



November 2018 Newsletter

Issue 1

The mission of the North American Songbird Working Group is to raise awareness of issues facing North American songbirds and to promote their conservation within AZA facilities

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the North American Songbird Working Group's annual newsletter!

The North American Songbird Working Group is an initiative of the AZA Passerine Taxon Advisory Group. We love North American songbirds and we know you do too! We're excited to share all the wonderful things zoos and aquariums are doing for songbirds.

Our Vision is simple: "The North American Songbird Working Group is a recognized leader in the conservation of North American songbirds" and our Mission is clear: "The mission of the North American Songbird Working Group is to raise awareness of issues facing North American songbirds and to promote their conservation within AZA facilities."

Native songbirds connect us to nature — essential for human well-being. Unfortunately, North American migratory birds are in trouble, and they are disappearing at alarming rates. BirdLife International (2008) reports over half of neotropical migratory songbirds have suffered widespread declines over the last 40 years. Major threats include habitat loss and degradation, predation by cats, and collisions with buildings and towers. More recently, pesticides (e.g. neonicotinoids) are recognized as detrimental to songbirds.

The first steps towards supporting native songbird conservation are already occurring at many zoos in the form of native songbird feeding stations, Christmas bird counts on grounds, using bird-friendly glass treatments on buildings and exhibits, celebrating World Migratory Bird Day, and educating guests about native songbirds.



Committee Members



Kimberly Cook, DVM, Akron Zoo

Kimberly is currently the Senior Director of Life Sciences at the Akron Zoo. She feels blessed and grateful to be able to do work which both excites and inspires her. The position at the zoo offers her a platform to combine medical training as well as her passion for one global health - animal, planet, and human all in balance to create a sustainable world. Kimberly graduated

from Wayne State University with a degree in Biology and from Michigan State University with a veterinary medical degree. She has always been a “bird nerd” and began her career with an avian medicine internship then residency. She is very grateful to be included in the work that this committee is doing.



Sara Hallager, Curator of Birds, Smithsonian’s National Zoo

Sara oversees the bird collection and a team of nine animal professionals care for a diverse and growing collection of birds. She has over 30 years’ experience with avian management and husbandry in a zoological setting. Sara Chairs the AZA Struthioniformes TAG, kori bustard SSP, greater roadrunner SSP and is Co-Chair of the North American Songbird Working Group. She is currently helping to plan for “Experience Migration,” a major first-of-its-kind experience that involves the renovation of the National Zoo's historic 1928 Bird House. She and her staff will re-dedicate the historic Bird House's exhibits and interpretive programs exclusively to the story of migratory birds of the western hemisphere.

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Dr. Jason Fischer, Conservation Program Manager for avian projects, Disney’s Animals, Science, and Environment

Ever since he first started taking pictures of birds as a child, Jason has been fascinated by birds and our relationship to them. His graduate research focused on avian urban ecology, and he now brings this passion to

managing Disney’s avian conservation efforts. His work involves partnering with the Disney Conservation Fund to support international avian conservation efforts and developing research and engagement programs focused on the bird species that call Walt Disney Parks and Resorts home.



Matt Igleski, Student and Teacher Programs Developer, Lincoln Park Zoo

As an undergraduate at Northern Michigan University, Matt studied zoology and continued with graduate work in conservation biology at Central Michigan University, studying chytrid fungus in frogs. Despite being a herpetologist, he took my first ornithology class in graduate school which jump started his

interest in birds...and has been birding ever since! Currently, Matt works at Lincoln Park Zoo as the Student and Teacher Programs Developer which has given me the opportunity to work on some very cool programs like ‘Partners in Fieldwork.’ This program partners with high school science teachers to facilitate student research on urban wildlife, which includes birds! This current position is a fit great for Matt, since it brings together all of my previous positions and experiences, as a research technician, a high school science teacher, and a zookeeper (at both John Ball Zoo and Potter Park Zoo), to pursue conservation through education



Shane Good, Animal Curator, Akron Zoo

Shane has served as an Animal Curator at the Akron Zoo since 2012, managing the Zoo’s avian collection. Before coming to the Akron Zoo he spent 20 years working as an Animal Keeper at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. He serves on the Association

of Zoos and Aquariums’ (AZA) PACCT Taxon Advisory Group (TAG). Akron Zoo boasts a large North American Songbird Aviary and in recent years Shane has been working closely with fellow zoo curators toward advancing North American Songbird conservation initiatives. Shane is a national member of Audubon and locally he has helped coordinate Akron Zoo’s participation in the Greater Akron Audubon Society’s Annual Christmas Bird Counts and Summer Bird Counts. He assisted in creating the Lights Out Cleveland and Akron/Canton Chapters; programs with the goal of preventing bird-window collisions in urban areas.



Lindsay Jacks, Director of Lights Out Baltimore

Lindsay is the Director of Lights Out Baltimore (LOB), a nonprofit striving to make Baltimore safe for migratory birds. LOB monitors downtown buildings during migration and works with the city and local organizations to reduce light pollution and advocate for bird-friendly building design. Lindsay has been a bird keeper in AZA institutions for 10 years. She is also an apprentice wildlife rehabilitator at Phoenix Wildlife Center in Maryland. She enjoys caring for the injured birds she finds on her LOB walks and releasing them back to the wild.

