



AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY

CONSERVATION IMPACT SCORECARD 2023

This American Bird Conservancy (ABC) Conservation Impact Scorecard provides an “at-a-glance” summary of ABC’s cumulative conservation actions and outcomes. It provides conservation metrics in three sections according to the main components of ABC’s strategic bird conservation framework. (See the right-hand column on this page, and the pyramid-shaped graphic on the reverse, for more information.)

Not all programs lend themselves easily to quantitative scoring, and we believe that it is important that we not allow ease of measurability to drive priority-setting away from important but less easily counted actions (such as training, capacity-building, and sustainability). Nevertheless, this document does provide data on those ABC program outcomes that are most easily quantified.

Other critical aspects of our work, such as commitment to our mission, our integrity, and our dedication, will likely never be fully measurable in quantitative terms, but we hope that these qualities shine through from these pages.

Working in partnership is the bedrock of ABC’s organizational philosophy, and ABC is one of multiple partners engaged in almost all of the activities outlined here. Listed outcomes and actions in this scorecard are those in which ABC played a leading or significant role in the particular accomplishment. We are extremely grateful to all the donors and partners we have worked with over the past 29 years and want to acknowledge that ABC’s accomplishments would not be possible without the collective efforts of these groups. A full list of partners and supporters is included in our current online Annual (or Impact) Report, which can be found at: abcbirds.org/annual-reports.

Summary of the Status of Birds and Bird Conservation in the Americas, by ABC Framework Component

1. PREVENTING BIRD EXTINCTIONS

There have been 15 bird extinctions in the Americas and U.S. Pacific Territories since 1968 (most in Hawai’i). Today, the majority of endangered birds outside the U.S. have at least some populations in protected areas, but significant gaps remain, and only 18% of the most threatened species can be considered effectively protected from extinction at present. In the U.S., more endangered birds are increasing than are declining, but Hawaiian species in particular need much more recovery support.

2. REVERSING BIRD POPULATION DECLINES

While waterfowl and raptor populations have responded positively to conservation action, most other groups of birds are still showing significant long-term declines, and a substantial increase in resources is needed to help these species follow waterfowl and raptors back to robust population levels. Many effective habitat conservation projects are demonstrating that this can be done, and some bird groups (such as grassland birds) are showing recent signs of positive response as a result.

3. REDUCING THREATS TO ALL BIRDS

Despite widespread concern from the public, substantial challenges remain in reducing and mitigating many of the most significant sources of bird mortality. Changes in lighting on communication towers and the marking of electrical lines to stop bird collisions are just two great examples of what can be done, but overall, bird concerns are still under-valued, and the bird community must unite to help encourage and incentivize positive change.



TOP: White-throated Sparrow by
Paul Reeves Photography, Shutterstock.
RIGHT: Golden-winged Warbler by Joshua Galicki.





STATUS OF BIRDS

According to the IUCN Red List, there have been 15 bird species extinctions in the Americas and U.S. Pacific Territories since 1968, and 5 more bird species have been declared extinct in the wild but still survive in captivity. BirdLife International scientists contributing to the Red List believe that an additional **18 bird extinctions have been averted by conservation intervention** since 1994.

In 2023, an ABC report documented that

63 BIRD SPECIES LISTED UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA) IN THE U.S. WERE STABLE OR INCREASING,

32 were declining, two were of uncertain status, four went extinct after listing, and another 18 were already extinct before or at the time of their listing (most of these being Hawaiian species already close to extinction in 1973 when the Act was passed). Since then, 17 bird populations have been delisted due to successful recovery efforts, including the Kirtland's Warbler and Black-capped Vireo.

In the Americas and U.S. Pacific Territories, there are currently 239 Endangered (EN) and Critically Endangered (CR) bird species on the IUCN Red List.

Habitat loss is considered the principal threat for 168 of these. The remaining 71 species are primarily threatened by other factors, such as invasive species.

