



Bringing back the birds

Inside Bird Conservation – October 2017

American Bird Conservancy Asks California to Ban Neonic Use on Public Lands

On behalf of American Bird Conservancy (ABC), the nonprofit environmental law organization Earthjustice has petitioned the California Fish and Game Commission to adopt a [statewide prohibition on the use of neonicotinoid pesticides](#) on wildlife habitat under its jurisdiction. “We need to be sure that these lands remain safe havens for birds and other wildlife,” said Cynthia Palmer, ABC’s Director of Pesticides Science and Regulation.

Neonics are a relatively new class of chemicals with the potential to derail California’s efforts to safeguard its unique ecosystems. Neonics are deadly to pollinators and other wildlife, including birds. For example, a single seed coated with these pesticides is enough to kill a songbird, and exposure to just one-tenth of a coated seed per day during the egg-laying season is enough to impair reproduction. Even tiny doses can cause birds to lose coordination and the ability to fly. Neonics are also lethal to many of the terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates — including butterflies, bees, earthworms, and mayflies — that are critical food sources for birds and other wildlife.

TAKE ACTION: <https://abcbirds.org/action/petition-neonics>

NRDC Challenges Neonic Pesticide Registrations for Violating ESA

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has asked a federal court to vacate the registrations of nearly one hundred products containing three widely-used neonics—acetamiprid, dinotefuran, and imidacloprid—until the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency complies with its legal obligations under the Endangered Species Act. Bees, butterflies, birds and insects across the nation are being harmed by neonic pesticides that the EPA allowed on the market unlawfully.

“EPA ignored endangered bees, butterflies, and birds when it approved the widespread use of neonics. Massive pollinator die-offs across the country show that these pesticides cause serious harm to wildlife. It’s time for EPA to do its job and make sure our most vulnerable species are protected from the products it approves,” said Rebecca Riley, a senior attorney with NRDC.

Scientists Say No Room for Doubt, Neonics Killing Birds and Bees

A group of international scientists recently met in Ottawa to try to convince Canadian parliamentarians there is no longer any doubt that common agricultural pesticides are proving toxic to ordinary honey-bees. In fact, says Jean-Marc Bonmatin of the French National Centre for Scientific Research, neonicotinoid pesticides kill a lot more than just bees, posing a deadly risk to frogs, common birds, fish, and earthworms. The scientists represent a task force on pesticides within the

International Union for Conservation of Nature, which in 2015 released a comprehensive review of more than 1,100 peer-reviewed research studies on neonicotinoids.

Bill Would Make New Federal Buildings Bird-Friendly

The U.S. Senate will have an opportunity to act to make all new federal buildings safer for birds. This week, Sen. Cory A. Booker (D-NJ) introduced the Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act (S. 1920) — the first time such a bill has been introduced in the Senate. ABC thanks Sen. Booker and Reps. Quigley and Griffith for encouraging the federal government to lead by example in addressing one of the biggest human-caused threats to birds. As many as a billion birds a year are killed in the United States when they collide with glass on all kinds of structures, from skyscrapers and office buildings to homes and bus shelters.

Many existing federal buildings already feature bird-friendly design. Both the House and Senate versions of the bill call for the General Services Administration to require new federal buildings to incorporate bird-safe building materials and design features. “While this legislation is limited to federal buildings, it’s a very good start that could lead to more widespread applications of bird-friendly designs elsewhere,” said Dr. Christine Sheppard, Director of ABC’s Glass Collisions Program.

TAKE ACTION: <https://abcbirds.org/action/petition-bird-safe-buildings>

Metal Architecture and Bird Conservation?

In the Constructive Insights column in the June 2017 issue of Metal Architecture magazine, Alan Scott, FAIA, described the huge toll taken every year on birds in the U.S. by collisions with glass on buildings. This was followed by a guest column in the September issue by ABC’s Dr. Christine Sheppard, highlighting the many ways in which metal products like grilles, screens, and louvers can make glass bird friendly.

Will Des Moines' glass skyscrapers be a death trap for birds?

Plan to Shrink National Monuments Jeopardizes Habitat for Threatened Birds

The Interior Department review of National Monument designations has produced recommendations that, if enacted, would reduce protection of important habitat for species listed under the Endangered Species Act. “The Northern Spotted Owl is one of the big losers in this decision,” said Steve Holmer, Vice President of Policy for American Bird Conservancy. “Reducing the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument that protects owl habitat in Oregon and California risks further reducing the population of this threatened species.”

Greater Sage-Grouse Need Better Protections, Not More Development

The Trump administration has plans to revise or abandon key grouse conservation measures, including the existing federal conservation plans, throwing this issue into an urgent crisis. The plans represent important progress for conservation, and were also the basis for the not warranted for ESA

listing finding in 2015. Much of the progress made over the past five years is in jeopardy, and the future of grouse and many other sagebrush ecosystem species is uncertain.

TAKE ACTION: <https://abcbirds.org/action/petition-sage-grouse>

The Department has announced a public comment period to amend the 98 resource management plans across the region. ABC will be utilizing this public process to mobilize public support in favor of strong grouse conservation plans. [ABC initiated an organizational sign on letter](#) to the administration, highlighting the importance of the sage grouse plans.

[Beloved and Deadly, Cats Are the 'Lion in the Living Room'](#)

What is it about cats? They purr and cuddle on our laps. But they also hunt birds and small mammals to extinction. The fascinating history of these super-predators—from prehistoric times to the age of Instagram—comes to life in Abigail Tucker's 2016 book *The Lion in the Living Room*. She recently sat down with us to talk about the enigmatic—and deadly—nature of cats.

[Hawaii Updates Rules to Address Feral Cats in Boat Harbors](#)

The Wildlife Society reports the Hawaii Board of Land and Natural Resources approved a rule change that would authorize state officials to seize feral cats found within boat harbors or facilities. (Birding Wire)

[Cats kill more than one million birds per day in Australia](#)

[The Complicated Politics of L.A.'s Feral Cats](#)

[Post-Hurricane Report: How Are the Birds?](#)

People continue to suffer across the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, and the southern United States as the impacts of recent hurricanes linger. At American Bird Conservancy, our hearts go out to everyone affected by these storms and we provide updates on affected birds.

[High in the Andes, Turf Mining Threatens Rare Birds' Habitat](#)

Of the more than 10,000 species of birds on Earth, less than a quarter of one percent are considered critically endangered. These species are often restricted to unique and rare habitats that are susceptible to human disturbance. One such species, the White-bellied Cinclodes, makes its home high in the Peruvian... [Read more >>](#)

[No good news for eastern black rails in North Carolina and Georgia](#)

The eastern black rail is listed as endangered in six states and is currently under review for federal listing. In 2016, The Center for Conservation Biology worked with many partners to produce a status

assessment in support of the federal process. Among other things, this assessment identified gaps in survey coverage. (The Center for Conservation Biology)