

The Rectrix

A seasonal newsletter of the Missouri River Bird Observatory

Volume 9 No. 3 Fall 2019



rectrix [rek-triks] noun. (pl. -trices) any of the larger feathers in a bird's tail, used for steering in flight.

MISSION

The Missouri River Bird Observatory is a 501(c)3 non-profit entity dedicated to the conservation of Missouri's migratory and resident birds through scientific research, community outreach, K-12 education and conservation policy advocacy.

STAFF

Dana Ripper Duke, Director/Founder

Ethan Duke, Director/Founder

Paige Witek, Education Coordinator

Erik Ost, Field Project Leader



P.O. Box 16
Arrow Rock, MO 65320
660.837.3888
www.mrbo.org

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This Issues' Photography Credits

Eastern Towhee, front cover - Andrew Reago & Chrissy McClaren. Diamond Grove Prairie Conservation Area, this page - MRBO staff. *The Inspection*, page 3 - David Seidensticker. *Cedar Waxwing Formal Attire*, page 7 - Steve Garr. Cedar Waxwing, page 7 - Marvin De Jong. Swainson's Thrush, page 12 - James Gorski. Prothonotary Warbler, page 13 - Andrew Reago & Chrissy McClaren. Broad-winged Hawk, back cover - Linda Williams.

Letter from the Directors



Dear MRBO Supporters and Friends,

Much has changed since we founded the Missouri River Bird Observatory in 2010 - in the world, in the state of Missouri, and within our organization. MRBO has been inspired to grow in both depth and breadth thanks to the encouragement of countless individuals and from the Missouri conservation community as a whole. As the organization enters its 10th year, we have been fortunate to receive a great deal of recent guidance from a number of other organizations and individuals. This has coincided with our own ambition of taking MRBO to the next level as a conservation entity.



The two of us have a combined 37 years in conservation work, 20 of which has now been in Missouri. MRBO has been blessed to be involved in a wide variety of conservation research, education and outreach across our whole state plus eastern Kansas and Nebraska. We have had the opportunity to do great work with folks like the Missouri Department of Conservation, National Audubon and several state and local Audubon groups, the Missouri Prairie Foundation, and many others. MRBO and the organizations it partners with reach tens of thousands of people each year with a positive conservation message; many of our partners also own and manage land for wildlife conservation. However, the clear reality in 2019 is that we conservationists still have a great deal of work to do. Populations of most bird species continue to decline across the region and the country. As the human population continues to grow and to require more food and energy resources, wildlife species are pushed further to the margins of the habitat they need to survive, raise young and migrate successfully. MRBO is working with other like-minded organizations that are focused on ensuring the existence of quality natural resources for both wildlife and people.

With MRBO's 10th anniversary in mind and with a fresh vision for where we'd like to take the organization, we have been working with our staff, Board of Directors, and other advisors to re-shape MRBO's strategic plan. Our mission remains to *contribute to the conservation of birds and their habitats through research, monitoring, education and advocacy*. We are now pursuing that mission in a more strategic way by identifying our primary focus areas (see the "eggs" on the following pages!) and setting goals within those areas. We hope you, our supporters and friends, enjoy learning about this new strategic framework and watching MRBO become more effective in its next decade.

*Strive not to be a success,
but to be of value.*
-Albert Einstein

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Ethan and Dana Duke in black ink.

Ethan and Dana Duke

Our thanks to these recent Supporters:

Laura Lee Grace
Steve & Anita Byers
Westport Garden Club
Steve & Regina Garr/Birds-I-View Store
Donna & John Huston
Kyna Iman
Timothy Donze
Robert Middleton
Jessie Dryden
Tom Tucker & Tina Yochum-Magaz
Karen Meyer
Jean Leonatti
Susan Hazelwood
Pat Wood, in Memory of Elouise Douglas

With Special Thanks to:
Dana & James Hoisington
River Bluffs Audubon Society
Anonymous
Warren & Denise Loveland Family Fund
Conservation Foundation of Missouri



MRBO's New Strategic Framework

On these pages, our readers will find details about MRBO's new strategic plan that will take the organization into its next decade. This framework is a first draft that will help us shape MRBO's plans, activities and fundraising goals going forward. You will notice that our existing activities fit into this framework but there is room for much expansion. Over the next year, we will flesh out the framework into a full strategic plan with tactical details of how to address the goals in each focal area. While wildlife conservation is the driving force behind all of MRBO's work, we are also incorporating human health and wellness into our vision and goals. Going forward, MRBO supporters will be kept apprised of how the organization's growth is in keeping with the strategic framework presented here.