Dr. Michael Kreger, Vice President of Conservation, Columbus Zoo

Michael works with all the departments at the Zoo, Safari Golf, and The Wilds to develop and promote programs that save animals worldwide. Before joining the Zoo, he had a 20-year career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the Migratory Bird Program and International Affairs. As a biologist in the Division of Scientific Authority, he worked on wildlife-related international treaties, laws, and regulations including CITES, the Endangered Species Act, and the Wild Bird Conservation Act. He served on endangered species recovery teams and U.S. delegations for wildlife-related treaties. As Deputy Chief of Bird Habitat Conservation and Special Assistant to the Director of Migratory Birds, he coordinated international bird conservation grant programs and advised on complex issues involving Tribal affairs, wind energy, bald and golden eagles, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. He worked at or with zoos throughout his career and has published on topics ranging from animal care and welfare to ethics and conservation biology. His graduate studies included research on ball python and blue-tongued skink behavior in human care and whooping crane reintroduction.

**Eric Peterson, Ambassador
Animal Keeper, Utah's Hogle Zoo**



Eric started at Hogle Zoo in 1994 as a Nursery Keeper. He then moved to elephants where he worked his way to Elephant Manager. After becoming a part of the Ambassador Animal Team in

2016 Eric joined the NASWG. Eric became an avid birdwatcher and photographer in 2008 while in Kenya. Since then he has cataloged almost 800 species worldwide and 600 in the United States. One of Eric's goals is to educate people about the importance of birds through photography. During Eric's time at Utah's Hogle Zoo he has led the Annual Christmas Bird Count as well as led Citizen Science project partnered with Hawkwatch International as well as Great Salt Lake Bird Festival.



Danielle Ross, Vice President of the Conservation Education and Engagement Department, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

She has worked at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium since 2002. In 2009 she took leadership of the Conservation Education Department. Recently Danielle has launched an ambitious strategic visioning project for conservation education at these institutions. This includes realigning the Department to focus more intentionally on conservation behaviors. With this new vision, the Zoo and *the Wilds* will be positioned to become leaders in developing a lifelong conservation ethic in Central Ohio. She also served as the Chair of AZA's Conservation Education Committee from 2014-2016. In 2013 she participated in Antioch University's Conservation Psychology Institute. With a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife and Range Management from Brigham Young University and a Master of Science in Environmental Communication, Education and Interpretation from the Ohio State University, Danielle has extensive experience in environmental education. In addition to her experience at the Zoo, she was an interpretive ranger in Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Parks. She also worked at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center, a resident camp located in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.



Tom Schneider, Curator of Birds, Detroit Zoo

Tom has served on the ASAG Steering Committee since 2004 and is currently serving as the Vice-Chair. Tom is the Penguin TAG Chair and species coordinator for white storks, greater flamingos, and hooded vultures. He is involved in a number of bird conservation programs including coordinating the Great Lakes piping plover captive rearing effort, common tern restoration efforts in SE Michigan, monitoring osprey reproductive success in southern Michigan, and coordinating metro Detroit's Urban Bird Initiative. Tom is a committee member of the Michigan Bird Conservation Initiative and the Kirtland Warbler Alliance.



Grant Sizemore, Director of Invasive Species Programs, American Bird Conservancy

Grant grew up in Ohio fascinated by nature and enjoying the outdoors. He earned degrees in Zoology and Environmental Science from Miami University and an MS in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida, where he studied wading bird ecology in the Greater Everglades Ecosystem. As the Director of Invasive Species Programs for American Bird Conservancy, Grant supports bird conservation through science-based education, outreach, and management of harmful invasive species, most notably the domestic cat. Prior to joining American Bird Conservancy, Grant worked toward wildlife conservation through policy, outreach, education, and wildlife research. Outside of work, Grant enjoys hiking, birding, fishing, and taking care of his (indoor) cat.



Joe Smith, Director of Animal Programs, Ft Wayne Children's Zoo

Passerines have been a life-long passion for Joe. He has been active in aviculture for 25 years, with zookeeping, wildlife rehabilitation, and veterinary medicine experience. Joe is currently the Director of Animal Programs at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, where he has been employed for 15 years. After graduating from Louisiana State University's School of Veterinary Medicine, he quickly found opportunities to get involved with passerines. He has been the PACCT TAG veterinary advisor for 14 years, and currently serve on the Steering Committee. Joe has been the veterinary advisor for the Blue-crowned Laughingthrush GSMP for the last 5 years. He has participated as a veterinary advisor for the Marianas Avifauna Conservation project for the last 5 years. He is the author for the Passeriformes chapter of the zoo medicine textbook "Fowler's Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine, Vol 8". Joe is a life-long birder and enjoys our native avian wildlife every opportunity he gets!



