaw.



Spotted Owl: Mike Danzenbaker

Learn more about how ABC safeguards the rarest birds in the Americas — visit www.abcbirds.org

Fuertes's Parrot: Fundación ProAves www.proaves.org

ABC currently protects 57 of the world's most endangered species through its work with in-country partners at 41 bird reserves throughout Latin America.



Banded Cotinga: Ciro Albano,
www.nebrazilbirding.com



Yarigües Slate-crowned Antpitta: Fundación ProAves www.proaves.org

SPOTLIGHT

on Safeguarding the Rarest

Endangered Hawai'i



Kauai 'Akialoa (extinct). Illustration courtesy of Princeton University Press



I'iwi: Jack Jeffrey

Since colonization by Polynesians and Europeans, Hawai'i has lost an amazing and saddening 71 native bird species, including most of the honeycreepers—the highest bird extinction rate in the world. In 2009, ABC launched the Hawaiian Birds Program to direct new resources and greater attention towards saving the most imperiled birds in the United States.

In partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, which this year made Hawaiian Forest Birds one of their Keystone Initiatives, ABC continued the exciting work of restoring habitat and creating new populations to prevent the extinction of the Palila, Millerbird, and Maui Parrotbill. Habitat restoration for these birds will also benefit the endangered Crested Honeycreeper and Akiapola'au, as well as the 'Elepaio, Maui Creeper, I'iwi, and 'Apapane.

By highlighting Hawai'i in *State of the Birds – United States of America, 2009*, a report co-authored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ABC, and other non-profit groups, and in drawing the attention of key lawmakers to the plight of Hawaiian birds, ABC and its partners

'Anianiau : Peter LaTourrette, www.birdphotography.com



succeeded in triggering an additional \$2 million for Hawaiian bird conservation from Congress. Read more at www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/oceansandislands.

'Apapane: Jack Jeffrey



“American Bird Conservancy has emerged as one of the foremost leaders in bird conservation in the Western Hemisphere. Their proven success is a result of an impeccable scientific foundation; a pragmatic, yet innovative, business model; and a relentless commitment to building local capacity to ensure that short-term successes evolve into long-term sustainability.”

*Jeff Trandahl, Executive Director,
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*



Hawaiian Hawk (Io): Jack Jeffrey

CONSERVING HABITAT



Least Terns: Bill Dalton

In 2009, ABC influenced land management decisions affecting priority birds on more than five million acres in the United States through management within Bird Conservation Joint Ventures. In addition, ABC was engaged in multiple on-the-ground habitat protection projects selected for their high value as breeding, wintering, or foraging habitat for endangered or WatchList bird species. Highlights include:

UNITED STATES: Through a grant from the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act and funding from other donors including the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, ABC helped the Columbia Land Trust purchase 300 acres of priority oak-pine habitat on the Klickitat River in Washington to support conservation of the Lewis's Woodpecker.

UNITED STATES: Working with multiple partners through the Intermountain West Joint Venture, ABC assisted the Flathead Land Trust in Montana in obtaining a \$1 million grant that enabled them to secure a perpetual easement on significant habitat for bird species of conservation concern, including the Red-naped Sapsucker, Sandhill Crane, Willow Flycatcher, and Vaux's Swift.

UNITED STATES: ABC worked with the Army Corps of Engineers, the lead U.S. agency charged with river management, to develop habitat management recommendations for endangered Interior Least Tern populations, particularly on the Arkansas and Red rivers, that addressed major threats to their reproduction. This includes the development of groundbreaking, new scientific modeling techniques that could have implications in the study and management of other threatened birds.

UNITED STATES: ABC played a leadership role in advancing conservation actions and results for several multi-year, multi-partner landscape habitat initiatives that resulted in improved management on more than 100,000 acres of core breeding habitat for targeted species including the Cerulean and Golden-winged Warbler, Henslow's Sparrow, Lewis's Woodpecker, and Northern Bobwhite.

COSTA RICA: Using a grant obtained through the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), ABC enabled the Association of Ornithologists of Costa Rica to protect more than 37,000 acres of wintering habitat for Golden-winged Warblers through easements on 43 private land holdings in the buffer zones of Braulio Carrillo and La Amistad National Parks.

