

RENEWED COMMITMENT TO CANADA'S BIRDS

The 2016 State of North America's Birds report shows that one third of North America's birds need urgent conservation action to prevent extinction. The causes of declines are complex and numerous, and, for many Canadian birds, originate both within and beyond our borders. Most Canadian birds are migratory and spend a portion of their life cycle elsewhere, some as far away as South America. For this reason, international cooperation and conservation, across the whole of their ranges, is needed to ensure that birds remain part of our Canadian ecosystems.

Birds contribute enormously to our country's biodiversity; there are 690 species in Canada. Their presence increases human health and well-being. Further, birds are an integral part of our culture and our economy, providing services such as pollination and pest control, upon which our natural resource industries rely. The importance of birds to Canadians was recognized over one hundred years ago, with the signing of the *Migratory Bird Convention Act*.

Under this Act, the Government of Canada has a legal responsibility to manage and protect our birds. As a leading member of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, the Government clearly recognizes the seriousness of the problem. Still, increased funding and immediate action are needed to address the crisis. While the \$1.3 billion for conservation announced in Budget 2018 will have positive impacts for some birds, it will not address the factors causing the most severe declines in bird populations. These include protecting and managing some of the world's most vulnerable habitats, such as oceans, grasslands, and tropical forests, as well as addressing the human-related causes of mortality such as window strikes, toxics, pesticides, marine pollution and cats.



Photo: Philip Brown

The Green Budget Coalition recommends that the Government of Canada renew its Canadian and international commitment to birds with **\$25 million per year over the next four years (2019-2023) to:**

- Support conservation of Canada's birds and their habitats within and beyond our borders;
- Revise and strengthen the *Migratory Bird Convention Act* to address current conservation issues, including incidental take;
- Increase capacity to adaptively manage bird populations;
- Address human-related threats outside scope of protected areas funding;
- Meet North American Bird Conservation Initiative commitment to implement an all-bird conservation approach; and
- Take steps to "keep common birds common" including reinstating the Habitat Stewardship Program's Prevention Stream funding.

Contact

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