



*Bringing back the birds*

*Inside Bird Conservation – July 2017*

## **Alerts: Bird Conservation Legislation Heating Up in 115<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Bills to protect birds from collisions with federal buildings and poisoning by neonicotinoid pesticides have been introduced in the House of Representatives, and several others to conserve migratory birds and Albatrosses and Petrels are expected to be introduced in the House and Senate very soon. **Please contact your Representative and Senators in support of the following bills:**

### **The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act**

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) is a successful matching-grant program for migratory birds that results in crucial progress for birds like the Canada Warbler and to reverse declines of species such as the Cerulean Warbler, Long-billed Curlew, and Red Knot. This month, Sen. Ben Cardin and Reps. Ron Kind and Rob Wittman will introduce legislation to reauthorize the NMBCA in both the House and Senate. [Please ask your elected officials to cosponsor the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act.](#)

### **The Federal Bird-Safe Building Act, H.R. 2542**

Collisions with glass claim the lives of hundreds of millions of birds in the United States each year. Birds that have successfully flown thousands of miles on migration can then die in seconds when they collide with a pane of glass. Luckily, we have bird-friendly design strategies and technology that can make a difference now. Reps. Mike Quigley and Morgan Griffith have introduced the bipartisan Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act to help prevent the deaths of millions of birds by including bird-safe building materials and design features in federal buildings. We anticipate similar legislation to be introduced in the U.S. Senate soon. [Please ask your elected officials to cosponsor the Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act.](#)

### **Saving America's Pollinators Act, H.R. 3040**

Reps. John Conyers and Earl Blumenauer have introduced the Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2017, H.R. 3040, which directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to suspend registration of a toxic group of pesticides called neonicotinoids that are causing serious damage to birds, bees, and aquatic life. ABC and a coalition of conservation organizations, beekeepers, scientists, and business leaders [support this bill](#) to require the EPA to suspend the four most toxic neonicotinoids until a comprehensive study of their effects on wildlife and people is completed. [Please ask your Representative to cosponsor H.R. 3040, and ask your Senator to support introduction of a similar bill in the U.S. Senate.](#)

## **Albatross and Petrels Conservation Act**

The Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) is a multilateral agreement that seeks to conserve albatrosses and petrels by coordinating international activity to mitigate known threats to their populations. The U.S. is a world leader in reducing accidental bycatch, and our participation in the agreement can encourage other nations to make similar progress. Rep. Alan Lowenthal is expected to soon reintroduce the Albatross and Petrels Conservation Act needed to implement ACAP. We anticipate a similar effort in the U.S. Senate. [Please ask your elected officials to cosponsor the Albatross and Petrels Conservation Act.](#)

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## **Preventing Collisions**

### **[Bird Conservation Groups Win Fight Against Great Lakes Wind Project](#)**

ABC and Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) have won their campaign to stop a planned wind turbine in a major bird migration corridor close to the shores of Lake Erie. In response to a lawsuit by ABC and BSBO, the Ohio Air National Guard (ANG) has announced that it has not approved or authorized plans to install a large turbine at its Camp Perry facility in Ottawa County, Ohio, and that it has no plans to do so. As a result, ABC and BSBO filed a [motion](#) today in U.S. District Court to dismiss the lawsuit.

The Camp Perry site would have been the first wind energy development on public land in this ecologically sensitive area. “ABC is delighted that the Ohio Air National Guard has finally decided not to develop a large wind turbine at Camp Perry in one of the world’s largest concentrations of migratory birds and bats,” said Dr. Michael Hutchins, Director of ABC's [Bird-Smart Wind Energy Campaign](#). “This reaffirms the Department of Defense’s record on wildlife conservation, and sends a message to other wind energy developers who have their eyes on the Great Lakes.”

## **Wind Alert for Great Lakes States**

The Great Lakes are home to one of the world’s greatest bird migration routes, but wind developers plan to build hundreds of dangerous turbines either in the Great Lakes or along their shores that could be disastrous for birds. Wind turbines are an essential source of clean energy, but they need to be responsibly located—not placed in the path of countless migratory birds.

If you live in the Great Lakes region, [please send a letter](#) to decision makers in OH, PA, NY, MI, IL, IN, WI, and MN. You can ask your governor and state wildlife officials to protect birds—and keep the Great Lakes and their shorelines free of large-scale wind energy development.