In 2023, ABC helped to create a new reserve for the Endangered Cundinimarca Antpitta southeast of Bogotá, Colombia.



AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY RESPONSE

CONSERVATION OUTCOMES



ABC prioritizes our work to prevent extinctions by identifying the species at greatest risk, based on the IUCN Red List and the U.S. Endangered Species Act list. We especially prioritize Endangered or Critically Endangered species that are confined to a single site.

Of the 168 EN and CR birds primarily threatened by habitat loss, ABC-supported projects (such as bird reserves) currently provide **protected habitat for 82 species** (49%). ABC currently works on 23 of the species threatened primarily by invasive species or other factors – mostly seabirds and Hawaiian birds.

Of the 18 bird species extinctions considered to have been averted since 1994 in the Americas, ABC and partners have significantly contributed to preventing six. While surviving, these species require ongoing conservation action:

- ALAGOAS ANTWRN
- JUNIN GREBE
- LEAR'S MACAW
- MILLERBIRD ►
- PALE-HEADED BRUSHFINCH
- YELLOW-EARED PARROT



ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

More than **2,982 bird species** have been recorded in ABC-supported reserves (68% of all bird species found in the Americas).

In 2023, ABC supported the acquisition of 4,000 acres of habitat for the Critically Endangered Gorgeted Puffleg; the land is now under conservation agreements with local communities in Colombia's western Andes.

Bolivia's Critically Endangered Red-fronted Macaw benefited from an ABC-supported conservation agreement with local communities to protect 35,975 acres of foraging habitat within the Pasorapa Integrated Management Area.

On Molokai, Hawai'i, a predator-proof fence is nearing completion at an elevation well above projected sea-level rise. The enclosure, which is being restored with native plants, will provide habitat for an entire community of seabirds.

With partners, ABC has supported the acquisition/ protection of 1.1 million acres of land at 119 sites in 15 countries, with 59 partners. We have also supported the planting of 7.5 million trees and shrubs in reserves and buffer areas.



1.1 MILLION - ACRES ACQUIRED/PROTECTED
7.5 MILLION - TREES AND SHRUBS PLANTED

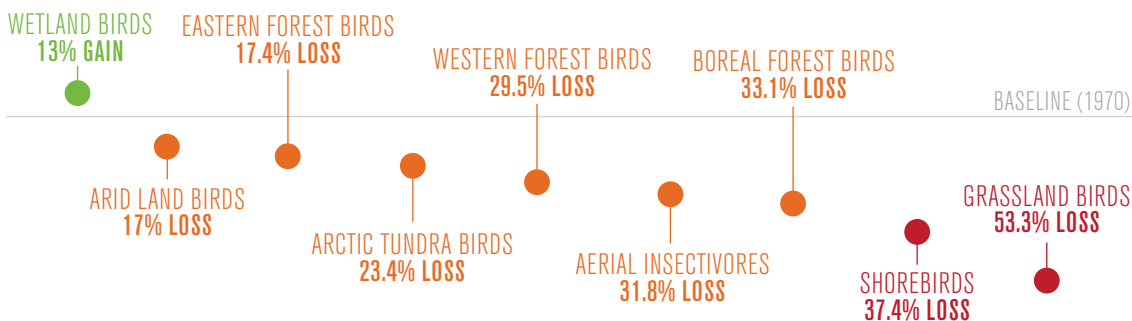
= Fewer Bird Species

TOP: Cundinimarca Antpitta by Peter Kaestner. Millerbird by Robby Kohley.



STATUS OF BIRDS

Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count data show that since 1970, nearly all major groups of native wild birds have shown significant declines in population, culminating in a nearly **3 billion overall** loss of individual birds from the U.S. and Canada. Further, the U.S. WatchList identifies 238 specific bird species and subspecies as being of particular conservation concern.*



*Comparable data has not yet been developed for the Americas as a whole.



AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY RESPONSE

CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

To address declining bird populations, ABC has initially identified **100 priority BirdScapes** through which we are delivering, or plan to deliver, large landscape-scale habitat conservation projects to stabilize and restore migratory and other bird populations. (ABC is currently active in 45 of these BirdScapes.) Six new program examples are provided on the following page.

In the U.S., ABC operates several regional programs that focus on conserving priority bird habitats. We also work closely on habitat conservation with Migratory Bird Joint Ventures (JVs) and their partners. The total area with improved management implemented by ABC programs, and by JV partners in JVs where ABC staff played a significant role in planning and/or conservation delivery, was 9.3 million acres from 2007 to 2023. This scorecard reflects acreage data through 2023.



9.3 MILLION ACRES

with improved conservation management

ABC also works with partners in many parts of Latin America and the Caribbean to ensure healthy wintering and stopover habitat for migratory birds. For example, our BirdsPlus program promotes best management practices on working landscapes, and in 2023, we saw our efforts to encourage sustainable cacao production pay off with the launch of the Smithsonian's Bird Friendly® cacao certification. ABC worked to implement best management practices with Zorzal Cacao, based in the Dominican Republic, and 17 of the company's cacao-supplying farms became the first to receive the Smithsonian's new certification.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

BIRDSCAPE CONSERVATION

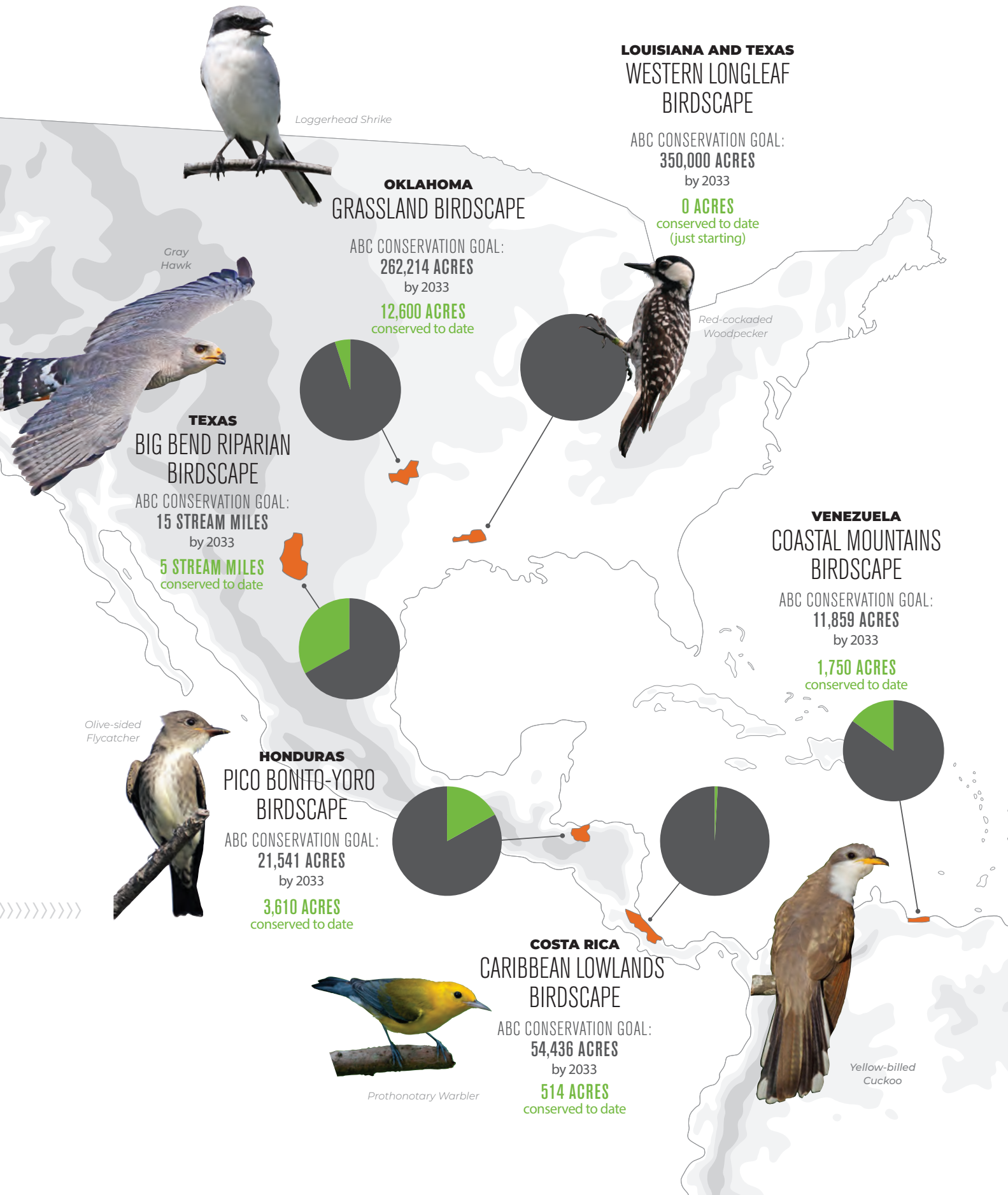
SEE MAP ON NEXT PAGE FOR PROGRESS
MADE BY ABC & OUR PARTNERS

Working in partnership is the bedrock of ABC's organizational philosophy. In almost all of the activities outlined here, ABC is one of multiple partners. To learn more, visit the Partners page in our Annual and Impact Reports: abcbirds.org/annual-reports.

= More Bird Species



BELOW, CLOCKWISE: Red-cockaded Woodpecker by Greg Lavaty; Yellow-billed Cuckoo by Larry Master, masterimages.org; Prothonotary Warbler by Owen Deutsch, owendeutsch.com; Olive-sided Flycatcher by Greg Lavaty; Gray Hawk by Greg Homel, Natural Elements Productions; Loggerhead Shrike by Cephas, CC BY-SA 4.0





STATUS OF BIRDS



Feral and owned
cat predation:
2.4 Billion



Collisions with home and
other building windows:
600 Million to 1 Billion



Collisions with
vehicles:
200 Million



Pesticide and other
toxics poisoning:
72 Million



Collisions with, and
electrocution by,
power lines:
36 Million



Lead poisoning:
16 Million



Collisions with
communication towers:
6.6 Million



Entrapment in mining claim
marker tubes and oil and
wastewater pits:
1.25 Million



Collisions with
wind turbines:
680 Thousand

Other significant sources of bird mortality include the collapse of important food sources, such as aquatic insects, due to pesticide pollution, and invasive species on islands, impacting seabirds and island endemics. ABC works to reduce all of the threats listed above across the Americas. Data is based on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service numbers and/or the most recent studies available.



AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY RESPONSE

CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

The **reduction of bird collisions** with window glass is a long-term effort, but ABC's Bird Collisions team is making headway by engaging architects, glass manufacturers, and building owners around the world in bird-friendly solutions. In the U.S., more than 24 states and municipalities now have bird-friendly guidelines in place.

ABC's advocacy and outreach played a key role in the cancellation or restriction of 15 harmful organophosphate and carbamate pesticides, **reducing bird mortality from toxic chemicals**. However, our fight must continue given the advent and spread of deadly neonicotinoids that reduce populations of insect prey for birds.

ABC supports renewable energy, except when projects pose unacceptable risks to birds, such as along important migratory corridors or near protected areas. Our advocacy has helped to halt or mitigate at least 17 major wind-development projects in these places.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

After **six years of advocacy** by ABC and others, the state of Maryland passed the Sustainable Buildings Act in 2023, mandating that all newly built, acquired, or renovated state-owned buildings use bird-friendly windows and lighting.

ABC opened a **second glass testing tunnel** in 2021, doubling our capacity to rate products for their ability to deter bird collisions. In 2023, ABC tunnels tested more than 65 products from 20 manufacturers, with 43 meeting our "bird friendly" criteria.

