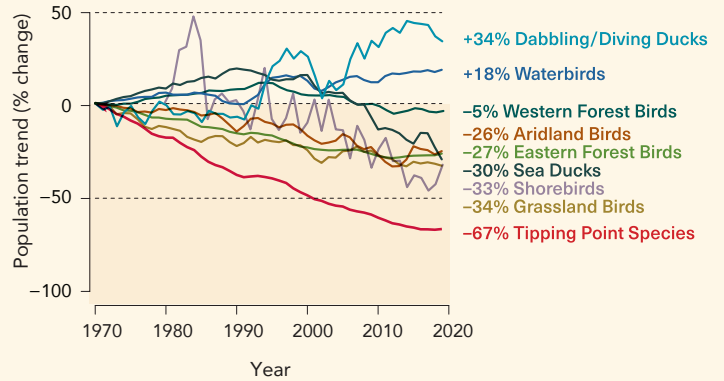




Let's Bring Birds Back!

Bird conservation policy priorities to help recover our bird populations

The 2022 State of the Birds report documents continuing bird losses in America, including aridland birds, grassland birds, forest birds, and shorebirds. The report also identifies a set of 70 Tipping Point species that are fast plummeting toward Endangered Species Act listing and are on a trajectory to lose another 50% of their populations over the next 50 years. Bending the loss curve of bird populations in America will require effective laws, policies, science, planning, coordination, and funding. In the end, success will require that bird conservation interests work together as partners with adequate resources to help bring birds back.



Bobolink by Brad Imhoff/Macaulay Library

PRIORITY #1

Enhance funding for habitat and partnerships

Increased funding for bird habitat conservation is urgently needed. This includes passing legislation that will expand funding, including for states through the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, and internationally under the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act. It is also necessary to expand appropriations for programs that conserve birds and engage partners and communities, including the Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, the Urban Bird Treaty program, collaborative efforts like the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan and Partners in Flight, and dedicated funding for Birds of Conservation Concern.

BIRD POLICY SPOTLIGHT

Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act (H.R. 9135, S.4187)

This legislation would enhance the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to increase authorized funding for projects across the Western Hemisphere, from \$6.5M to up to \$25M, while easing match requirements and expanding staff capacity, to help expand its impacts for birds across their full migratory ranges.

PRIORITY #2

Reduce hazards and threats facing birds

Bringing back birds will require reducing deadly threats, including limiting hazards from industrial activities by establishing a permitting program under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and passing legislation to safeguard the law. Other issues include addressing seabird bycatch by ratifying the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, lessening the risks of building collisions through the Bird-Safe Buildings Act, and controlling mosquitoes and avian disease in Hawaii through appropriations for ESA recovery and State of the Birds, as well as utilizing \$14 million in funding under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Furthermore, far-reaching actions to reduce the impacts and causes of climate change are critically important for bird conservation.

BIRD POLICY SPOTLIGHT

Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

The MBTA has protected birds for more than a century. In addition to managing hunting activities, it has helped reduce avoidable hazards from industrial activities, such as oil wastewater pits. Now, there is an opportunity to modernize MBTA rules and statute through incidental-take permitting, and by affirming longstanding bird protections through legislation like the Migratory Bird Protection Act (H.R. 4833).