EL SALVADOR: ABC provided key funding through NMBCA to enable SalvaNatura to acquire 70 acres of important wintering habitat for Golden-cheeked Warblers immediately adjacent to and in the buffer zone of Monte Cristo National Park, and for Golden-winged Warblers immediately adjacent to the Rio Sapó Reserve.

**Learn more about how ABC conserves
habitat for native birds by visiting
www.abcbirds.org**

Louden Wetlands, part of a 300-acre riparian tract owned by Montana's Flathead Land Trust, provides habitat for numerous species of migratory birds. Photo: Flathead Land Trust

“Without the assistance provided by American Bird Conservancy, two important conservation easements for priority birds in core areas of the Flathead Valley would not have happened.”

Stacy Allen, Flathead Land Trust



Red-naped Sapsucker: Bill Schmoker

Planting Trees to Restore Vital Habitat



Seedlings at Huembo, Peru tree nursery. Photo: Mike Parr

For bird conservation impact and value for the dollar, it is hard to beat planting trees. On average, it costs just \$1 in Latin America and \$3 in the United States to grow, transport, and plant a tree that will become valuable nesting, foraging, and roosting habitat for hundreds of bird species; create shade for understory plants important to other wildlife; provide environmental services including watershed protection and carbon sequestration; and present opportunities to engage local communities directly in bird conservation through paid and volunteer jobs.

In 2009, ABC helped its partners plant more than 860,000 native trees for reforestation in seven bird reserves throughout Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Colombia, benefiting hundreds of migrant and endemic bird species. This included planting 81,000 *Polylepis* trees that are essential habitat for the critically endangered Royal Cinclodes and other *Polylepis* forest specialists.

By building plant nurseries and training staff, we have ensured that in 2010 and future years, we will continue to plant trees to restore and enhance habitat for birds, biodiversity, and local communities.



Reforestation at El Paujil, Colombia, September 2009. Photo: Benjamin Skolnik

Royal Cinclodes: Valère Clavierie



Women from the Patancha community, Peru participating in a reforestation project, December 2009. Photo: ECOAN

“Reforestation is complex, but one of the best means of engaging local communities in long-term conservation efforts. It provides them with a stake in the future of their protected forests, and helps guarantee that our conservation mission will be successful and not just words.

ABC has played a vital role in our success through their ongoing support of community reforestation activities in key bird conservation areas.”

*Constantino Auca, President
Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN)*



ELIMINATING THREATS



Cat with bird: Dean Mullin

The toll on bird populations from bird mortality caused by human actions is incalculable. From the hundreds of millions of birds killed by free-roaming cats to the similar number killed by glass and night lighting on man-made structures to the often insidious effects of pesticides, ABC worked steadily in 2009 towards the long-term goal of eliminating these preventable deaths. Many results will be years in the making, but this year we are pleased to be able to report on several key victories:

- ABC led successful efforts to get the Bolivian government to agree to sign an international convention that will result in the ban in that country of the pesticide monocrotophos. Once implemented, the ban will have support from the Bolivian trade association, and will end the poisoning of Bobolinks and other species of migratory and resident birds in farm fields.
- ABC won another victory in the battle to preserve the food supply that sustains Red Knots through their long arduous migration from Argentina to Canada. Red Knots have declined precipitously as the supplies of horseshoe crab eggs have dwindled due to overharvesting of crabs for bait in conch and eel pots.



Red Knot: Bill Dalton

Thanks to ABC advocacy efforts, the State of Maryland agreed to implement harvest restrictions on the crabs, now requiring two males to be caught for every one female. The new regulations have already resulted in a 10% reduction in crab take in the state over an equivalent period last year.

- ABC has quickly become a recognized leader in the battle to prevent bird deaths at windows. Working with partners at a new facility built at the Carnegie Museum's Powdermill Avian Research Center in Pennsylvania, ABC has initiated scientific testing on mitigation measures that will provide crucial information on their relative effectiveness for use by city planners, architects, glass manufacturers, and even homeowners. ABC also began a program to test mitigation measures in real-world situations, beginning with a partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at their National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia. The window film being tested has reduced observed bird kills there by 100%. In 2010, ABC is moving to conduct similar tests on other materials at the Philadelphia Zoo and the Smithsonian National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C.
- ABC helped win a lawsuit to prevent the City of Los Angeles from unofficially sanctioning feral cat colonies and the practice of Trap Neuter Release. Now, the city must conduct a full evaluation of the impact of these colonies on the environment, which includes the threat to birds from these introduced predators.

