



Inside Bird Conservation – July 2018

[Happy Cats, Healthy Birds Campaign Launched](#)

With baby bird season well underway, it's an important time to limit pet cats' access to vulnerable bird species. In an effort to spread the word, we've launching our Happy Cats, Healthy Birds Campaign. By keeping pet cats safely contained, cat owners make an important choice to protect not only birds but cats and people also.

[Check out the new campaign webpage](#), featuring resources and solutions for responsible cat ownership, and join American Bird Conservancy in supporting simple solutions to keep cats safely contained!



['Life is Good in a Catio'](#): Birds and other wildlife benefit when cats are kept safely contained in places like "catios." Because an indoor cat doesn't need to be a bored cat! [Read more >>](#)

[Meet Louie, A Happy Indoor Cat \(Part 2\)](#): As part of ABC's "Happy Cats, Healthy Birds Campaign," which runs through August, we sat down with Christiana Viscusi to discuss responsible cat ownership. Her cat Louie, an Instagram star and our Cats Indoors Feline Ambassador, stays safely indoors and only goes outside on a leash, in a backpack, or in a stroller.... [Read more >>](#)

If you've already taken our [Cats Indoor Pledge](#), here are more ways you can help:

[Learn more about ABC's Cats Indoors program](#) and the work we do to protect cats and birds.

Keep up to date on our efforts by signing up for our [Cats Indoors eNewsletter](#).

Download or purchase bulk quantities of our [Solutions for Pet Cats handout](#).

Take Action: Support Humane Pet Ordinances to Protect Birds & Cats

Public officials can curb the staggering toll on birds by passing ordinances that restrict cat roaming and promote responsible pet ownership. But the vast majority of our local governments have yet to pass even rudimentary laws, allowing cats to wreak havoc on vulnerable birds. It's time we change that by asking elected officials to pass humane laws that reduce bird deaths by prohibiting cat abandonment, strengthening sterilization efforts, and encouraging safe alternatives to unrestricted roaming. **Please ask elected officials in your county and municipality to keep birds safe from free-roaming cats by [passing laws that encourage safe pet ownership](#).**

Free-Roaming Cats Spread Toxoplasmosis, Risking Human Health and Wildlife Too

A new study linking cats, toxoplasmosis, and human brain function has become a [widely covered news story](#). It provides a new perspective on the impact of tens of millions of free-roaming in the United States. “We hope this interest in toxoplasmosis will encourage decision-makers to take another look at pet ordinances — and compel more cat owners to keep their pets safely contained,” said ABC's Steve Holmer, Vice President of Policy.

The parasite that causes toxoplasmosis, *Toxoplasma gondii*, depends on cats to complete its life-cycle and is spread through cat feces. “While cats make beloved pets, cats left outdoors are decimating wildlife, with [more than 2 billion birds](#) killed by cats each year in the United States alone,” said Holmer. “As recent news shows, there is substantial [scientific documentation on the impacts](#) free-roaming cats can have on humans, too.” Other recent news reports focus on the threat posed by [toxoplasmosis to Endangered monk seals](#).

Pesticides

Retailer Announces Phase Out of Neonics on Garden Plants – More Needed

A coalition of over 100 organizations led by Friends of the Earth is urging leading food retailers to stop selling food grown with neonics, chlorpyrifos, glyphosate, and other toxic pesticides to protect the environment and human health. [The letter](#) is being delivered to Kroger and 24 other top food retailers. Kroger has announced a new policy to phase out neonics on all of the garden plants it sells. You can view the policy [here](#). This is a good step in the right direction, but groups are asking Kroger to go further and commit to not sell food grown with these and other toxic pesticides.

Costco Releases New Policy to Limit Toxic Pesticides to Protect Pollinators

Costco has updated the breadth of its 2016 pollinator [policy](#) to encourage its suppliers of fruits, vegetables, and garden plants to phase out the use of chlorpyrifos and neonicotinoids. This announcement follows a multi-year [campaign](#) led by Friends of the Earth and [allies](#) urging Costco and other leading food retailers to commit to phase out toxic pesticides and increase domestically produced organic offerings.

“Given the failure of our federal government to regulate the rampant use of toxic pesticides, we are encouraged by the steps Costco is taking to reduce the use of toxic pesticides in its supply chain and increase organic offerings to protect our environment, public health and pollinators,” said Tiffany Finck-Haynes, senior food futures campaigner at Friends of the Earth.

Suit Filed to Rid Rat Poisons in California

RATS has filed a lawsuit in Alameda County Superior Court asking the court to require the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to adequately review the dangerous rat poisons it registers every year, and to consider all of the science and data about impacts on wildlife. Despite the fact that the DPR removed second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides from consumer shelves in 2014, there has been *no decrease in the number of wildlife deaths* since that time, and new studies published in 2018 show that 70 percent of Northern Spotted Owls are testing *positive for rat poison*.

Updates from The Birding Wire:

Birds Eat 500 Million Tons of Insects Annually

A team of scientists has calculated that worldwide, birds consume billions of potentially harmful insects that conservatively weigh about ½ billion tons! The scientists highlight the ecological and economic benefits these insect-eating birds provide, suppressing potentially harmful insect pests on a global scale, especially in forested areas.

Duck Stamp Dollars Protect Habitat for More than Waterfowl

All birders should buy an annual Duck Stamp for \$25; in turn, enlightened conservationists find and purchase the highest quality habitats in the country for waterfowl and all birds and other wildlife. In most cases, the protected habitat is open to the public as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. (Birding Wire)

First Private Reserve Benefits Bicknell's Thrushes in the Dominican Republic

Biologists from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies used a computer model to identify prime habitat characteristics of female Bicknell's Thrushes on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, where 90 percent of the total population winters. Model results were used to help identify, purchase and create the 1,000-acre private reserve in the Dominican Republic (*Reserva Privada Zorzal*), supported by American Bird Conservancy, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), the Global Environment Facility, and others. Visit the reserve's website: <http://zorzalcaao.com/>