



Montana Bird Conservation Partnership

February 2011

<http://avianscience.dbs.umt.edu/links/partners.php>
<http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/management/birdConservation>

The Montana Bird Conservation Partnership is a coalition of representatives from state, federal, and tribal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector dedicated to conserving bird populations and habitats in Montana. Our mission is to “keep common birds common” while also conserving sensitive or rare species. We use science to direct habitat conservation priorities, and work with landowners and managers to recommend conservation actions that are practical and sustainable for land stewards.

We support a partnership-based approach to state and regional implementation of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) and the four National Bird Conservation Initiatives:

- Partners in Flight North American Landbird Conservation Plan,
- U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan,
- Waterbird Conservation for the Americas, and
- North American Waterfowl Management Plan.



Over 400 species of birds depend on Montana's landscapes for breeding, migration, and winter habitat.



Photo by Kristi DuBois

Guiding Principles

- Provide information to collaborating partners for consideration in land management decisions.
- Keep common birds and their habitats common so that they do not become endangered, threatened, or rare.
- Conserve, protect, and restore endangered, threatened, and rare bird species and their habitats so their populations are again secure.
- Recognize the social and economic value of birds to the people of Montana.
- Identify opportunities to conserve birds and their habitats within Montana using the best available science.

Our education and outreach activities engage Montana's citizens in bird conservation.



Conservation Priorities

Coordinated All-bird Monitoring

Monitoring is a valuable tool for assessing the effects of conservation action on bird populations. We assess current bird population status and evaluate species adaptations to habitat, management, and climate changes. Statewide current bird monitoring activities include:

- Integrated Bird Monitoring by Bird Conservation Region — a broad-scale landbird monitoring program
- Colonial-nesting Waterbird Surveys — a west-wide program coordinated by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Various special species projects.

Conservation Priorities

Strategic Habitat Conservation

The Montana Bird Conservation Partnership is implementing Strategic Habitat Conservation as a framework for conservation action. We use science to define *biological planning*, such as identifying focal species and setting regional population objectives. We collaborate with analysts to prepare spatially-explicit maps linking populations to specific habitats as part of *conservation design*. Resource specialists in our partnership work to *deliver conservation* programs to affect on-the-ground habitat maintenance and restoration. Lastly, we assess the success of conservation action and refine models and planning tools through *research and monitoring*.



Habitat conservation builds resilience in our landscapes and benefits a wide diversity of wildlife species.

Partners



Our partnership annotated directory is on-line at:
<http://avianscience.dbs.umt.edu/links/partners.php>

Action Plan

At a workshop in December 2010, the Montana Bird Conservation Partnership identified focal species for short-term conservation action. We identified first steps for a few focal species:

- Develop a Long-billed Curlew initiative to influence grassland conservation
- Coordinate with NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative to enhance habitats for other sagebrush obligate birds, including Brewer's Sparrows and Sage Thrashers
- Assess conservation design options for Black Terns
- Explore Citizen Science monitoring options for Flammulated Owls and Short-eared Owls
- Feature conservation success stories, such as Trumpeter Swan reintroduction, on web pages and in newsletters.
- Evaluate success of conservation easements

Conserving birds and their habitats through science and partnerships