Nikki Smith, Assistant curator— North America and Polar Frontier

Nikki began her career at Zoo New England's Franklin Park Zoo where she spent 14 years caring for a variety of taxa including birds and other things that are not birds. She flew south to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium in 2015 to take on the role of Assistant Curator of the North America and Polar Frontier region and continues to work with birds and things that eat them. She is the SSP coordinator and stud-book keeper for Red-crested turaco and serves on the steering committees for the Gruiformes and Ciconiiformes & Phoenicopteriformes TAGs. Nikki attended Ohio Wesleyan University for undergraduate school and George Mason University for graduate school.



Rhana Paris, Outreach Coordinator, North Carolina , Aquarium

Rhana is the Outreach Coordinator at the NC Aquarium on Roanoke Island—I know, what could an aquarium have to do with birds? Plenty! They are on the Atlantic flyway for waterfowl and other migratory creatures so we treasure all types of animals and their important habitats! Rhana is on the education team of NASWG so if you have ideas for talking about songbirds or need help coming up with ideas for events or programs, please let her and the other educators know.



Anne Tieber, Curator of Birds, Saint Louis Zoo

Anne has been at the Saint Louis Zoo for 28 years and the last year as Curator of Birds. She has worked with a variety of species but is most passionate about vultures and native bird species, especially native songbirds. Born and raised in St. Louis, she received her degree in Wildlife conservation and management from Missouri State University. She spends what little free time she has dedicated to her family, her dogs, and native birds and ecosystems.



Bonnie Van Dam , Associate Curator of Birds, Detroit Zoo

Bonnie is the Associate Curator of Birds at the Detroit Zoo and has 23 years of experience with aviculture and oversees all daily animal management operations for the bird department. She is the Captive Rearing Coordinator for the Great Lakes Piping Plover Recovery Program. She is the Bird Collision Manager at the Zoo. She assists with long-term planning of all bird department programs and in exhibit design, and manages the Bird Collision Program on Zoo property. Bonnie is a member of DZS Oil Response Team. Bonnie is also a member of Detroit Audubon's Safe Passage Committee and the African spoonbill SSP Manager.



Kelly Vineyard, Senior Curator, Columbus Zoo

Kelly has worked at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium for the past 28 years! She began her career in the Bird department for 5 years then spent the next 6 years as a keeper in the North America Region. Kelly is now Senior Curator of Animal Care. Kelly's has a BS in Wildlife Management from The Ohio State University and also has an Associate's Degree in Veterinary Technology from Columbus State Community College. She serves on the steering committee of AZA's Avian Scientific Advisory Group, the Columbiformes TAG, the PACCT TAG and the Ratite TAG. Notable achievements include designing and implementing the North American Songbird Aviary, participant in the reproduction and release of wolves for the Mexican Wolf Recovery Project and assisting with the Zoo's participation in the release of 21 Bald Eagles back to the wild.

Chris Sheppard, Director, Glass Collisions Program, American Bird Conservancy



Christine Sheppard earned her B.A. and Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Cornell University. She began at Wildlife Conservation Society's Bronx Zoo, as a curatorial intern, in 1978, and ended as Curator and Chair of the Ornithology Department. She joined the board of the Bird-safe Glass Foundation as science advisor, in 2007; she became President in 2017. In 2009, she moved to the American Bird Conservancy as Collisions Program Director. She authored both editions of ABC's publication, Bird-friendly Building Design. She has also created AIA/LEED continuing education classes on Bird-friendly Design. She helped create San Francisco's Standards for Bird-safe Buildings and has subsequently been involved in creating code and legislation in many different jurisdictions. She led the team that developed USGBC LEED Pilot Credit 55: Reducing Bird Mortality. She was named an Engineering News-Record Top 25 Newsmaker for 2014 because of her work on glass testing and has worked with most major glass manufacturers on design and evaluation of bird-friendly materials.



ABOVE: An indigo bunting
Photo by Eric Peterson

BELOW: A mountain bluebird
Photo by Eric Peterson



In October, the Columbus Zoo and The Wilds detected their first nano-tagged birds with the Motus towers installed this year. The Wilds picked up three wood thrushes and the Zoo detected a black-crowned night heron, a wood thrush, and a Swainson's thrush. Joining Bird Studies Canada's international network of tracking stations is one way that zoos and aquariums can contribute valuable data to field research projects.



Learn more about Motus at <https://motus.org/>



Building Your Collection with Rehabilitated Birds!

Nikki Smith, Assistant Curator, Columbus Zoo

Exhibiting North American songbirds is a vibrant and colorful way to connect our visitors to a conservation crisis happening in our own back yards. Zoos have a great opportunity to highlight the plight of native songbirds through exhibiting non-releasable rehab birds. The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium's mission is to "Lead and Inspire by Connecting People and Wildlife". Our Native Songbird Aviary has been doing just that for over 20 years through long-cultivated relationships with wildlife rehabilitators. We currently exhibit 25 species of native passerines, galliformes, and waterfowl with close to 70 individual birds. Three quarters of these birds came to us from wildlife rehabilitators. These birds were deemed non-releasable and many rehabbers are not permitted for long-term possession or exhibition of these birds. There is a need to find permanent placement options or rehabbers are forced to euthanize these birds. Many suffer from wing injuries though we also see some with eye or foot injuries. These injuries have not kept these birds from leading very full lives in our walk-through aviary. We make accommodations for these birds with creative perching and roosting options and modify feeding stations and nest boxes to meet the needs of our collection.