				
Vision	MRBO contributes to the conservation and continual improvement of the highest-quality habitats possible for birds and other wildlife.	MRBO contributes to the improvement of local and regional food systems, which are integral to wildlife/ natural resource conservation and to providing people with quality food.	MRBO works to build communities that provide the things birds need: Food and Water Shelter Safe Passage Places to Raise Young.	MRBO provides opportunities for people to experience, enjoy and understand the natural world, fostering awareness of the need for conservation action.
Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Improve public and private habitat management quality.2. Support increases in the occurrence and functionality of intact natural systems - e.g., watersheds, floodplains, grassland complexes.3. Encourage/facilitate enrollment of private acreage in conservation programs4. Decrease environmental pollutants - chemicals, plastics, emissions, other waste.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Promote an agricultural system that is fair to both people and wildlife and that results in natural resource conservation.2. Encourage people to choose food based on ecological conservation.3. Promote local, bird-friendly food systems.4. Work to make local, sustainably produced food available to as many people as possible.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reduce avian window collisions.2. Proliferate the use of native plants in homes, schools, and all public places.3. Reduce chemical use in home yards and public places.4. Support initiatives to reduce populations of outdoor cats.5. Promote/support the reduction of waste in communities, particularly single-use plastics.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increase the amount time spent outdoors by people of all ages and demographics.2. Foster enjoyment of all parts of the natural world.3. Increase understanding of basic ecology and ecological connections, including humans as part of nature.4. Provide opportunities for volunteerism, internships, community engagement and other involvement in MRBO's work.

Current and planned activities

Quality Habitats

Goals 1, 2 and 3:
Current: grassland and wetland survey projects, nest-monitoring project, wetlands hydrological analysis project.
Planned: grasslands landscape-level analysis.

Goal 4: Partially & indirectly addressed via goal 3, e.g., conversion of crops to native pasture.

Goals 1 and 2:
Current: meetings with private landowners to discuss birds/habitat. Audubon Conservation Ranching program.
Planned: Outreach work in KC area as part of Audubon marketing.

Goal 4:
Current/On-going: outreach and advocacy relevant to chemical, plastic and fossil fuel pollution reduction.

Feeding the Flock

Goals 1 - 4:
Current: Audubon Conservation Ranching program.
Planned: work with Audubon and other partners to bring local/sustainable food to a broader consumer group.

Goals 1-3:
Current: work with private landowners; continual outreach via presentations, event booths.

Goals 1-3:
Current: supporting policy work of Missouri Coalition for the Environment, the Conservation Federation of Missouri, Missouri Rural Crisis Center and others.
Planned: working with Audubon chapters to rally conservation policy support.

Bird-Friendly Communities

Goals 1-2:
Current: BirdSafeKC project underway; work with Marshall's Martin Center to maintain/improve native planting

Goals 1 - 5:
Current: Continual education & outreach via presentations, event booths etc.
Planned: Increase involvement in outreach events. Broaden partnership base to reach more community/civic groups to encourage action.

Goals 1-5:
Planned: Local issue-based campaigns to encourage voluntary action or, where necessary, local ordinances (for example, to require native plants in public space landscaping)

People in Nature

Goal 4:
Current: MRBO provides seasonal staff positions, internships and volunteer opportunities in its research and monitoring programs, e.g., BirdStrikes KC.

Goals 1-3:
Current: Young Explorers Club, Missouri Young Birders Club, Friends of Arrow Rock programs, school and community programs, banding events, Birds & Bees fest, partner events.

Planned: Additional "immersion experience" weekend camps for new audiences. Increase in volunteer opportunities.

Planned: advocate improvements in science education and increases in student-centered environmental education.

The values and philosophy that pervade all areas of MRBO's work

Core Values

- Robust data and scientific integrity
- Time- and cost-efficiency and use of technological innovations
- Fostering the formation of partnerships
- Embracing and encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion
- Empowering and providing opportunities for young people

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

By MRBO Education Coordinator Paige Witek



If you have read the core values that pervade all areas of the Missouri River Bird Observatory's work, then you know that MRBO embraces and encourages equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). What do we mean by this? How do we achieve greater equity, diversity and inclusion? Of course, the answer is not a simple one, but we at MRBO believe it is important in achieving our mission and our hope for this article is to help you, our supporters, better understand the value in this work. We believe that success in conservation depends on inclusive efforts that incorporate multiple views and perspectives, and we are not the only ones who think this way. Many groups are taking a closer look at their role in EDI efforts to ensure longevity and stay relevant with their communities, officials, and funders.