Feral cats that threatened Piping Plovers at Sagg Main Beach in New York were removed in 2023, thanks to the efforts of ABC's Cats Indoors program.



= All Bird Species

ABC has helped **to build support for responsible cat-management legislation in several states** and has reached millions of Americans with the message that cats need to be kept indoors or contained outdoors to protect birds.

Bird mortality caused by lighted communication towers was reduced by 70% thanks in part to an ABC lawsuit and outreach that led to over 2,700 towers (17%) turning off the steady-burning lights that lure birds to their deaths.



The ABC-led Bird City Network formally launched in 2023, bringing new tools and resources to help communities across the hemisphere reduce threats to birds via birdcity.org.

In 2023, ABC's Cats Indoors program **successfully advocated for the defeat or amendment of bills** in Hawai'i, New Jersey, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia that would have led to more unowned cats on the landscape. In 2022 on Kaua'i, ABC and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partnered to remove 63 feral cats from wildlife refuges.

"Birds Not Mosquitoes," a multi-agency partnership involving ABC in Hawai'i, **reached a milestone in 2023**: On Maui and Kaua'i, helicopters delivered the first groups of male mosquitoes containing a naturally occurring bacteria incompatible with wild mosquitoes. Females mating with the incompatible males will produce infertile eggs — ultimately reducing mosquito populations and curbing transmission of avian malaria, which threatens Hawaiian forest birds with extinction.

ABOVE: American Kestrel by Paul Rossi.



Strategic Bird Conservation Framework

ABC worked with partners in 2023 to protect nearly 4,000 acres of forest habitat for the Gorgeted Puffleg, a Critically Endangered hummingbird found only in the Andes of southwestern Colombia.



PREVENTING BIRD EXTINCTIONS



Protected Area Creation and Sustainability to Save Species

ABC works to prevent the extinction of the most endangered birds by helping partner groups to establish and sustain protected reserves for the rarest species in Latin America; by supporting the restoration of habitat for endemic Hawaiian forest birds; and by protecting key seabird colonies from invasive species and other threats. ABC also monitors implementation of the U.S. Endangered Species Act to ensure all listed birds, and those that need to be listed, are properly conserved.

LEFT: Gorgeted Puffleg by Carlos Mario Wagner, Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

BELOW: Lear's Macaw by David Fisher, Neotropical Bird Club

ABC works to prevent birds of conservation concern from becoming endangered by engaging landowners and partner groups to help improve the management of millions of acres of land in the U.S. and internationally. ABC identifies areas where conservation opportunities overlap with key habitat for birds, known as BirdScapes, and develops and implements management practices coupled with incentives to ensure that bird habitat is well protected, managed, or conserved.

REVERSING BIRD POPULATION DECLINES



Delivering Habitat Management and Landowner Incentives Across the Continent



A lawsuit in Brazil was decided in favor of the Lear's Macaw in 2023, canceling a wind energy facility's license in the endangered parrot's habitat. Appeals are underway, and ABC and partners continue to push for the facility's relocation.

ABC works to prevent or mitigate threats to birds by working with policymakers, partner groups, and the private sector to develop and implement solutions to large-scale causes of bird mortality, along with precedent-setting or critical regional bird problems. This work involves lobbying, grassroots outreach, the development of new technologies, and occasional legal action to resolve particularly intractable problems.

REDUCING THREATS TO ALL BIRDS



Working to Find Solutions with Policymakers, the Private Sector, Communities, and Individuals

ABC supports partners in their work to build the capacity to sustainably tackle the critical issues faced by birds across the Western Hemisphere. This includes financial and technical support, as well as knowledge sharing and technology development and implementation across a broad range of management and conservation programs.

BUILDING THE BIRD CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

Building Capacity for Bird Conservation



American Bird Conservancy is proud to be a top-rated charity.

Contact us: abcbirds.org | 1-888-247-3624 | P.O. Box 249,
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Paper Source:

