



*Bringing back the birds*

*Inside Bird Conservation – November 2017*

## **Tools to Protect Birds: [Cats Indoors Brochures](#) and [Petition Drive](#)**

Keeping cats indoors is better for cats and saves the lives of birds and other wildlife that might otherwise fall victim to needless predation. You can help spread this life-saving message by distributing [Cats Indoors brochures](#) and endorsing the [Cats Indoors petition](#). Help spread the word about the importance of keeping pet cats indoors. Learn more and [explore our tools](#).

[Click here to sign up for regular Cats Indoors Updates.](#)

## **Many State Legislatures Considering Cat-Related Bills**

Around the nation, numerous cat-related bills, good and bad, were introduced in 2017, and some have been enacted into law. Check the list below to see if your state is among them. If you see something missing, or if you are interested in legislation to protect birds in your state, please [let us know!](#)

**Connecticut:** [SB 832](#) - Did Not Pass - Prohibit the feeding or attracting of any potentially dangerous animal

**Delaware:** [HB 235](#) - Did Not Pass - Authorize and encourage trap, neuter, release for feral cats

**Hawaii:** [HB 122](#) - Did Not Pass - Authorize public funding of trap, neuter, release for feral cats

**Hawaii:** [SB 1262](#) - Did Not Pass - Establish a task force to consider feral cat issues

**Illinois:** [SB 641](#) - Passed - Authorize public funding of trap, neuter, release for feral cats

**Nevada:** [SB 411](#) - Passed - Exempt the release of a sterilized and vaccinated feral cat from being considered abandoned

**New Jersey:** [AR 237](#) - Passed - Encourage all animal shelters to become "no kill" by 2025

**New Jersey:** [S 1640](#) - Passed - Exempt homeless cats from the same care and responsibility afforded to homeless dogs

**New York:** [S 6182](#) - Did Not Pass - Authorize the release of sterilized feral cats

**Virginia:**     [SB 799](#) - Did Not Pass - Authorize the public funding of trap, neuter, release for feral cats

**Virginia:**     [SJ 234](#) - Did Not Pass - Require the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to study spay-neuter programs in the state.

[Click here](#) for additional information about legislation to keep cats indoors and protect birds.

## **Cat Media Clips**

### **[Protect Wildlife -- Keep Your Cats Indoors](#)**

It's a no-brainer that cats who are kept indoors are safe from the many dangers that free-roaming cats face every time they are outside—infectious and deadly diseases, speeding cars, loose dogs, and cruel people, to name a few. Some cats are stolen by dogfighters to be used as “bait.” But keeping cats indoors has another safety side effect—it makes life easier and safer for wildlife, too.

*Scientific American*

Dr. Peter Marra, author of *Cat Wars*, spoke with Rene Ebersole about the [consequences of continuing to allow cats outdoors](#) and what we can do to effect change.

*Washington Post*

Veterinarian Dr. Michael Fox and Dr. Peter Marra commented on the [perceived debate regarding cat-caused bird mortality in the United States](#).

### **Population Impacts of Free-Ranging Domestic Cats on Mainland Vertebrates**

Domestic cats have contributed to at least 63 vertebrate extinctions, pose a major hazard to threatened vertebrates worldwide, and transmit multiple zoonotic diseases. This is the finding of researchers Dr. Scott Loss and Dr. Pete Marra who have [synthesized the available evidence](#) of the negative effects of cats on mainland vertebrates. In addition to predation, cats affect vertebrate populations through disease and fear-related effects. Policy discussions should shift from requiring “proof of impact” to a precautionary approach that emphasizes evidence-driven management to reduce further impacts from outdoor cats.

---

### **[Tell Congress to Protect Birds by Banning Chlorpyrifos](#)**

A dangerous neurotoxic pesticide,—chlorpyrifos,—has been killing birds and poisoning children and farmworkers for the past half-century. Related to sarin nerve gas, this chemical has been linked to autism and other developmental disorders. Yet it is found at dangerous levels in drinking water and common foods like strawberries, wheat, and apples.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was on course to ban chlorpyrifos until March of 2017, when EPA's new administrator extended its registration for another five years—reversing the recommendation of the agency's own scientists. There is no place for this neurotoxin in our nation's food supply.

[Please act now](#) to protect the health of America's families, birds, and wildlife by urging Congress to ban chlorpyrifos.

## [Chlorpyrifos: Why It's Time to Ban This Dangerous Chemical](#)

Editor's note: For 50 years the insecticide chlorpyrifos has been posing a threat to human health and wildlife, including birds. A bill recently introduced in Congress called the "Protect Children, Farmers & Farmworkers from Nerve Agent Pesticides Act" would ban this dangerous chemical. We asked Cynthia Palmer, ABC's Director of... [Read more >>](#)

## **Study Finds Drastic 75 Percent Decline of Aerial Insects**

A study finding that [flying insects of have declined by 75 percent](#) over the past three decades that may help explain declines of aerial insectivorous birds including swallows, swifts, nightjars, and flycatchers. ABC is investigating this decline and potential links to neonicotinoid pesticide use.