**Learn more about how ABC eliminates threats to birds in the Americas—
visit www.abcbirds.org**

“People need to be made aware that birds are at risk from collisions with buildings and from the development of wind energy, and that both problems can often be solved with simple measures. ABC is the leading organization highlighting these issues, and we are very pleased to be working with them.”

*Shelby White, Founding Trustee
The Leon Levy Foundation*

Wind turbines: Oregon State University

Halting a Bird-killing Pesticide



Bobolink: Alan Wilson

After years of scientific review and steadily tightening restrictions, in 2009 EPA followed through on the full cancellation of carbofuran, one of the deadliest pesticides ever used on agricultural lands in the United States. ABC had advocated for the ban and supported EPA in fighting pressure from the manufacturer to keep the chemical on the market. Through efforts by ABC and other organizations, and support from the Wallace Genetic Foundation, Turner Foundation, and New York Community Trust, cancellations and restrictions on pesticide use, including carbofuran, have caused bird deaths from pesticide poisonings to drop dramatically, from an estimated 67 million birds per year in 1992 to perhaps fewer than 15 million per year today.

Throughout its ten-year history, ABC's Pesticides and Birds Program has helped cancel or limit usage of a number of pesticides that caused bird kills. Read more at www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/pesticides/index.html. Here are some of our most significant accomplishments to date:

CANCELED: Monocrotophos—

Use: sunflowers in Argentina. Resulted in the deaths of an estimated 35,000 Swainson's Hawks.

HIGHLY RESTRICTED:

Chlorfenapyr – Use: cotton in Africa. ABC highlighted adverse effects in other countries, which helped prevent its registration in the United States.

HIGHLY RESTRICTED:

Aldicarb – Uses: coffee, pecans, sugarcane, sorghum, tobacco, and alfalfa. Known to have killed many raptors such as Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers, Great Horned Owls, and Bald and Golden eagles.

CANCELED: Disulfoton – Uses: Cotton and other food and non-food crops. Known to have killed Swainson's Hawks, Black-crowned Night-Herons, and Common Ravens.

CANCELED: Fenthion – Use: mosquitoes in Florida. Known to have killed Black Skimmers, Sand-erlings, Short-billed Dowitchers, Snowy Egrets, Snowy Plovers, Black-



Short-eared Owl: Greg Lavaty

necked Stilt, Short-eared Owls, and others, and threatened wintering endangered Piping Plover populations.

HIGHLY RESTRICTED:

Diazinon – Uses: in granular form on backyards and golf courses. Known to have killed waterfowl such as American Wigeon, Ross's Goose, and Brant, as well as Blue Jay, Great Blue Heron, and Great Horned Owl.

CANCELED: Ethyl Parathion—

Uses: alfalfa, barley, corn, cotton, canola, sorghum, soybean, sunflower, and wheat. Known to have killed

Hermit Thrush, Northern Flicker, Varied Thrush, Western Meadowlark, Band-tailed Pigeon, and Bald Eagle.

HIGHLY RESTRICTED:

Rodent Poisons – Use: rats, mice, and other rodents. Killed raptors that ate poisoned rodents, and other birds, such as blackbirds, turkeys, and pheasants, that ate poisoned bait. Nine rodenticides are now restricted for use by professional applicators only; all over-the-counter sales of remaining rodenticides now limited to tamper-resistant bait stations.

CANCELED PENDING COURT DECISION:

Carbofuran – Uses: cotton, potatoes, corn, soybeans, alfalfa. Known to have killed waterfowl, wading birds, raptors, shorebirds, grassland birds, and songbirds such as the Blue Grosbeak, Rusty Blackbird, Hermit Thrush, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.



Varied Thrush: Daniel J. Lebbin

Thanks to ABC and its partners, bird mortality due to pesticide poisoning has been dramatically reduced by as much as 40 million birds each year, following the cancellation of the most toxic chemicals.



