



*Bringing back the birds*

Inside Bird Conservation – August 2, 2017

## **State of the Birds Report Finds Farm Bill Benefits Landowners and Birds**

Thirty-seven million. That's the increase in the number of waterfowl in the Prairie Pothole Region over the past quarter-century, thanks to the Farm Bill. The [State of the Birds 2017 report](#), released today by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI), documents the many benefits the Farm Bill—America's single largest source of conservation funding for private lands—has delivered to birds, farmers, and rural communities.

For more than three decades, the Farm Bill has been an effective tool for wildlife conservation, sustaining essential habitat for more than 100 bird species. For farmers, ranchers, and forest owners, the bill provides a safety net that helps keep working lands from being developed. As the 2018 Farm Bill is debated for reauthorization in Congress, the report calls attention to the benefits of investing in conservation on private lands, which make up nearly 70 percent of the land area in the contiguous United States.

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## **Bill Introduced to Boost Migratory Bird Conservation**

In good news for migratory birds, Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) have introduced a bipartisan bill, S. 1537, to reauthorize the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), one of the nation's most important bird conservation laws. Rep. Robert Wittman (R-VA) and Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) have introduced H.R. 3598, companion legislation in the House of Representatives. Now called ... [Read More>>](#)

### **Senator Portman Reaches Across Aisle on Important Bird Bill**

(Outdoor News - Steve Pollick) Ohio Senator Rob Portman has reached across the political aisle to Maryland Senator Ben Cardin to introduce a bill into Congress to reauthorize the Neotropical Migratory Bird Act. Ohio Senator Rob Portman, a Republican, has reached across the political aisle to Maryland Senator Ben Cardin, a Democrat, to introduce a bill into Congress to reauthorize the conservation-crucial Neotropical Migratory Bird Act.

### **Migratory Birds to Benefit from Nearly \$18 Million in Funding**

The sight of a migrating songbird in a backyard or shorebird along a beach brings joy to millions of Americans each year. Our national passion for birdwatching also puts billions of dollars into the economy through our purchases of bird food, binoculars and travel to see our favorite birds. Yet many of the birds we love are in trouble from shrinking habitats or threats such as invasive species. Thanks

to the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), however, our migrating birds will benefit to the tune of \$18 million in federal and matching funds. [Click here](#) for a full list of approved projects.

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## **Legislation Introduced to Save America's Pollinators from Pesticide Poisoning**

Toxic neonicotinoid pesticides are found in the foods we eat, the pest-control sprays we use in our gardens, and the flea-control products we put on our pets. Yet, they are lethal to birds, as well as the bees we rely on to pollinate our crops. ABC, Friends of the Earth, and other partners hosted a Congressional briefing to discuss neonicotinoid insecticides' devastating impacts on wildlife and people. Growing scientific evidence points to neonics as a leading cause of drastic pollinator population decline. [Click here to watch a video](#) of the congressional briefing.

Representatives John Conyers and Earl Blumenauer have introduced the Saving America's Pollinators Act, H.R. 3040, which would require the EPA to suspend registration of neonicotinoids -- pesticides found in products ranging from garden sprays to pet flea treatments. Please contact your Representative and ask him/her to cosponsor the bill. Act now: <https://abcbirds.org/action/petition-neonics>.

### **Neonics Also Threaten Clean Water and Aquatic Invertebrates**

[ABC submitted comments](#) to EPA on the preliminary aquatic risk assessment for the registration review of the neonic imidacloprid. The assessment found extreme harm to the full range of aquatic insects, with resulting deleterious effects on their predators including fish, birds, bats, and amphibians. The findings are consistent with those of independent researchers and with Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency, which is proposing to phase-out all the agricultural and a majority of other outdoor uses of imidacloprid over three to five years. ABC is urging EPA to take similar steps.