Let us start by describing what we mean by equity, diversity and inclusion. Below are the definitions outlined in Audubon's new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Chapters How-To Guide.

Equity refers to an outcome. Equity is when all people have equal access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. For the conservation movement, this means that individuals of all backgrounds, ages and abilities have similar opportunities to access and benefit from a clean and healthy environment and that no groups bear a disproportionate burden of impacts from pollutants or land degradation. Equity also means that all residents can meaningfully inform environmental and other decisions that impact where they learn, live, work, play and pray. Determinants of equity refer to the social, economic geographic, political and physical environmental conditions in which people in our country are born, raised, live and age. Improving equity requires promoting justice, impartiality, and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems.

Diversity refers to people. We cannot have equitable outcomes if decisions and systems are not designed, approved, and implemented by the full spectrum of people impacted. Diversity for MRBO means having a mix of board members, volunteers, staff, and participants who provide a wide range of abilities, experiences, knowledge, and strengths due to their differences in age, background, ethnicity, physical abilities, political and religious beliefs, sex and other characteristics. Identifying those who can represent many types of difference is a continuous task, but well worth doing.

Inclusion is about action and processes. Inclusive systems are those that operate in a way that diverse individuals can participate fully in decision-making processes within an organization or group. Inclusive groups are those who take seriously the "belief that all people should feel that they are included in society, even if they lack some advantages. While diversity is about who to include, inclusion is about how to include them. And it is important to remember that while a truly inclusive group is necessarily diverse, a diverse group may or may not be inclusive.

Hopefully these outlined definitions help you understand what EDI work aims to achieve. Incorporating EDI into an organization's practices and processes requires attention to organizational culture, volunteer and staff skills and capacities, understanding one's communities, and navigating differences in experience, culture and tradition. It is no easy task, but we believe it is important to successfully achieve MRBO's mission. Why? All biologists know that biodiversity in natural ecosystems strengthens that ecosystem and, just as biodiversity strengthens ecosystems, the diversity of human experience strengthens conservation efforts for the benefit of nature and all human beings. Protecting and conserving the environment transcends cultural, social and political boundaries, and so will MRBO in order to expand our network's reach and engage more people in protecting birds and habitat. Many resources outline five key arguments that make the case for equity, diversity and inclusion:

1. The economic case is based on the idea that organizations that tap into a diverse talent pool are stronger and more efficient.
2. The market case states that organizations will better work with their respective communities when they reflect the diversity of their constituency.
3. The results case is that diverse teams lead to better outputs.
4. The moral or social justice case is that each person has value to contribute, and that we must address barriers and historical factors that have led to unfair conditions for marginalized populations.

5. The team-building case is that by bringing in more diverse leadership and participation, your team will be more interesting, innovative, fun and will have more energy!

Research has shown that businesses operating with an EDI lens are strengthened through recruiting new talent, increased adaptability, promoting creativity and innovation, increased competitive edge and higher financial performance. Individuals from a range of backgrounds can foster new ideas and approaches triggering more creative solutions that lead to measurable results. Essentially, by embracing and encouraging equity, diversity and inclusion, MRBO is strengthening itself as an organization and the communities in which we serve, bird and human alike.

I recently attended the 2019 State of Inclusivity Conference held in Columbia, MO on August 8th. The conference was organized largely by the Inclusive Impact Institute, also based in Columbia, MO. The Inclusive Impact Institute works to strategically create diverse and inclusive communities through collaboration, education and engagement. I got so much out of this conference and I would like to share with you a few key points made during the conference:

- » We all have a multitude of identities and it is okay to hold those loosely in our hands and be mindful of how they intersect.
- » "If you have a brain, you have a bias." But if we are made aware of our biases, we can better work to negate them.
- » We will all screw up and say something wrong. But when we screw up, we learn to fall forward and think about how to get up before we fall.
- » Using inclusive language can save lives.
- » "We are all human first." You may have seen MRBO's recent social media posts on August 25th, a date that was deemed "Inclusive Excellence Day" in Columbia. This movement is spearheaded by the Inclusive Impact Institute. Their website states, "Challenge yourself and others to start seeing one another as human first. When we can see each other as human first, we can start the building of a community with more peace and happiness with diversity, inclusion, and equity as the norms. Yes, we appreciate our differences -but let's first celebrate the foundation of what makes us alike. We are human first. Join the movement today."