Wildlife rehabilitators are passionate conservationists and are eager to get the animals in their care released into their native ranges. When that is not possible, they actively search for placement for their birds. When accepting a rehab it is important to determine if this bird will be a good fit for your aviary. Some birds are more successful than others in different settings depending on what their particular needs will be. Our most successful residents come to us able to feed and forage for themselves and with the ability to fly or flutter short distances. You might be able to accommodate birds with different needs depending on your aviary. Is it indoor, walk-through or perhaps outdoor but not walk-through? Always ask what the bird is currently eating; you'll want to be sure you can accommodate this bird's diet and feeding needs even if you plan to transition to your facility's diet once the bird arrives. These birds have survived a traumatic event and are under stress. It will be important to try to ease their transition when they move to your quarantine space. It is also important to try to gather as much information on the medical care this bird has received. You will want to request this information early and you will likely be receiving hand written medical records with the bird when it arrives. Once you've determined the abilities of this bird it's time to start the permitting process. You will need the rehabber to obtain a letter of non-release from their veterinarian, stating why the bird cannot be released to the wild. Next they will need to submit a transfer request to USFWS. You should familiarize yourself with federal laws governing migratory birds, specifically 50 CFR 21.31 and 50 CFR 22.21. You may be exempt from the 50 CFR 22.21 permit and that is also very important to be aware of in the event you are going to transfer birds zoo to zoo in the future. Last, they will need to obtain a health certificate (good for 10 days if you're flying the bird and 30 days for ground transport). Here in Ohio, we need to have them apply for an import permit from our Department of Agriculture. Be sure to check and ensure you're meeting any local regulations.

For many of us, shipping animals is a common occurrence. Bear in mind that this may be a rehabber's first time placing an animal at a zoo or aquarium. In the spring especially they have many animals in their care and can easily be scared off by the sheer amount of paperwork involved in this process. Please be patient with them, they often have a full time job in addition to their duties at the wildlife rehab center. Offer to ship a crate to them so they don't need to get one ready for the flight. Flexibility on when you can receive can go a long way; often times these animals need quick placement to ensure room at the rehab center for another critical case. Other times, the paperwork seems to take forever to get together due to time constraints on the rehabber's part. Patience pays off and this rehabber will call you again when they have a bird to place if you are able to dedicate the time to holding their hands through the first placement at your facility.

The 2014 State of the Birds report lists 33 once common birds now considered to be in steep decline, a warning that habitats these birds rely on are disappearing. These birds join the 86 identified on the Partners in Flight (PIF) list as a call to action for all of us concerned with conserving and securing the future of these species. Habitat loss, collisions, and cats pose huge threats to our native songbirds and many zoos are actively supporting in situ projects and educating our guests through Year of the Bird and World Migratory Bird Day events. Exhibiting native passerines is another way to spread the message! The PaCCTAG's North American Songbird Working Group is working to create and foster a communication network that can help place birds in a setting where they will not only survive but thrive. We regularly share information on birds that we are unable to accept with each other- email Sara Hallager or Nikki Smith (see p22) if you are interested in hearing about available birds. Listings of birds available for placement can also be found on the website for International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (www.theiwrc.org).



LEFT: A warbling vireo perched in Utah

Photo by Eric Peterson

World Migratory Bird Day at the Buffalo Zoo!

Shanna Dempsey, Buffalo Zoo

Saturday, May 12th 11-3pm

We celebrated with scheduled activities, like raptor encounters and keeper talks, and had several coloring pages for kids to take home with them. We played the movie "Winged Migration" in our main lobby. We also had a table selling buttons (small misprint on using IMBD instead of WMBD), bird cookies and feather prints to raise money for local bird conservation efforts.

One activity was having kids make binoculars out of toilet paper tubes and string. They got to decorate their binos with crayons and stickers and then take them home with them.

One activity was the bird tree. Kids got to color a bird and cut it out and then add it to our tree on our large windows. As the birds were added to the windows, it helped build the tree (which happens to resemble the logo for Environment of the Americas). It also was a great talking point about window collisions and kids really got excited about having their artwork displayed at the zoo!



We have had different organizations join us over the past 3 years: Erie County SPCA, wildlife division, Messenger Woods (a local rehabber) and Buffalo Audubon Society. We have goals to keep growing this number every year!

We did a migration game throughout the zoo. Kids got to pick a "bird tag" at the entrance and decide which migratory bird they wanted to be (Eastern bluebird, American Goldfinch, Red-winged Blackbird or Wood duck). Each tag (for them to wear like a necklace) had 4 simple bird facts for each species. For example.... "You are a Wood duck.... you like the water and you love to swim!" The kids got to keep them. They then "migrated" around the zoo and learned different facts about migratory birds. Here are some highlights from the tables:

World Migratory Bird Day at the Denver Zoo!

One table was about different types of food that birds eat and the different (not as well known) feeders that you can use.... mealworm feeders for bluebirds, suet for nuthatches/chickadees, peanut feeders for woodpeckers, orange/jelly feeders for orioles and nectar feeders for hummingbirds. We also tried to teach the importance of keeping feeders and water baths clean, not feeding wild birds unhealthy snacks, like french fries and bread, and not tossing rice at weddings. There was also a flip game with 5 different diets and the kids got to guess which bird ate what diet. The message at this table was also about how birds need to refuel at stopover sites and how they migrate to our warmer climates in the spring/summer for the abundant food supply that our area offers.

One table (my favorite) was "Dangers that migratory birds face". This table had 2 activities. One was a flip game to find out dangers that birds face along their way.... a mourning dove in your yard (outdoor cat), duck in a pond (six pack ring), hawk eating alongside the road (car collision) and an owl catching a rodent (poison).

The other activity was a lesson about helping keep waterways clean and helping migratory birds and other animals found in streams and ponds. We had a kiddie pool with a decoy duck, toy frogs, turtles, fish, snakes and dragonflies. Then, we also added plastic water bottles, six pack rings, plastic cups and bags. The kids got to help clean up the animal's home by removing the trash. The second lesson was that they had 2 choices to dispose of the trash. One small garbage can labeled "Trash" and one can labeled "Recycle". It was a big hit!

The last table was "What you can do to help!". We had several coloring pages for kids. One of those was the bird conservation tree chart (from the website). There were also displays of a plastic bottle/reusable bottle, plastic bag/reusable bag, window decals (from Birdlife International), info about bird-friendly plants using Audubon's plant database, info about being a citizen scientist, info about keeping cats indoors or making a "Catio", etc.



Monitoring to Mitigate Bird Collisions

Lindsay Jacks, Director, Lights Out Baltimore

Dr. Daniel Klem, world's leading expert on bird collisions, states, that, "you would need 333 Exxon Valdez oil spills each year to match the carnage," of window strikes. Even though it is estimated that up to 1 billion birds die per year in North America from collisions, large events like oil spills garner press while everyday collisions are overlooked. As professionals striving to teach conservation at our zoo or aquarium about exhibit species, we also have the opportunity to conserve local bird species and educate guests about the importance.

Creating a bird collision monitoring program at your institution can save local species, educate guests, and determine "hot" spots that need mitigation either temporarily during migration season or permanent year around solutions. The first step is to decide monitoring locations. If you have custodial staff that do a grounds sweep/clean in the morning chances are they already know which locations have frequent collisions. Keepers that clean exhibit glass daily also know which glass is repeat offenders. If you aren't aware, locate glass that reflects the outside environment or exhibit glass that presents an open pathway into the exhibit's vegetation to choose as monitoring locations.



ABOVE: Education signage at National Aquarium.

Photo by Lindsay Jacks

A photograph of a white sheet of paper with purple text and lines, tilted at an angle. The form contains the following fields: "Date" followed by a line and "2018 Time" followed by a line; "Species" followed by a line; "Monitor Name" followed by a line; "Location" followed by a line; "City, State, Zip" followed by a line; "Collision Kill/Injury (circle one)" followed by a line; and "Federal Salvage Permit #" followed by a line.

ABOVE: Example of sheet of information to be placed with collected bird

After you determine locations, plan to monitor during migration months or year around. In Baltimore, perfectly positioned on a flyaway and the Chesapeake Bay, we experience most collisions during migration months, but monitor and record data year around. If your institution decides to collect the dead birds and not just discard, then you will need to obtain a USFWS Migratory Bird Salvage permit. The application process is easy and will only require an annual log of the birds collected to be submitted at the end of each year. In addition to permits, having a protocol for finding injured birds during the monitoring is needed. Injured or stunned birds can be gently placed in a paper bag, closed with a binder clip or clothes pin, checked with your vet staff, and then transported to a wildlife rehabilitator if needed. According to National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association, bird injuries especially head swelling and visual impairment can take up to two hours to present, so immediately releasing the bird can be detrimental. Partnering with a local rehabilitator or wildlife center can greatly help when you find injured birds that need more than a couple of hours to recoup.

Whether your institution decides to collect the birds with a permit or just visually record what you find, the following is vital information to record:

- Date
- Time
- Species
- Building/Exhibit
- Collector's name

Most collision monitoring programs record this information on a slip of paper that can be placed with the collected bird in a freezer bag (Fig 1). This information can help decide what steps if any are needed to mitigate collisions at the monitoring site. Time of day is critical to record. If you find that most of the collisions occur between early morning hours before the public arrives, then placing a tarp on the glass overnight and removed before the grounds open is a simple fix. If you find that collisions are happening throughout the day, then you know that a more permanent solution is needed. Recording the date can determine whether you have collisions mostly during migration months or a year around problem.

The exact location is also vital to record. After recording data for 1-2 years, you will easily discover 'hot spot' locations that are a higher priority than others.