Piping Plover: Bill Hubick

SUPERCARGING *the* Bird Conservation Community

- To help partner organizations and bird reserves become self-sustaining over the long-term, ABC created an exciting new website to attract ecotourists to the amazing network of globally significant bird reserves that ABC members have helped build. Visit www.conservationbirding.org today to plan your next international trip.
- In tandem with the new Conservation Birding website, ABC published a stunning, comprehensive guide to the network of bird reserves that ABC supports in Latin America. The guide will help our partners market their reserves to potential visitors. Download the guide at www.conservationbirding.org
- In an effort to bring a greater understanding of bird conservation issues to a broader audience, ABC has embarked on an exciting new venture. In conjunction with Lynx Edicions and Chicago University Press, ABC is about to publish the landmark book, *The American Bird Conservancy Guide to Bird Conservation*. This will be the first publication of its kind, with details on all the threats to birds, descriptions of major habitat types and key sites, and information on priority species. Text was completed in 2009, and this revolutionary new publication will be available in all good bookstores in time for the 2010 holiday season.
- ABC helped private landowners in the United States increase the value of their property for birds by providing advice on creating snags that can be used for priority cavity-nesting birds such as the Flammulated Owl, and Lewis's and White-headed woodpeckers. ABC's booklet on managing for cavity-nesting birds in ponderosa pine forests, produced in early 2009, has already been distributed to more than 4,000 private landowners in the West. Read more at www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/specialreports.html



Marvelous Spatuletail: Dubi Shapiro



The American Bird Conservancy Guide to Bird Conservation, to be published in October 2010, presents the most thorough assessment of threats to birds published to date, as well as a priority list of birds of conservation concern.

2009 Supporters

We are honored to acknowledge the individuals, foundations, businesses, and others who have donated to support ABC's work. While space constraints prevent us from listing all of our donors, we are sincerely grateful for each member and every gift. We would also like to thank those who gave anonymously through the United Way or Combined Federal Campaign.

Peregrine Falcon: ClipArt.com



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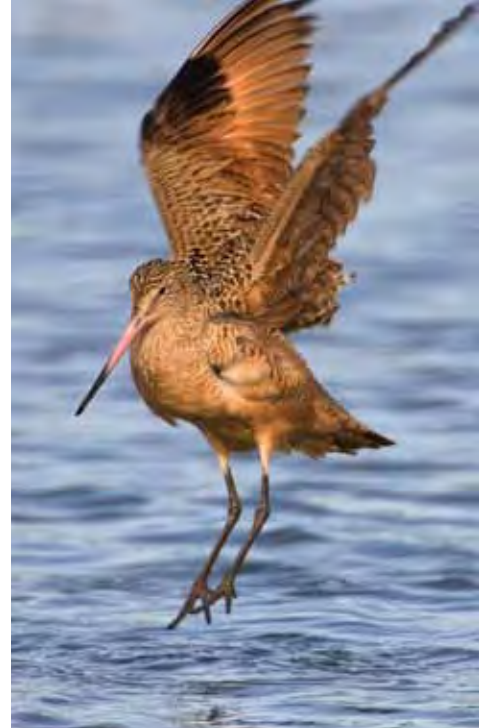
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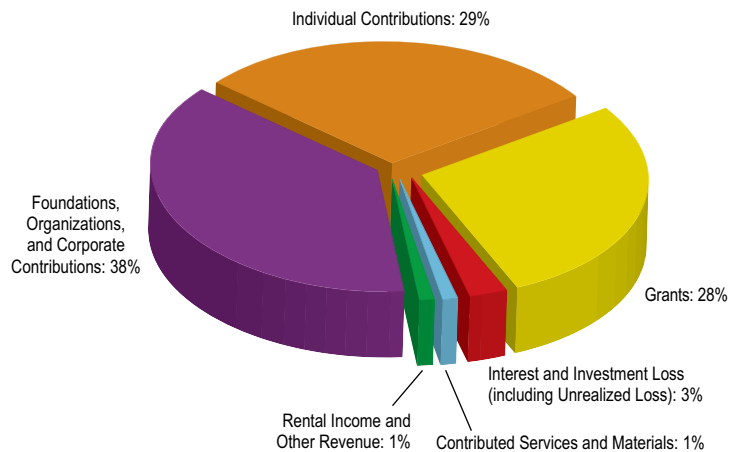