I know these points are broad and somewhat hard to define, but I encourage you to think about them when you bring more inclusivity into your own life. I have already learned so much on my journey toward cultural competency, but, of course, there is still so much more to learn and work to be done. I first heard the following phrase from Shakealia Y. Finley at her presentation on "Reclaiming Our Spaces" and I think it nicely sums up what I am trying to get across. Ms. Finley exclaims, "The outdoors belongs to everyone." And I whole-heartedly agree.



These Cedar Waxwings provide an interesting example of biological diversity. The bird on the right is a typical Cedar Waxwing; the bird on the left is displaying a rare genetic expression called "leucism" - a partial lack of pigmentation.

Notes from an Intern

By MRBO Summer Education Intern Emily Koch

What better way to learn about the world around you than at a summer camp with your best friends? This summer Paige Witek and I were able to make that possible. Our goal for Young Explorers Club (YEC) was to teach campers the importance of exploration and observation through hands on activities and lessons. Each week was filled with new topics and information for our campers to explore.

As an intern for MRBO I was given the opportunity to create and teach those lessons week after week. Often, I found myself thinking about the topics our campers enjoyed, or which types of material they learned from the best. After conquering the first week jitters our campers were quick to tell us the activities they liked and didn't like. With the flexibility of YEC, I was able to take this information and change my lessons to better fit our campers needs.

From learning about macroinvertebrates to the importance of plants, our campers got the opportunity to experience everything nature has to offer. The best part was that YEC provided a completely risk-free environment, without quizzes or tests, so the campers were able to explore their interests, and take learning to a new level, enjoy this unique learning opportunity. During a four-week period, campers were able to explore, comfortably ask questions, and learn about the importance of nature. One of my favorite parts about YEC was watching how students will naturally work together to find a solution to a problem. I distinctly remember one day we were walking back from a hike and a camper spotted a small snake in the grass. After everyone got the chance to look at the snake, a question quickly arose about what type of snake this might be. Instead of simply waiting for Paige or myself to find the answer, every camper present that day was looking at our backyard snake poster. The campers were engaged in discussion and comparing the characteristics of the snake found in the grass to those on the poster. It is no surprise that they quickly found the answer. When given the opportunity students are great problem solvers. YEC was able to provide an environment that campers felt comfortable enough to explore their interests on their own.

As an intern, I was also able to learn from this welcoming environment. Being an agriculture education student, I was over the moon about this opportunity. At Mizzou I spend a lot of time learning about how to teach students. Although this information is very useful, I rarely get to put that book knowledge to the test. My internship with MRBO was exactly what every educator needs before heading off to their own classroom. This internship gave me the freedom to learn my teaching style, and the ability to put it to practice several times a week. I learned the benefit of letting students find answers on their own, the proper way to aid discussions, and how to think on my feet. I can truly say I learned something new every day. This internship with MRBO has been a once in a lifetime experience and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn in such a supportive and welcoming environment. It doesn't matter if you are a camper or a college student, YEC provides an opportunity for everyone to learn.

Scenes from YEC: a hike down the Arrow Rock Landing Trail. Jaxson's bird loses the Great Migration Challenge. Discussion at the Big Spring.



Ode to a Tufted Titmouse

By MRBO Supporter and Volunteer Dianne Van Dien

The sound of a scolding bird drew me to the window. Outside were two tufted titmice. One hung from the peanut feeder by one foot, working hard to extract a peanut. The other stood on top of that feeder, making a raspy, scolding sound that seemed to be directed at the other bird. I looked around the yard but could see no threat—no cats, no hawks or owls. The titmouse kept scolding. When the feeding bird succeeded in pulling out a peanut and flew to a nearby bush, the scolding bird followed and jumped from branch to branch within the bush. “Hurry up! Hurry up!” it seemed to be saying as the other bird stood still and hammered at the peanut it held against a branch with its foot.

Titmice often came to the feeder in pairs, but I’d never seen them interact like this before. According to the bird books, mated pairs of titmice stay together on their territories year-round, and it seemed to me that I’d been seeing this pair for several months. While I couldn’t be 100 percent sure about the scolding bird, I was fairly certain the other titmouse had been coming to our feeder regularly since November. That bird had somehow lost a foot, and unless there were other one-footed titmice in the neighborhood, I’d been seeing this one all winter. Now it was spring, and this bird had survived through the cold and the snow despite its handicap.