Baltimore Oriole by Linda Petersen/Macaulay Library





Greater Sage-Grouse by Melissa Hafting/Macaulay Library

PRIORITY #3

Expand planning and coordination for bird conservation

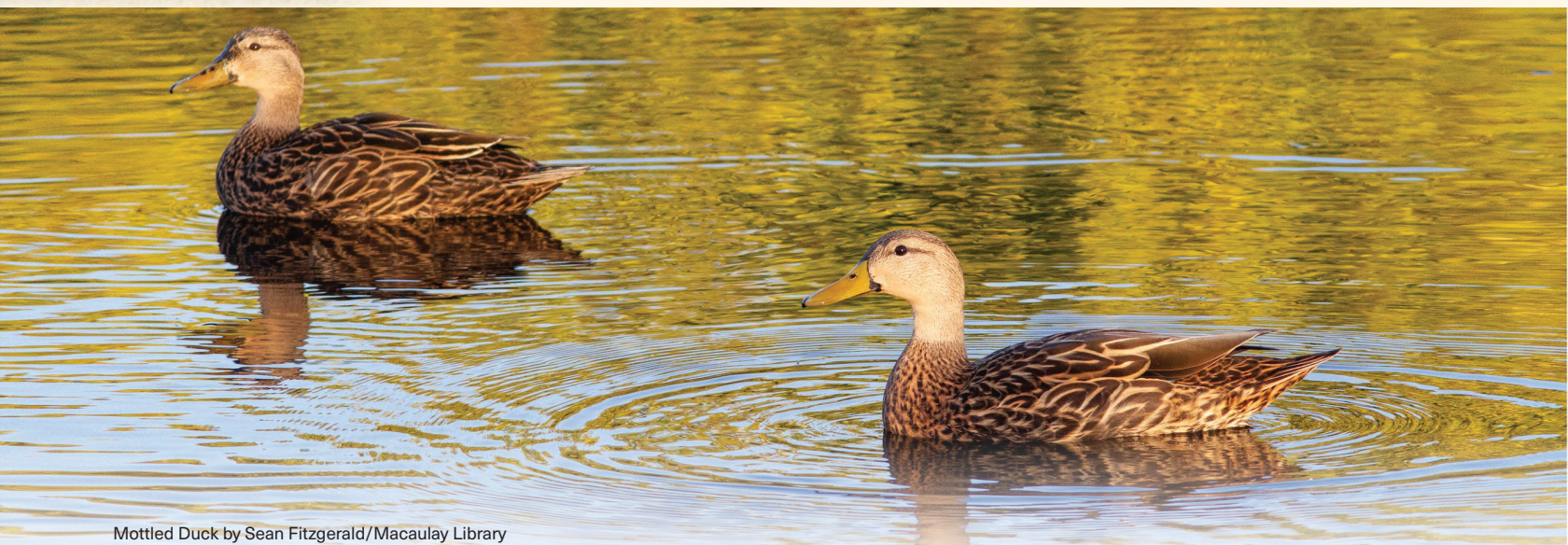
The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (Section 2912) requires the government to monitor bird populations and identify priority species, places, and actions to conserve birds. Given the urgency to coordinate bird-conservation actions, this law can be updated and further implemented to help expand commitments for planning, data sharing, and coordination.

Federal agencies can pursue opportunities to expand coordination through the Council on the Conservation of Migratory Birds and interagency MOUs, and with other nations and partners.

BIRD POLICY SPOTLIGHT

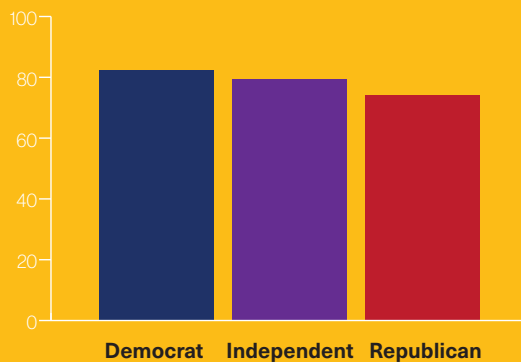
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (FWCA)

Congress can enhance implementation of FWCA by reauthorizing funding and providing additional updates to help expand coordination and planning to improve bird conservation efforts.



Mottled Duck by Sean Fitzgerald/Macaulay Library

Americans Across the Political Spectrum Vote for Birds and Wildlife



Percentage of poll respondents who said a political candidate's support for wildlife conservation policy is moderately to extremely important

Responses from a survey of 1,998 U.S. voters drawn from a national random panel. Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2020.