Monitor with the intent to eventually mitigate problem glass. It may take more than 1 year of data to determine locations that need treatments. In most collision monitoring programs, it takes a minimum of two years of data to find patterns in time of day, time of year, and high priority locations. Once you find the patterns, a temporary solution such as soapy water, tarps overnight, tempera paint, or window chalk markers can be applied (Fig 3). Permanent solutions can be various films by CollidEscape or 3M Feather-friendly, ABC Bird Tape, Acopian Birdsavers, or bird-safe glass. Whether your institution installs a temporary or permanent treatment, please consider adding signage to explain its purpose and importance (Fig 2). Creating a collision monitoring program at your zoo and aquarium is an opportunity to directly conserve local species and educate our guests in hopes that they too are inspired to save bird species at their own home. As zoo and aquarium professionals, we should encourage our conservation-driven institutions to follow the adage saying, "practice what you preach."



ABOVE: A temporary installation completed with Tempera paint. Photo by Lynne Parks.

Endangered Species Act Lawsuit Protects Piping Plovers from Feral Cats at Jones Beach State Park, NY

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (State Parks) finalized a [court-ordered settlement](#) in August 2018 to protect Piping Plovers at Jones Beach State Park on Long Island. This lawsuit is the first use of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to protect birds from feral cat predation and a clear example of potential legal liabilities for sanctioned feral cat colonies.

In March 2016, following months of discussion with State Parks, ABC filed an ESA lawsuit to protect federally threatened Piping Plovers from feral cats. ABC alleged that State Parks had facilitated the ongoing presence of feral cats, a non-native predator, in close proximity to Piping Plover nest sites. Feral cats are a known predator of Piping Plovers and one of the world's most harmful invasive species. The cat colonies in question were approximately 0.65 and 0.25 miles from plover nest sites.

The settlement calls for the removal or containment of all feral cats at one site (Field 10) in the park by December 31, 2018. All other cats within the park will be removed by March 31, 2019. Ongoing management will further prevent the establishment of additional cat colonies and remove any other cats that might arrive in the park.

The settlement is a major victory for bird conservation and gives credibility to the numerous warnings by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others that feral cat colonies near federally threatened or endangered species is a violation of the ESA.

Roaming outdoor cats annually kill an estimated 2.4 billion birds in the United States and are the top source of direct, human-caused mortality to birds in the United States and Canada. Juveniles and ground-nesting birds, like Piping Plovers, are particularly vulnerable, but cats will also kill adults and a wide range of species. A study of cat-caught wildlife admissions at The Wildlife Center of Virginia identified 1,321 cat-caught birds, including such species as American Goldfinch, Barn Swallow, Carolina Chickadee, Eastern Bluebird, and Wood Thrush.



Photo by Eric Peterson

For more information, see the [this joint press release](#) from ABC and State Parks.

Grant Sizemore, Director of Invasive Species Programs, American Bird Conservancy



ABOVE: Bullock's oriole

Photo by Eric Peterson



RIGHT: red-eyed vireo

Photo by Eric Peterson



Check out American Bird Conservancy's new Conservation Impact Scorecard, at <https://abcbirds.org/scorecard2017/> which provides a summary of the status of birds across the Western Hemisphere, ABC conservation outcomes, and many partner organizations.

Teaming up to Help Songbirds - The Sky's the Limit!

Michelle Smurl, Director of Animal Programs, Brevard Zoo

Inspired by the North American Songbird Working Group speakers and presentations at the 2018 AZA mid-year in Jacksonville the Brevard Zoo songbird supporters made it a mission to make a difference.

At an all-staff meeting in March it was announced that the new Butterflies and the Magic of Nature temporary exhibit opening in May will feature a catio or cat and patio combination. This announcement was followed by a round of applause by staff that felt relief that the songbird and outdoor cat conflict was being actively addressed by the Zoo.

The Facilities crew took the lead on building the catio and created an enriching area with jumping platforms, tunnels, a private place to rest and a private bathroom – all in front of the façade of a house. (see pictures below).

Brevard Zoo established a relationship with the local Brevard Humane Society and opened the catio with

two young male domestic cats that are available for adoption.

The Zoo plans on continuing this program once the butterfly exhibit closes at the end of September.

"The 'Catio' represents a couple things that are truly at the heart of the Brevard Zoo's mission, as well as our own work at the Brevard Humane Society," said Theresa Clifton, Executive Director of Brevard Humane Society. "One is animal welfare, and the other is education. The Brevard Zoo's 'Catio' not only protects wildlife but also offers our feline residents a safe environment. This is an ideal partnership that enables us to visually educate cat owners on responsible pet ownership and how to protect cats from hazards they might encounter outside."

The marketing team at each institution has created a social media plan of attack to raise awareness in our community of the negative impacts cats can have on wildlife.



The Zoo landscaping team assisted with planting native wildflowers and shrubs around the butterfly exhibit to attract birds. We have seen new avian visitors attracted to the area with the help of bird feeders and baths.

With motivation from the Food Services staff bird silhouettes were placed on office and café windows and around the zoo on exhibits using glass for containment. Bird strikes were not a regular occurrence at the zoo but the death of a grackle at our meerkat exhibit and a common wren at the gift shop in early 2018 was enough to spiral staff into action. Luckily the gnatcatcher that hit the gift shop window found solace with an observant staff member until it recovered from the shock. The gnatcatcher flew away to the top of the oaks, where it regained its strength.