I’d taken great interest in this bird, to the way it was adapting to a one-footed life. When titmice come to the feeder, they usually grab a seed and fly to a nearby tree, where they either cache the seed under some loose bark or they stand on a branch and hold the seed between their feet, then pound it open with their beak. How much harder must it be for a one-footed bird to hold onto a seed like that? Yet this bird managed. However, I rarely saw it take sunflower seeds. It seemed to prefer the peanuts, perhaps because they had no shell and perhaps because one peanut provides more calories than one sunflower seed—more energy for less effort. But getting a peanut out of a peanut feeder is not exactly easy. This bird would cling to the feeder with one foot, its footless leg sometimes pumping back and forth in the air, and it would work relentlessly at pulling a peanut through the wire mesh. Sometimes it would take a break and hang briefly upside down by one foot before continuing with the task. When it did finally have a whole peanut in its beak, it would fly into the center of the nearby bush, balance on a branch, put the peanut under its one and only foot, and proceed to eat. Except that it took a little longer at the feeder than other titmice, this one-footed bird appeared to be doing fine.

Tufted titmice are known for being bold and loud. These small gray birds have been reported to pull hair and fur from living animals to use for lining their nests. In spring their songs echo through forests and suburban neighborhoods. Common in woodlands and backyards throughout the eastern half of the US, they are a force of life weighing only a little more than the average cherry tomato. This weight is nearly twice as much as that of their cousin, the chickadee, with whom they share several behaviors—nesting in tree cavities; caching seeds; foraging in trees for beetles, ants, caterpillars, and spiders. Titmice even have a call that resembles the chickadee’s “dee-dee.” But that is only one call in a quite impressive vocal repertoire. Depending on what source you read, they have as many as twelve calls and several types of songs. While their songs are generally for advertising their territories and deterring rivals, many of their calls are used to announce the presence of a predator. They emit a high-pitched note when a hawk is flying and a scolding call when a predator is perched or on the ground. Researchers have found their scolds will vary depending on whether the predator is a screech owl or a red-tailed hawk. It is believed that other songbirds understand and benefit from the titmouse’s predator alerts.

So on this day when one titmouse scolded and followed One-Foot from the feeder to the bush, I imagined the scolding was communicating something of urgency. But what? With no predators in sight, could this other bird have been a rival trying to chase One-Foot away? If the bird was One-Foot’s mate, what then would this scolding mean? To me, it looked like impatience. But my interpretation of “hurry up!” could have been completely wrong. As it turned out, something important may indeed have been going on. That day was the very last time I ever saw One-Foot. When the bird finished eating the peanut, it flew off and never returned.

After at least five months of making regular trips to my yard, One-Foot was gone for good. Perhaps it had been driven away. Perhaps it had been captured later by a cat or a hawk. But I’d like to think it moved to a new territory with its mate to find a suitable cavity for nesting. As sad as it was that One-Foot disappeared, it was a joy to have seen this resilient titmouse make it through the winter, living up to the bold reputation of the species.



BirdSafeKC: a new conservation project

By MRBO Director Dana Ripper

MRBO has teamed up with its long-time partner, Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City, to help reduce bird collisions with windows in the KC metro area! This program is called BirdSafeKC and consists of a bird carcass monitoring project (BirdStrikesKC), outreach to building owners and managers, and an effort to raise public awareness via presentations and multimedia. The BirdSafeKC program just began in April of this year and we have already made strides in recruiting citizen scientists for surveys and initiating contacts with building owners. Moving forward, we will continue to monitor the buildings that are most prone to bird collisions. The BirdStrikesKC project has almost doubled its volunteer base for the fall survey season.



