

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP PROTECT BIRDS?

By Dr. Charles Clarkson, Audubon Director of Avian Research

Your actions at home and in your community can make a difference in bird conservation. The list below can get you started on making smart choices and taking simple actions to help protect our feathered friends.

Simple with Immediate Results:

- Put UV decals on your windows. An estimated one billion birds die each year from window strikes in the U.S. alone. Decals can be purchased at the Audubon Nature Shop in Bristol.
- Keep your cats indoors. Domestic and feral cats kill approximately 2.4 billion birds each year in the U.S. alone. Cat predation is close to habitat loss as a main driver in bird population declines.
- Provide foraging and nesting habitat. Providing stocked feeders, native plants, nest boxes, and ample shrub-habitat will allow your local birds to feed more efficiently, avoid predation, and nest successfully.
- If you feed birds, it is better to continue doing so during inclement weather events to provide extra nourishment for birds that may become stressed. Stocked feeders may also be used by migratory birds en route to breeding and wintering grounds. Visit the Audubon Nature Shop in Bristol for a wide selection of feeders and seed.



Easy and Effective:

- Purchase certified bird friendly coffee. Purchase coffee that has been certified “bird friendly” by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Institute. This coffee is produced without the removal of rainforest habitat, which is critically important for migratory birds.
- Avoid the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides in your yard. The vast majority of birds consume insects, particularly during the breeding season. Applying pesticides to your lawn can have severe negative impacts on birds, including death.
- Contribute to long-term, citizen science projects. Cornell Lab of Ornithology collects data from citizen scientists all over the world and uses these data to create maps depicting bird abundance, distribution, and climate-change driven population fluctuations. Collecting and reporting data is easy. Visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website for more info.
- Instill a sense of awe in a child. Do you have children? ...grandchildren? ...neighborhood kids? Take a child birding or for a simple nature walk. Kids are the next generation of conservationists. Getting them excited about nature and birds will pay dividends as they come into positions of power later in life.



Purposeful and Very Effective:

- Donate to Audubon to conserve birds and habitats. Donating money to Audubon can go a long way towards the conservation of habitats and declining bird populations in Rhode Island. Audubon makes it easy to donate online. Visit asri.org/donate.
- Talk to your neighbors about managing their yards. Consider planning with neighbors to provide birds with continuous habitat across both of your properties. Encourage them to plant native vegetation, keep their trees standing, avoid mowing fields until after breeding season has ended, and provide feeders for birds.
- Stop using plastics. Avoiding plastics is very difficult to do in modern society, but look for alternatives that are made from glass and aluminum. They are far more recyclable and don't cause as much harm to the environment.