ABC also continues to track and engage on other wind and associated powerline projects that pose needless risks to birds. ABC sent a letter to USFWS on the proposed [“R” Transmission Line project](#) in the Nebraska Sandhills region that threatens the endangered Whooping Crane, and another to the [State of New York](#) regarding another proposed wind development in the Great Lakes region.

## [Wind Energy and Birds FAQ — Part 3: Take Action](#)

From staying informed to rallying others, ABC's Michael Hutchins talks about how readers can support bird-smart wind energy solutions.... [Read more >>](#)

## [Proposed FCC Change Could Weaken Rules for Tower Construction](#)

Members of the [Bird Conservation Alliance](#) (BCA) and national environmental groups have submitted comments stating their opposition to a proposed Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rule that would exempt construction of communication towers from our nation's environmental laws. The [comments](#) reflect the groups' concern over potential negative impacts the rule change could have on birds and on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other bedrock environmental laws.

Bird conservationists are also concerned about changes to recently adopted lighting [guidelines](#) to help reduce the number of birds that die at towers—an estimated 7 million birds every year. The new lighting standards can reduce collisions by as much as 70 percent while also reducing energy costs.

“We are making great progress to reduce risks to migratory birds from outdated lighting on existing towers,” said Steve Holmer, American Bird Conservancy's Vice President of Policy and Director of the BCA. “We appreciate that hundreds of tower operators have already adopted the new standards, and urge the operators of the remaining towers to change their lights to save birds and to save energy.”

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## **Bird Conservation Updates**

### [Review of Sage-Grouse Management Plans Risks Harm to Birds](#)

ABC is concerned by the order from Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke that the Bureau of Land Management review the federal government's Greater Sage-Grouse conservation plans. Sec. Zinke emphasized that the review would focus on potential oil ... [Read More>>](#)

### [Species Maps 2.0 — Using eBird to Understand Bird Distribution](#)

As technology evolves, birders and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology collaborate via eBird to refine species maps for birds around the world.... [Read more >>](#)

### [Restoring Habitat for Minnesota's Golden-winged Warblers](#)

On a quest to restore habitat for Golden-winged Warblers, ABC's Peter Dieser braves winter's cold and summer's mosquitoes in Minnesota's north woods.... [Read more >>](#)

## [Farewell to ABC's George and Rita Fenwick](#)

After founding and leading American Bird Conservancy for nearly 24 years, George Fenwick is stepping down. Here is how we remember him. Thank you, George.... [Read more >>](#)

## [I'iwi at Risk: A Scarlet Bird's Dangerous Migration](#)

As environmental impacts unfold in Hawaii, I'iwis' seasonal migrations turn deadly. (Island Conservation)

## [American Birding Podcast: Bird Conservation in Hawaii with Mike Parr](#)

The newest episode of the American Birding Podcast features Mike Parr, the new president of American Bird Conservancy (ABC), one of the premier bird conservation organizations in the Americas. (The Birding Wire)

## [Delaying Mowing to Conserve Grassland Birds](#)

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department and Audubon Vermont are encouraging landowners to help promote the state's many grassland birds and give them a chance to complete their nesting season simply by altering the times of year that they mow large fields. (The Birding Wire)

## [How beloved pets become invasive predators – an interview with Dr. Peter Marra](#)

Of all the human-caused direct mortality threats to birds, cats take the biggest toll, killing around 2.4 billion birds a year. Dr. Peter P. Marra, a leading ornithologist, is the co-author, with Chris Santella, of the book [Cat Wars: The Devastating Consequences of a Cuddly Killer](#) (Princeton University Press, 2016). The book has been widely reviewed—and fiercely attacked by advocates for free-roaming cats. Grant Sizemore, director of [American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors](#) program, interviews Marra about the book and why addressing the cat problem is such an urgent concern for both bird conservation and public health. (National Geographic Voices Blog)

## [Editorial: Jersey's Tie to the Red Knot](#)

According to NorthJersey.com, “The annual migratory flight of the red knot holds all the trappings of a tale from Greek mythology, except it is real, a late-spring reminder of those parts of our natural world that survive, and in fact thrive, even under trying circumstances. Indeed, the willful determination of the red knot to make its epic, 9,300-mile trek north year after year would not mean as much to any of us if the robin-sized birds did not make their stopover every May along the beaches of the Delaware Bay.” (NorthJersey.com)