The Problem

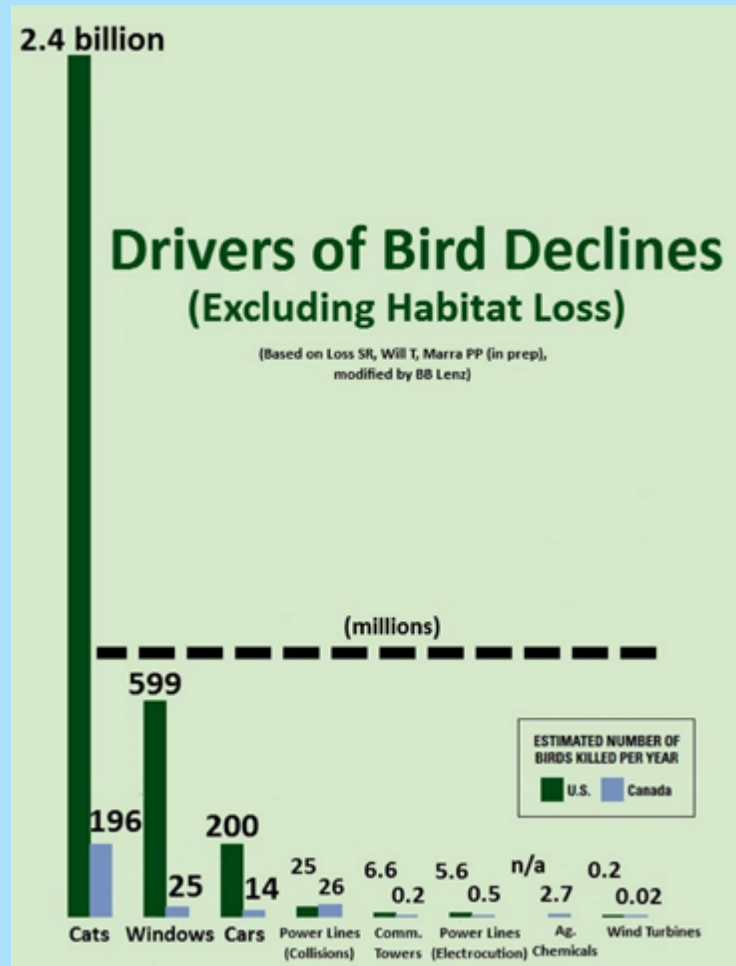
» Collisions with windows kill an estimated 365 to 988 million birds each year in the United States¹. Over half of these window strikes occur on low-rise buildings. This is the second most common cause of direct bird mortality, after free-roaming cats.

» A recent study² by Cornell University indicated that Kansas City is the 7th-most dangerous city in the country for migrating birds based on a combination of geography, avian migration patterns and the city's building configurations and disorienting lights.

» Birdwatchers and other casual observers in Kansas City have supplied numerous accounts of finding window-killed birds at a variety of KC buildings, bridges and walkways.

¹Loss, S.R., T. Will, S.S. Loss and P.P. Marra. 2014. Bird-building collisions in the United States: Estimates of annual mortality and species vulnerability. The Condor: Ornithological Applications Vol. 116: 8-23.

²Horton, K.G., C. Nilsson, B.M. Van Doren, F.A. La Sorte, A.M. Dokter and A. Farnsworth. 2019. Bright lights in the big cities: migratory birds' exposure to artificial light. Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment Vol. 17(4): 209-214



Left: Data compiled by American Bird Conservancy, based on Loss et al. 2014, showing window strikes are the 2nd highest driver of direct mortalities.

Below: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Tennessee Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Swainson's Thrush.
Found and photographed by BirdStrikesKC volunteers K. Anton, A. Talbot and D. McCreary.

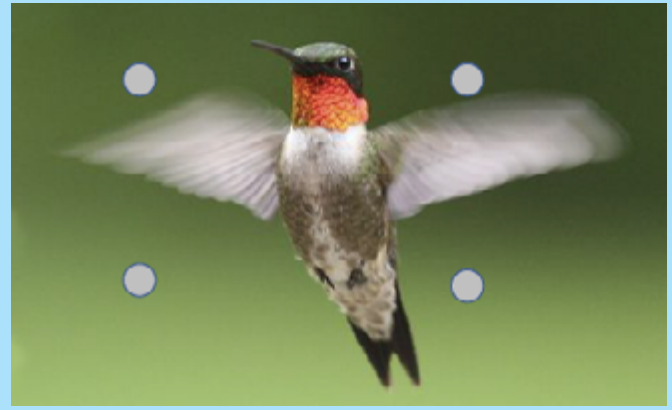


Solutions

» Start by documenting areas where window strikes are frequent. They do not occur all over a building; typically there is one or just a few windows that are causing bird mortalities. These windows may be highly reflective, transparent, and/or have nearby vegetation that “tricks” birds into flying into the window.

» Once problematic windows are identified by documenting frequent bird strikes, a building owner or manager can choose to implement one of a number of reduction strategies. There are many after-market window treatments designed specifically to deter birds from hitting windows while being decorative or almost invisible to the human eye. In some cases a solution may simply involve partially closing blinds inside the window or placing something decorative in front of it.