### **Deadly Pesticide May Yet Be Outlawed**

We applaud the U.S. Senators who have introduced a bill to ban chlorpyrifos, a widely used pesticide that has been killing birds and poisoning the environment for the past half-century: Tom Udall (D-NM), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Kamala Harris (D-CA), and Edward ... [Read More>>](#)

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## **Keep the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge Intact**

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) is very concerned that portions of a border wall might be built through the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. This week, news outlets reported that federal officials and private contractors have been surveying portions of the ... [Read More>>](#)

## **Changes to Whooping Crane Reintroduction Program Raise Concern**

The United States Geological Survey is planning to close the Whooping Crane captive breeding program at Patuxent Research Refuge. We're concerned by the news and hoping for no long-term

adverse effects on this endangered species. [Here's a statement](#) from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries page. For more about the amazing recovery of the Whooping Crane, check out this blog post from Environmental Defense Fund: [From 15 birds to flagship status: An American conservation movement takes flight.](#)

## [Endangered Species Act is itself in danger](#)

(Op-ed by ABC's Steve Holmer) Bald Eagle. Peregrine Falcon. California Condor. These are some of the many American birds brought back from the brink by the Endangered Species Act (ESA) since it was adopted in 1973. We have decades' worth of data that the ESA does what it's supposed to do: Prevent extinctions.

## **Huge Coalition Endorses Protecting the Endangered Species Act**

Four hundred and twenty-five national, state, and local conservation groups has **sent a letter** to the Senate and House leadership demonstrating their overwhelming support for the Endangered Species Act. Referencing the "unprecedented threat" faced by the Act in Congress, the groups strongly opposed any weakening of the Act under the guise of efforts to "modernize" or "reform" the Act. The groups—at least one from each of the 50 states—indicated that any "efforts to rewrite this law would prove disastrous for imperiled wildlife and should be strongly opposed." The release and letter are here: <http://www.endangered.org/overwhelming-support-for-the-endangered-species-act/>

## **Black Tern in Steep Decline**

[Klamath Bird Observatory](#) in Oregon has been tracking the population of Black Tern. The current population is estimated to be about one-third of its historical size, and KBO's research shows an alarming 8% loss annually at Agency and Upper Klamath Lakes. <http://callnote.klamathbird.org/.../black-tern-population-de.../>

## **Birds and Water in the Western U.S.**

Audubon's new report, [Water and Birds in the Arid West: Habitats in Decline](#), examines the critical habitats that birds like the American Avocet and the Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo rely on. By clarifying the relationships among birds, water, and climate change in the region, the report offers recommendations for a sustainable water future for birds and people in the American West. (The Birding Wire)

## **Public Lands Spur Local Economies**

Joint Economic Committee Democrats has released state [fact sheets](#) on the economic impact of public lands on their neighboring communities. Our nation's public lands are a cherished aspect of American heritage and a key contributor to local economies. The fact sheets show that in 2016, the 331 million people who visited national parks spent an estimated \$18.4 billion in local gateway communities, supported 318,000 jobs, and added \$34.9 billion in economic output to the national economy. Protected public lands also boost local economies by increasing income per person.

“America’s public lands are not only a part of our heritage that we cherish passing onto our children and grandchildren, but they are also the backbone of a thriving outdoor recreation economy,” said U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich, Ranking Member of the Joint Economic Committee. “National monuments, national parks, and other public lands draw locals and visitors alike to go outdoors and represent billions of dollars in economic output and millions of American jobs—especially in rural areas.” Click [here](#) to find your state’s fact sheet.

### **Bald Eagle Threat: Lead Ammo Left Behind By Hunters**

“Bald eagles have made a remarkable recovery across the United States since the pesticide DDT was banned 45 years ago, but the majestic birds are still dying from another environmental poison: lead from bullets and shotgun pellets in wildlife carcasses left behind by hunters.” [Associated Press]

### **Scientists Rediscover Venezuelan Bird Not Seen in 60 Years**

An international team of researchers has solved one of South America's great bird mysteries. Working deep in the mountainous forests of western Venezuela, they have rediscovered the Táchira Antpitta, a plump brown bird species not seen since it was ... [Read More>>](#)