

Inside Bird Conservation – April 2016



Report: 10 of the Worst-sited Wind Energy Projects for Birds

Although we support [Bird-Smart wind energy](#), we're concerned that hundreds of thousands of protected birds die each year when they collide with poorly sited wind turbines and associated power lines. Our report names 10 of the worst wind facilities from a bird conservation standpoint—and illustrates the inadequate system currently in place to protect U.S.

birds from poorly planned wind development. [Find out more.](#)



Lawsuit Charges New York Parks with Violating Endangered Species Act

The Piping Plover is listed as "Threatened" in the Atlantic Coast region under the Endangered Species Act. New York State's own Endangered Species Act lists the species as "Endangered." In spite of these designations, colonies of feral cats—a known threat to plovers—are being

accommodated at New York's Jones Beach State Park. We recently took legal action on the Piping Plover's behalf. [About the lawsuit.](#)



Take Action: Help Protect Northern Spotted Owls

Klamath National Forest is home to the rare Northern Spotted Owl. But now, 14 salvage timber sales in California have been granted permits and could impact more than 100 of these threatened birds. We think this project poses an unreasonable risk to the owl's population. [Ask decision-makers to rethink this project.](#)

New Protection for Lewis's Woodpecker Habitat in Oregon

With help from ABC, Columbia Land Trust secured the final 115 acres of a key 418-acre wildlife corridor on Mill Creek Ridge in north-central Oregon. This acquisition protects a stronghold population of Lewis's Woodpecker, one of the highest-priority birds in North America and a national Watch List species. [About this special place.](#)

In Appalachia, Landowners Create New Habitat for Forest Birds

Much of the Appalachian forest is a thick, unbroken carpet of trees. To the untrained eye, it appears healthy and robust. In fact, these densely packed, even-aged trees harbor far less diversity than they could or should; it's one of the reasons for the Golden-winged Warbler's decline. [What we're doing about it with partners across the Appalachia.](#)

ABC Offers Reward for Conviction in Bald Eagle Deaths

American Bird Conservancy is offering a \$5,000 reward for information leading to a conviction in the [Bald Eagle deaths](#) on Maryland's Eastern Shore last month. These funds will add to those already contributed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and four other charities totaling \$25,000. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has determined that the 13 eagles did not die of natural causes, including disease, and is now investigating human causes, such as possible poisoning, for the incident. [More on ABC's reward offer.](#)

Perspective: To Prevent Habitat Loss, Balance Conservation and Development

The Obama administration is making important strides toward creating a better balance between conservation and development on federal lands, which provide habitats for a vast array of birds and other wildlife. Without this balance, federal lands cannot provide healthy habitat for a vast array of birds and other wildlife. [Read more >>](#)

New Oahu Albatross Colony Required a Huge Team Effort

ABC is proud to be a supporter of a wonderful project to create a new Laysan Albatross colony at James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge on Oahu, Hawaii. Last year, 10 chicks fledged from the site. Read about how this year's cohort of 20 chicks is doing in the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* "Ocean Watch" column by Susan Scott. [Read more.](#)

Festival Celebrates Endangered Attwater's Prairie-Chicken

The *Houston Chronicle* reports that this weekend will be the 22nd annual Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Festival at the Attwater Prairie-Chicken National Wildlife Refuge. In 1900, this subspecies of the Greater Prairie-Chicken numbered almost 1 million, but by 1996, only 42 remained. What was once 9 million acres of prairie from Louisiana to Texas was slashed to the remaining 200,000 fragmented acres. "The chickens were on the endangered species list ever since the U.S. has had such a list in 1967," says John Magera, assistant refuge manager. "This is probably the most imperiled bird of North America today, with only 126 left in the wild." [See the story.](#)

Reddish Egret Impacted by Tourists

Reddish Egrets were wiped out in Florida in the 1880s, killed by hunters who sold their colorful feathers to the fashion trade. The species began a comeback in the 1970s but now faces a new threat from visitors who get too close to nesting areas. [Read more.](#)

FAA Moves to Change Airport Landing Lights to Avoid Killing Birds

The Guardian reports that the Federal Aviation Administration aims to stop millions of birds dying each year by [changing static red lights](#), which attract birds, to flashing lights. American Bird Conservancy and conservation and industry partners urged the FAA to conduct a study of tower lighting that led to this change. [Get more details.](#)

Forage Fish off West Coast Get New Protection from Commercial Fishing

New protections for forage fish off the West Coast will help species that help sustain the marine food web. ABC applauds a new federal rule published Monday that prohibits commercial harvest of eight types of forage fish that are a major food source for many seabirds and marine mammals. ABC and other conservation groups supported the rule, hailing it as a preemptive action to protect the marine food web. [Read the story.](#)

Will Maryland Become First State to Ban Bee-killing Pesticides?

While farmers will still be allowed to use neonicotinoids, the popular pesticide will be banned from consumers in a bill passed by the state legislature—if Governor Hogan signs the bill. Conservationists are optimistic that his approval will come at any time. ABC points out that neonics also kill birds, as our research has shown. [More information.](#)

Bird Carnage at Ottawa City Hall Leads to Changes

A thud could be heard each time a birds, about the size of a cardinal, smashed into a window and fell to the pavement below. Events like this one in Ottawa helped to inspire action. Our thanks to Ottawa city hall officials who are taking steps to prevent birds hitting windows. [See the story.](#)

Crowned Eagle Lost to Electrocutation

The Center for Conservation Biology reports that a critically endangered Crowned Eagle that was part of a satellite tracking program has been electrocuted in Argentina. This and other documented electrocutions highlight a continuing need to ensure all power poles and transmission lines are made bird-safe. [Read more.](#)

In Other News:

- The American Bald Eagle ... Live at the National Arboretum: [See the webcam.](#)
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- **OP-ED: The California Condor Returns:** Last month, the most critical milestone yet was reached when it was announced that the birth of condors in the wild outnumbered the deaths of adult birds. [See the good news.](#)
 - **Full Funding for Land and Water Conservation Fund in President's Budget:** Kris Sarri, the Department of Interior's principal deputy assistant secretary for policy, management and budget, and Robert Bonnie, the Department of Agriculture's undersecretary for natural resources and environment, defended the proposal to fully fund the LWCF in a [blog post](#) on Interior's website.
 - **To Feel Healthier, Happier...Try Nature:** Can nature enhance your health? There's a strong case to be made that it can. The idea that getting outdoors—on [national wildlife refuges](#), for example—can improve your state of mind and, with it, your physical well-being isn't exactly new. But there's a large and growing body of [research](#) behind it.
 - **2012 Forest Service Planning Rule Citizen and Government Guides:** The Federal Advisory Committee providing input on implementation of the 2012 National Forest Plan rule has release two useful guides. The [first is for citizens](#) who wish to participate in the planning process, and the second is a guide for [state, local and tribal governments](#).
 - **Florida Forest Service receives National Award for Prescribed Burns:** The Florida Forest Service has received the Wildfire Mitigation Fire Service Leadership award for its record-breaking prescribed burning program. [Read more.](#)
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