» Burroughs Audubon and the Missouri River Bird Observatory have compiled information on strike reduction techniques and products. We help find the most efficient, inexpensive ways for property managers to save birds.



Above: A Ruby-throated Hummingbird near a window treated with 2-inch by 2-inch adhesive dots. These dots are largely invisible to the human eye but alert birds to the presence of the window. These dots are one of several window treatments that can be used to reduce bird collisions.

BirdStrikesKC's first survey season



Lincoln's Sparrow, found and photographed by K. Anton.

In Spring 2019, Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City and the Missouri River Bird Observatory trained and deployed 12 volunteer surveyors. Volunteers chose the building(s) they wanted to survey and did so on their own schedules. A survey consisted of walking on public sidewalks all around a building and looking for dead birds on the pavement or vegetation within 20 feet of the building. Once a dead bird was located, surveyors noted the window with which it had collided (based on where it had fallen) and took several pictures of the bird and window for identification and record-keeping. Photographs and location records were entered into the BirdStrikesKC Project in the app iNaturalist. Surveyors also recorded when they performed a survey but found no bird carcasses.

Thirteen buildings were surveyed regularly from late April to the end of May. An additional six buildings were surveyed once. Three of the buildings that were regularly visited had no bird mortalities! Unfortunately, several buildings were found to have windows that are extremely risky for birds. Those buildings will continue to be surveyed and MRBO and Burroughs staff will be reaching out to the building owners with solutions.

Spring 2019 BirdStrikesKC Volunteers

DeAnn McCreary
Annette Talbot
Theresa Enderle
Laurie Kosmiski
Nicole LaPlante
Mark Mahaffey
Sherry Leonardo
Joseph Mosley
Cathy Vuchetich
Laura Gilchrist

Right: first volunteer training session at Burroughs Audubon Library.



We would also like to thank Krystal Anton, the Recycling and Waste Reduction Coordinator of Johnson County Community College. Krystal has established an excellent window strike research and mitigation program at JCCC, and has provided invaluable guidance and assistance on all aspects of the BirdSafeKC project.

Total Bird Mortalities at Thirteen Buildings in Kansas City April 15th - May 31st, 2019

Species	
Swainson's Thrush	9
Unknown (due to condition)	6
Tennessee Warbler	5
Gray Catbird	4
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	3
American Robin	2
House Wren	2
Mourning Dove	2
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2
Red-eyed Vireo	2
Warbler spp.	2
American Redstart	1
Black-and-White Warbler	1
Chipping Sparrow	1
Common Yellowthroat	1
Eastern Kingbird	1
European Starling	1
Nashville Warbler	1
Prothonotary Warbler	1
Summer Tanager	1
Thrush spp.	1
Vireo spp.	1
White-throated Sparrow	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1
Total	52



Swainson's Thrush during fall migration in Missouri.



Results from Buildings Surveyed Two or More Times

Building Code	Number of Days Surveyed	Survey Date Range	Number of Window Strikes	Species represented in sample	Average strikes/survey day
1	2	5/12 and 5/21	0		0.00
2	13	4/15 - 5/29	0		0.00
3	7	4/17 - 5/7	0		0.00
4	9	5/1 to 5/31	1	unknown; survived	0.11
5	9	4/16 - 5/30	1	Tennessee Warbler	0.11
6	6	4/16 - 5/30	1	Brown Creeper	0.17
7	7	5/10 - 5/26	2	Common Yellowthroat, Tennessee Warbler	0.29
8	14	5/2 - 5/30	6	Swainson's Thrush, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Kingbird	0.43
9	6	4/15 - 5/30	6	Dark-eyed Junco, American Redstart	0.33
10	7	5/4 - 5/21	4	Nashville Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Tennessee Warbler, European Starling	0.57
11	21	4/15 - 5/26	19	Swainson's Thrush, Prothonotary Warbler, Grey Catbird, Mourning Dove, Red-eyed Vireo, Common Grackle, Yellow-billed Cuckoo	0.90
12	2	4/26 and 4/27	3	American Robin, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Chipping Sparrow	1.50
13	6	4/26 to 5/18	15	Tennessee Warbler, Swainson's Thrush, Summer Tanager, Black-and-White-Warbler, American Robin, House Wren, White-throated Sparrow	2.50
Total			52		

Summer & Fall 2019

Completed:

- » Volunteer feedback solicited. Survey protocol improved.
- » Volunteer surveyor training conducted in late summer to prepare for a second survey season in Fall 2019.