In May the Interpretive Services team erected a Purple Martin housing structure in an open area of the Zoo in hopes of attracting this large and beautiful swallow. This team also plans on attracting other songbird species by erecting additional bird houses along the outskirts of our wetlands habitat that is enjoyed by kayakers and the perfect audience for songbird interpretation opportunities.

Since the initial announcement in March efforts to help songbirds continue to gain momentum. Staff members have shared successes in their home communities with promoting walking cats on leashes when outdoors, building catios or simply keeping domestic cats indoors. The silhouette information was shared with staff and volunteers, some of whom have shared pictures of their windows at home.

Celebrating our successes together has helped to build a solid songbird program at the Zoo that we will continue to nurture.



You Can Help Your Local Birds!

Reduce habitat loss

Why? Birds need space for finding food, for raising young and for resting. You can provide that space in your yard, school or park.

How? Plant natives— they provide more useful food to our native birds than non-native or cultivated plants. Plant in layers to provide space for ground nesters as well as those who nest up high.



Provide water stations year round

Why? Birds need water, just like you!

How? Place some water up high and some near the ground. Put a rock in deep water baths to help smaller birds. Dumping the water out every couple of days keeps the mosquito population down. Heat your bird bath in the winter to keep water available.



Keep cats and birds apart

Why? Feral or free-ranging cats kill an estimated 2.4 billion birds each year in the United States (Loss et al., 2013)! It is healthier for cats to be inside, too— roaming cats live less than half as many years as indoor cats.

How? Don't let your cat roam outside. Screen in a porch to let your cat enjoy safe and fun outdoor time. Train your cat to walk on a leash. Don't feed feral cats.



Prevent window strikes

Why? Birds see a reflection of themselves in a window of the plants in your yard and think they can fly to those imaginary plants.

How? Put screens on your windows. Close your blinds when you are not using the room. Use reflective stickers to show birds that your windows are not part of your outside landscape.



Turn off your outside lights

Why? Owls and other nocturnal animals need darkness so they can hunt. Migrating birds can get confused by seeing lights on at night— they think they see tree branches through Moon-light.

How? Use outside lights that point down, not out. When everyone is home, flick off the outside lights. Close your curtains when inside at night. Check out www.darksky.org for more information on ways to go dark.

Want to know more?

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has lots of information on your local birds and how you can keep them happy and healthy! Check out their website at <http://www.allaboutbirds.org> American Bird Conservancy has more information on how to prevent window strikes. Go to <http://abcbirds.org/get-involved/bird-smart-glass/> The Association of zoos and Aquariums (AZA) are also concerned about our local birds. Join us in protecting birds by visiting your local zoo or aquarium.

American Bird Conservancy is now a Conservation Partner of AZA. While ABC does work on taxa like seabirds, parrots and cracids, a primary focus is on songbirds, especially migrants. We've been partnering extensively with zoos on collisions, and also on cats, but there are many other opportunities for joint projects in the US and in Latin America – we might well be working at a site near you! I will try to contribute something about our programs to each newsletter. This time, a bit about Migratory Bird Joint Ventures and a new reserve in Peru. You're also welcome to contact me (csheppard@abcbirds.org) or check our website ABCbirds.org. I'm in the Policy Divisions and we work on legislation, lobbying and sometimes lawsuits, across the US. Right now, we're working on the Federal Bird-safe Buildings Act, as well as being involved with proposed legislation requiring bird-friendly design in Maryland, New York, DC and California. The August edition of Inside Bird Conservation – on our website - has information on a successful lawsuit to remove feral cats from Jones Beach, an area where Piping Plovers nest.



Migratory Bird Joint Ventures (from their website) “Migratory Bird Joint Ventures are cooperative, regional partnerships that work to conserve habitat for the benefit of birds, other wildlife, and people. Since the [North American Waterfowl Management Plan](#) called for our establishment in 1986, Joint Ventures (JVs) have grown to cover nearly all of the U.S. and Canada, and much of Mexico. There are twenty-two habitat-based Joint Ventures, each addressing the bird habitat conservation issues found within their geographic area. In addition, three species-based Joint Ventures, all with an international scope, work to further the scientific understanding needed to effectively manage



Yellow-scarfed Tanager is an endemic species, found only in this region, that will greatly benefit from the additional protected habitat of Monte Puyo Private Conservation Area in northern Peru. Photo by Andrew Whittaker

populations of specific bird species.” ABC coordinates the Appalachian Mountains JV, Rio Grande, Northern Plains, Oaks and Prairies and plays other roles in several more. The Appalachian Mountain JV got a grant in 2014 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture designed to enhance more than 13,000 acres of habitat for Cerulean Warblers and other wildlife.

On the South American wintering grounds, we work with Fundación ProAves, partnering to define the [Cerulean Warbler Conservation Corridor](#) in 2008 and later enhancing habitat by planting trees between the Pauxi Pauxi and Cerulean Warbler reserves. This work benefits other migratory birds such as [Golden-winged Warblers](#). The recent expansion of Ecuador's Narupa Reserve has preserved even more valuable wintering habitat for the Cerulean.