---

## [Numerous Inadequacies Found in Environmental Assessment for Proposed Icebreaker Wind Energy Project](#)

Bird conservation groups are challenging an industry-supported environmental assessment of Lake Erie's first offshore wind project, citing numerous inadequacies in both science and process. Ohio's Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) and American Bird Conservancy (ABC) reject the assessment's claim that the planned Icebreaker wind energy facility would have little to no impact on birds and bats, citing the critical importance of Lake Erie to migratory birds such as the endangered Kirtland's Warbler.

"Based on our exhaustive review of the EA, we see no evidence to support the claim that the project poses little to no risk to birds and bats," said Kimberly Kaufman, BSBO's Executive Director. "In fact, having conducted more than 30 years of migratory bird research along Lake Erie, we believe the six-turbine Icebreaker project would pose a significant threat to wildlife, including the endangered Kirtland's Warbler that migrates across Lake Erie — not to mention substantially increased impacts that would be triggered by the planned expansion of the project to more than 1,000 turbines." ... [Read More>>](#)

## [Endangered Seabirds Killed by Power Line Collisions in Kauai](#)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released an analysis that estimates 1,800 endangered seabirds on Kauai are killed by collisions with power lines every year. The study forecasts that at the present death rate, Kauai's Shearwater and Hawaiian Petrel populations will be wiped out in about 30 years unless more preventive measures are adopted. The seabirds hit the power lines at night when they're flying back to their nesting grounds high in the mountains.

"We always knew that there was a problem but this is really the first time that we've seen how significant and serious the problem is," said Brett Hartl of the Center for Biological Diversity. "The

power lines are basically invisible. These birds can fly 30 miles an hour or more. When they hit those lines they either are killed or they get really injured, they break their wings."

The Kauai Island Utility Cooperative has taken steps to curb the kills. It removed some power lines and realigned others, and installed lasers on some power poles that the birds can see and avoid.

### **9/11 Tribute in Light Reveals How City Lights Affect Migration**

A new study provides the most compelling evidence yet that artificial lights cause radical changes in the behavior of birds migrating at night. Using radar data and observations during the Tribute in Light in New York City, researchers from the University of Oxford, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and New York City Audubon found that densities of birds were up to 150 times higher over lower Manhattan when the tribute was illuminated. The birds dissipated when the lights were turned off. [Read more.](#)

### **[Songbird Saver](#): Test New Tool to Help Prevent Birds from Colliding into Towers**

An estimated seven million birds die each year in North America by colliding with broadcast and cell towers. These birds, primarily night-flying songbirds on migration, are either attracted to or disoriented by the lighting systems, especially when night skies are overcast or foggy. Now, a website developer who loves birds has [created a new web page](#) to make it easy to help implement a solution. With Stan Weigman's Songbird Saver, you can enter your zip code to find tall towers near you, then send a request to operators asking them to turn off steady-burning red lights. This simple change is known to reduce bird mortality by about 70 percent.

---

### **Bill Threatens Habitat of Marbled Murrelet and Northern Spotted Owl**

H.R. 2936, which has passed the U.S. House of Representatives, directly targets Northern Spotted Owl habitat and would roll back bedrock environmental laws. ABC worked with conservation groups in the Pacific Northwest on a letter opposing the bill: <https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/S-1731-hr2936-NW-letter.pdf> and is now encouraging Senators to oppose similar legislation, S. 1731.

**Take Action:** <https://abcbirds.org/action/petition-northern-spotted-owl>.

### **[Sage Grouse Conservation At Risk](#)**

"Two Western governors on Tuesday warned the Trump administration against making big changes in a plan to protect a ground-dwelling bird across the West, saying it would send a message to states not to bother working together to save other imperiled species." (Associated Press)

### **[Lead Poisoning in Pennsylvania Bald Eagles on the Rise](#)**

An increasing number of bald eagles have been admitted to wildlife-rehabilitation centers across Pennsylvania exhibiting signs of illness such as weakness, lethargy, emaciation, labored respiration and drooping wings. Blood tests often reveal that the eagles are suffering from lead toxicity. [The PA Game Commission](#) is urging hunters to reduce the potential contact between eagles and lead by

covering deer carcasses and using non-toxic ammunition, and hunters indicate that they are willing to help (Birding Wire).

**[Audubon Society Applauds Introduction of RCPP Improvement Act](#)**

David O'Neill, Audubon's chief conservation officer, this week praised the introduction of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program Improvement Act by Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA). (Birding Wire)