In progress:

- » Surveys resumed 1 September 2019 at high priority buildings and those that need more data collected. Carcass surveys will continue until 15 November.
- » Begin initial contacts with building owners and managers at buildings that have already been identified as high priority by spring surveys.
- » Help cooperating owners/managers install window treatments; continue surveying those buildings post-installation.



Upcoming Events

See more events as they're added at <https://mrbo.org>

Saline County Career Center Birds and Butterflies Class

Sept. 26th and Oct. 3rd from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm
Join the staff of the Missouri River Bird Observatory to learn about the beautiful winged creatures you can find in your own backyard! Learn fun facts, how to identify and how to help Missouri's birds and butterflies. This class is perfect for beginners and enthusiasts who want to enhance their outdoor experience. The class costs \$29 for two sessions and is held at the Saline County Career Center in Marshall, MO.

Family Camping Night

Sat. Sept. 28th at 6:00 pm until 11:00 am on Sunday Sept. 29th
Join the Missouri River Bird Observatory and the Young Explorer's Club at our family camping night! All families are welcome and camping equipment is available upon request. We will be camping in the special use area of the campground at Arrow Rock State Historic Site at 6:00pm on Saturday, Sept. 28th. This event is FREE to all families, so come camp with us and participate in all sorts of fun programs and activities! Please register beforehand by emailing paige.witek@mrbo.org or calling 660-837-3888.

Wah'Kon-Tah Prairie Days

Oct. 12th all day
Join MRBO and many other prairie biologists to learn about one of the most diverse, well-managed prairie landscapes in

Missouri! All are welcome at this family-friendly event. Learn about current and historic prairie biota, including the Greater Prairie-Chicken, which is found at Wah'Kon-Tah and only a few other prairies in Missouri. You will also find bird-friendly beef provided by the Audubon Conservation Ranching program!

Arrow Rock Heritage Festival

Oct. 12th and 13th from 10 am until 4 pm
Arrow Rock was one of the first town's to host a heritage craft festival, and its festival continues to draw thousands each year. Enjoy lost-art crafts demonstrated and sold by costumed artisans, live music and entertainment, great food, and the historic ambiance you won't find anywhere else! Admission is \$2 per day and includes parking.

Burroughs Banding Series

Nov. 9th from 11 am until 2 pm
Join MRBO at Burroughs Audubon Library for a bird banding demonstration, held inside where you can meet your favorite backyard birds up close. If the weather does not permit banding we will have a special Bird ID game and bird bingo!
Dec. 14th from 11 am until 2 pm
Join MRBO at Burroughs Audubon Library for a second bird banding demonstration! If the weather does not allow for banding on this date we will be doing a special program on all the many awesome bird adaptations.



*You are invited to the 2nd Annual
MRBO Supporters Appreciation Party!*



*October 19th, 2019
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.*

*Chez Trappeur Wine Bar and Bistro
406 Main Street, Arrow Rock*

*Heavy hors d'oeuvres featuring Audubon-certified beef
Wine & Beer*

*Free for current MRBO Supporters
\$50/person for new supporters - includes a year supportership*



*Please direct RSVPs and any questions
about your current status as a Supporter to:
dana.ripper@mrbo.org*





Hope is The Thing With Feathers

The Missouri River Bird Observatory's
Fourth Annual Photography Contest



Announcing MRBO's 4th annual Missouri bird photography contest! All amateur photographers from anywhere are welcome, but photographs must be of wild birds taken in Missouri.

This year, the contest will have four categories - Prairie Birds, Wetland Birds, Forest Birds and Birds of the Backyard! We will offer two awards with prize money in each category - one regular and one youth (8-17) award. There will also be a "Best in Show" award. Photographs will be judged by a panel of professional photographers, artists, and bird conservationists.

Also new this year: any photographer submitting three or more photos will automatically receive a one-year MRBO supportership!

Save the Dates!

Contest opens October 1st and closes on December 31st, 2019

See the rules and submit at: <https://mrbo.org/photocontest2019>

This webpage will go live on October 1st.

Entry fees are \$25 for adults and \$10 for youth. All entry fees support MRBO's education program.

To see submissions from previous years' photo contests:
<https://mrbo.org/hope-is-the-thing-with-feathers-2018-photo-contest-entries/>
<https://mrbo.org/hopehasfeathers/>
<https://mrbo.org/images-of-hope-entries/>

