A New Chapter for the NORTH AMERICAN BREEDING BIRD SURVEY

The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is the primary and most reliable source of information on changes in bird populations in the U.S. and Canada.

Enhancing the BBS Program: The 2020-30 Strategic Plan

GOAL 1: Upgrade the program's data collection and management systems to support new data protocols, improve volunteer experience, fill priority geographic gaps, and advance model development to better serve the bird conservation and management communities.

GOAL 2: Ensure BBS data and products are accessible and widely recognized as the authoritative source of information on long-term changes in North American bird populations.

GOAL 3: Develop strong partnerships with other organizations to enhance the BBS program.

These ambitious goals require the support of stakeholders at all levels; from the volunteers who collect data, to the biologists who analyze and disseminate the results, to the senior officials who use the data for conservation and management decisions.

The BBS at a Glance

95,000,000 bird sightings
150,000 annual point counts
3,300 annual surveys
3,000 annual participants
800 scientific publications
600 species monitored

The BBS is Critical for Conservation

The BBS directly and indirectly contributes to all stages of the conservation and management cycle, from identifying conservation needs to evaluating conservation actions.

What is the BBS?

A standardized avian point count survey conducted by thousands of dedicated volunteers across North America, every year, since 1966.

The foundation for science-based decisions concerning bird conservation and management in the U.S. and Canada.

A conservation tool that helps fuel the $75 billion-dollar wildlife-watching industry[1,2].

[1] U.S. DOI, USFWS, U.S. DOC and U.S. Census Bureau, 2016
[2] Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Governments of Canada. 2014

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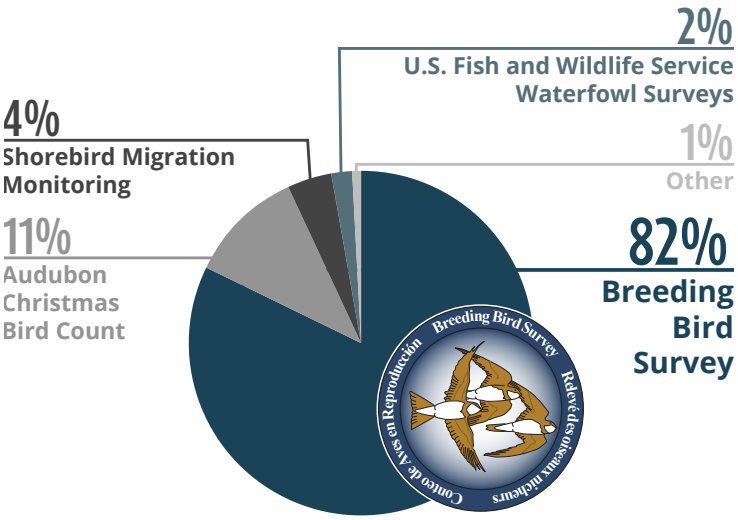
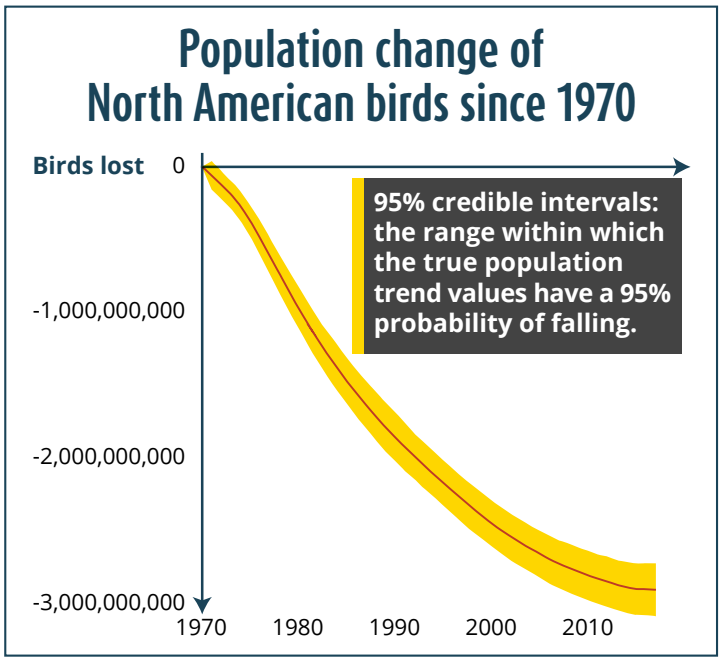
Canada

The BBS in Action

Highlighting the Loss of 3 Billion North American Birds



BBS data were essential in the groundbreaking study published in the prestigious journal *Science* and brought to light the astonishing declines of North American bird populations. **BBS data were the basis for the analysis of 82% of the 529 species assessed in this study[1].**



This study — widely reported in the science community and the mainstream media — estimated that we have lost almost 3 billion birds since 1970[1] which represents one quarter of North America's birds. These staggering declines occurred not only in species of concern but also in many common and familiar species. **As birds are important indicators of ecosystem health[2], these losses show that our ecosystems are losing their ability to support both bird and other wildlife populations,** with potential consequences for human health and well-being[3,4].

[1] Rosenberg, K.V., Dokter, A.M., Blancher, P.J., Sauer, J.R., Smith, A.C., Smith, P.A., Stanton, J.C., Panjabi, A., Helft, L., Parr, M., and Marra, P.P. 2019. Decline of the North American avifauna. *Science* 366(6461): 120-124.

[2] Fraixedas, S., Lindén, A., Piha, M., Cabeza, M., Gregory, R. and Lehikoinen, A. 2020. A state-of-the-art review on birds as indicators of biodiversity: Advances, challenges, and future directions. *Ecological Indicators* 118: 106728.

[3] Díaz, S., Fargione, J., Chapin III, F.S. and Tilman, D. 2006. Biodiversity loss threatens human well-being *PLOS Biol* 4(8): e277.

[4] Aerts, R., Honnay, O. and Van Nieuwenhuyse, A. 2018. Biodiversity and human health: Mechanisms and evidence of the positive health effects of diversity in nature and green spaces. *British Medical Bulletin* 127:5–22.

Major Findings

Since 1970, we've lost:

1,000,000,000 forest birds

> 720,000,000 grassland birds

160,000,000 aerial insectivores

But conservation efforts can bring birds back!

Visit the USGS North American Breeding Bird Survey website or the 3 Billion Birds Lost site for more information.

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