A 39,915-acre expanse of cloud forest and wetlands has been declared protected within the new Monte Puyo (Bosque de Nubes) Private Conservation Area in northern Peru. In response to rising deforestation rates, the Yambasbamba community led this conservation initiative in partnership with Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN) and American Bird Conservancy (ABC), with support from the national and regional government. Monte Puyo is regarded as a high conservation priority due to its extraordinary biodiversity and proximity to a number of existing protected areas.

“More than 500 bird species occur in the new Monte Puyo Private Conservation Area, including the Endangered Ochre-fronted Antpitta and Speckle-chested Piculet. This forest is also home to iconic mammals like the Andean bear and Critically Endangered Yellow-tailed Woolly Monkey,” said Constantino

Aucca, President of ECOAN.

In an effort to protect their territory from outside threats, the Yambrasbamba community will manage the new Private Conservation Area (PCA). This categorization within Peru's National Protected Area System is unique in that it allows communities to set aside part of their communal property for conservation, while allowing for sustainable development, such as tourism. "This new protected area helps our community protect our watersheds and biodiversity, helps us to attract tourists to see unique geological formations within our underground caves, and helps us defend our territory against invasion by colonists from outside," said Wagner Calongos Collaton, President of the Yambrasbamba community.



In addition to conserving habitat for resident birds, the Monte Puyo PCA helps to protect birds that breed in North America but spend the winter there. "This region provides habitat for at least 23 species of North American migrant songbirds, including the Olive-sided Flycatcher, Cerulean Warbler, and Canada Warbler, which have experienced population declines in recent decades," said Dr. Philip Tanimoto, International Project Officer at ABC. With support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant program, ABC and ECOAN have been working with the Yambrasbamba community to reforest degraded areas with native trees in a mixture of shade coffee, silviculture, and mixed forestry systems.

"ECOAN and ABC will continue to work with the Yambrasbamba and other local communities to create protected areas and reforest degraded lands in northern Peru. Additional PCAs are in the process of being created, and in the future, we hope to report on additional protected areas nearby," said Dr. Daniel Lebbin, Vice President of Threatened Species at ABC.

Readers interested in visiting the area or exploring the caves of Monte Puyo PCA may consider staying nearby at Owllet Lodge at the Abra Patricia Reserve or at the Huembo Reserve. Located along the [Northern Peru Birding Route](#), Abra Patricia is one of the premier birding destinations in Peru, which itself is one of the premier countries in the world for birding. The [Owlet Lodge](#) at Abra Patricia often serves as a base for birding tourists who typically spend several days at other regional birding spots, such as [Waganki](#), [Huembo](#), and [Gotas de Agua](#). Owllet Lodge is a four- to five-hour drive from the airport in Tarapoto, and the spectacular [Marvelous Spatuletail](#) hummingbird can be seen just an hour's drive away at the Huembo Reserve. A trip here can be combined with visits to the Kuelap Ruins near Chachapoyas and to Gocta Falls — one of the three tallest waterfalls in the world.

The birding experience at Abra Patricia just got a lot better this year: Both Rusty-tinged and Chestnut Antpittas now make daily appearances at Owllet Lodge, visiting feeding stations stocked with worms. To learn more about the ecotourism and birding opportunities in the Abra Patricia region, visit the [Conservation Birding website](#).

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CREATING EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION ACTIONS: A Columbus Zoo & Aquarium (CZA) and North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) collaboration.

Executive summary prepared by the Audience Research Team at the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium

The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium (CZA) and the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) have joined forces to explore CZA guests understanding of the challenges migratory birds face and how they connect to the overall well-being of the environment. Gathering information of this nature will lend insight into the development of adoptable, long-term actions (on behalf of migratory birds) for our guests. As stated by Hutchins, et al (2018), “Zoos and aquariums offer a unique opportunity to educate guests on the threats and solutions for conserving migratory songbird populations.”



Photo by Eric Peterson

The overall goal of this project is to encourage and inspire CZA guests to adopt these actions into their everyday lives through several realizations:

- individual actions are important, relevant, and can make a difference
- conservation efforts can be accomplished easily and efficiently by individuals
- specifically, migratory birds are important to the well being of the environment

Using a series of activities, observations, semi-structured interviews, and surveys with CZA guests, a set of tangible, realistic actions in support of conservation efforts surrounding the challenges faced by migratory birds along their seasonal flight paths will be developed.

PHASES AND TIMELINE

The project will be developed and implemented in three separate phases – each with its own set of objectives.

PHASE 1(Summer/Fall, 2018) – FRONT-END/FORMATIVE (*Phase complete)

- to establish base-line guest knowledge and information

PHASE 2(Winter/Spring/Summer, 2019) – FORMATIVE/REMEDIAL

- to research, create, and prototype a list of adoptable actions with CZA guests

PHASE 3(Summer/Fall, 2019 and Winter, 2020) – SUMMATIVE/FINAL REPORT

- to evaluate final actions in relation to the overall goal

REFERENCE

Hutchins M, Marra P, Diebold E, et al. The evolving role of zoological parks and aquariums in migratory bird conservation. *Zoo Biology*. 2018;1–9.

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