

WHY HELP BIRDS?

A healthy ecosystem depends upon the synergy of its parts and birds play important roles in many ecosystems. One of the best examples of how birds contribute to the health of an ecosystem is their role as biological controls. Birds, especially songbirds, eat vast quantities of insects each year. Birds are also critical in seed dispersal and some birds even function as pollinators.

Equally as important is the role birds play in Iowa's economy. Iowans spend \$45 million on birdseed annually. Nationally, \$38.4 billion is spent by U.S. citizens engaged in wildlife watching, which includes birdwatching.* So, caring about birds yields many positive benefits. Join us in making a difference.

*Statistics courtesy of *Talk of Iowa*, Iowa Public Radio, November 14, 2017



PRAIRIE RAPIDS AUDUBON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
Serving Black Hawk, Grundy, Butler, Bremer, Buchanan and Hardin Counties

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9. PREVENT WINDOW STRIKES

Birds only see the sky and trees reflected in windows so they may collide with the glass and often perish.

There are many ways to prevent window strikes by using special tape, parachute cords, or other products. See links to DIY ideas & products on the **gopras.org** website. At night, turn off lights that are not needed, this can reduce glare & prevent window strikes at night.

10. SUPPORT CONSERVATION

Quality bird conservation requires work in the area of research, habitat & education. Donate money to your local Audubon group (Prairie Rapids Audubon), or Sierra Club, the Iowa Chickadee Check-off or the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.

10 Simple Things You Can Do to Help Birds



American Goldfinch—Photo by Kenneth Heiar

**PRAIRIE RAPIDS
AUDUBON SOCIETY**

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**Waterloo, Iowa
Iowa's 1st
Bird-Friendly City!**

TEN SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP BIRDS

1. LIMIT PESTICIDE USE

Although pesticides can help keep your garden free of insect pests, they also impact bird life. During the breeding months many birds need insects to provide protein to their growing chicks. Plus, many insects are beneficial pollinators! So, consider using less pesticides & enjoy more birds.

2. PROVIDE CLEAN WATER

Birds need a clean source of water for drinking and bathing. Clean feathers help keep a bird cool in the summer and warm in the winter.



3. PLANT NATIVE SPECIES

Planting wildlife-friendly landscapes provides birds with shelter & food. Native plants often conserve water, and are often pest resistant. They attract pollinators which birds can also eat as a tasty source of protein.

4. KEEP CATS INDOORS

Free-ranging domestic cats kill 1.4 to 3 *billion* songbirds



annually. Help protect birds & other small mammals. Plus, keep your cat safe from disease, cars, and even predators like owls & hawks by keeping them indoors.

5. BUY SHADE-GROWN COFFEE

Shade-grown coffee plantations support tremendously higher numbers of bird species than deforested ones. Buy shade-grown coffee, it benefits birds & all wildlife & the people who live & work where it is grown.

6. GO BIRDING!

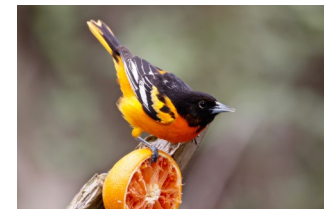
Learn about birds to foster appreciation for conservation. Attend local field trips and programs sponsored by **Prairie Rapids Audubon Society**. Participate in citizen science projects like the Christmas Bird Count, etc. See gopras.org for details.

7. GIVE THEM SHELTER

Pine, cedar trees, shrubs and tall grasses provide shelter for many songbirds and raptors. Even dead trees & branches provide shelter for cavity nesting birds. Plans for species-specific houses & boxes can be found online. A simple brush pile near your feeders is also important for giving birds protection from predators.

8. FEED THE BIRDS

To attract different birds, offer a variety of seeds, suet, nectar, nuts, etc. The kind of feeder you use—hopper, platform, tube, etc. will also help determine the kinds of birds you attract. Finches prefer thistle seed, while black sunflower seeds appeal to many species of birds. Remember, keep feeders clean to prevent disease.



Baltimore Oriole
Photo by Scott Garrett