Least Grebe: Alan D. Wilson

2009 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

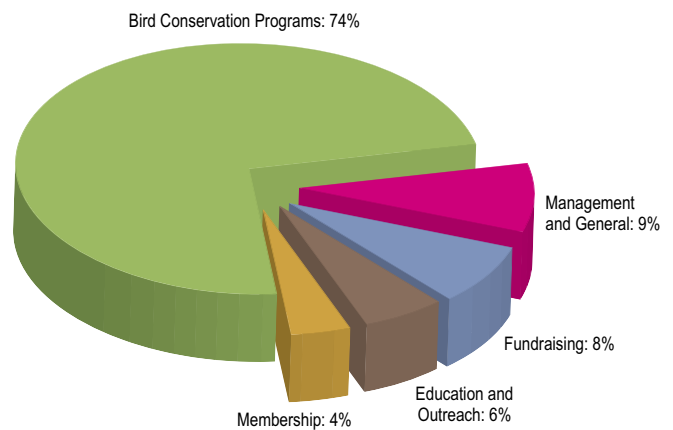
ANNUAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Foundation, Organization, and Corporate Contributions	\$ 2,388,109
Individual Contributions	\$ 1,857,259
Grants	\$ 1,741,817
Contributed Services and Materials	\$ 43,295
Rental Income	\$ 17,749
Other Revenue	\$ 13,851
Interest and Investment Income	\$ 200,978
Total Annual Support and Revenue	\$ 6,263,058



ANNUAL EXPENSES

Program	
Bird Conservation Programs	\$ 4,369,217
Education and Outreach	\$ 323,278
Membership	\$ 231,536
Total Program Services	\$ 4,924,031
Supporting Services	
Management and General	\$ 531,656
Fund raising	\$ 495,295
Total Supporting Services	\$ 1,026,951
Total Annual Expenses	\$ 5,950,982
Net Assets at December 31, 2009	\$ 3,724,012



Percentage figures on these charts are rounded to the nearest whole number



"Based on the most recent financial information available...we are proud to announce American Bird Conservancy has earned our eighth consecutive 4-star rating for its ability to efficiently manage and grow its finances. Only 1% of the charities we rate have received at least eight consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that American Bird Conservancy consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates American Bird Conservancy from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust."

*Charity Navigator
Independent Evaluator of Non-Profit Organizations*



Green Jay: Alan D. Wilson, www.naturespicsonline.com

American Bird Conservancy's financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2009, were audited by the Certified Public Accounting firm of Gelman, Rosenberg, and Freedman. A copy of ABC's complete financial statements can be obtained by contacting American Bird Conservancy, P.O. Box 249, The Plains, VA 20198.

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GRACE DE LAET

Leaving a Legacy for Birds

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) would like to recognize the contributions of Grace de Laet to bird conservation. She was devoted to the environment from an early age, and birds and birding were her passion. Grace originally joined ABC because of the Cats Indoors Campaign and for more than ten years was a staunch supporter of our work. She became a founding member of ABC's Legacy Circle by including ABC in her estate plans.

Sadly, Grace passed away in 2009, but through her generous bequests to the Cats Indoors Campaign and to ABC operations, she continues to play a vital part in our bird conservation efforts. By naming ABC in her will, Grace ensured that our work and hers will go on for generations to come. ABC is deeply grateful to her.

A growing number of our members are joining the Legacy Circle by naming ABC as a beneficiary in their wills, or of their IRAs, insurance policies, or trusts. Our Legacy Circle



Grace de Laet on the deck of her home in Sausalito, CA, 2005. Photo by Joe Watterson

members have made a vital commitment to the future of ABC's mission—safeguarding the rarest species, conserving habitats, and eliminating threats to all birds. We invite you to follow Grace de Laet's example by making an enduring gift to secure the future for birds.

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) is a not-for-profit organization, with principal offices located at 4249 Loudoun Avenue, P.O. Box 249, The Plains, VA, 20198. ABC's tax identification number is 52-1501259.

For more information about ABC's Legacy Circle or Planned Giving, please contact Jack Morrison at 540-253-5780 or jmorrison@abcbirds.org.