

Hope for the future

The extinction of the passenger pigeon helped promote nature conservation in the US. In 1918, Congress passed the Migratory Bird Act, making it illegal to hunt, kill, capture or sell some 800 wild species. Since then additional legislation, coupled with changes in social attitudes, have saved the whooping crane, peregrine falcon, Kirtland’s warbler and many other species from the passenger pigeon’s fate.



The trumpeter swan, hunted almost to extinction in the US 100 years ago, has fully recovered thanks to habitat protection and captive breeding.

*“Nature is not a
place to visit.
It is home.”*

— Gary Snyder, poet

Who cares about birds?

You should! Birds do a lot of vital work. They eat insects and crop pests. They scavenge dead animals. They pollinate plants and spread their seeds. Even their poop is valuable as fertilizer!

But equally important is what birds mean to us. Their color, their song, their grace in flight—all add immeasurably to the quality of our lives.



If you look out your window or down the street, you may see chickadees or other common birds.

Putting up a bird house with a properly sized entrance gives small native songbirds a safe place to build nests and raise young.

It takes more than laws to protect our wildlife—it takes us! You can take small, easy steps to help save our native birds. Keep pet cats indoors, put up window decals to prevent bird collisions, install and maintain bird feeders and bird houses, volunteer at nature centers, and participate in citizen science projects like the Christmas Bird Counts.

Hunting and poaching aren’t the only threats to birds. The bald eagle suffered a steep decline due to chemical pollutants weakening their eggs. Limits on pesticide use helped the eagle make a full recovery.

