What We Are Doing

Window collisions are one of the leading direct human causes of bird mortality, killing at least one billion birds annually in the U.S. Audubon chapters, centers, and programs are working with communities to make buildings safer for birds and raise awareness about how to prevent collisions.

For more information visit:

www.audubon.org

Audubon

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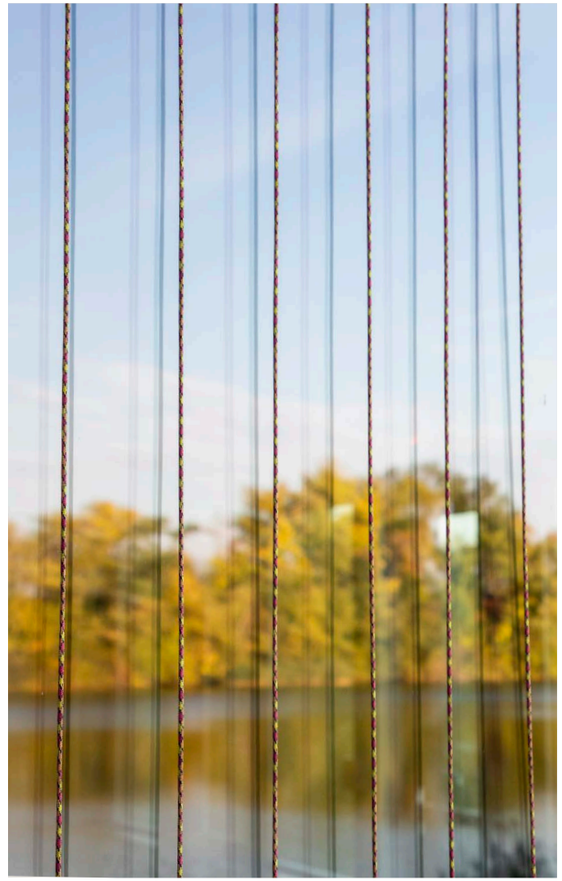
Content adapted from the BirdSafe Homes brochure, designed and produced by the Bird-window Collision Working Group (BCWG), a collaboration between The Acopian Center for Ornithology, Muhlenberg College, Lehigh Valley Audubon Society, Wyncote Audubon Society and Audubon. Infographics: Julie Rossman/Audubon and adapted from "Reflections of a Bird Collision Monitor," originally published in *Audubon* magazine, Spring 2024 issue, and "Unseen Danger: One Day of Deadly Window Strikes for New York's Birds" on Audubon.org. *To receive our print magazine, become a member by making a donation today.* Photos: Cover, Luke Franke/Audubon; Blackpoll Warbler, Sydney Walsh/Audubon; Patio Door, Mike Fernandez/Audubon. Illustrations: Yeji Kim/Audubon.

BIRDSAFE HOMES

Making Your Home Safe for Birds



Audubon

Building collisions kill at least a billion birds every year.

SAD FACTS:

- **Up to 50% of bird-window collisions leave no evidence at all.**
- **Many of the birds that fly away are likely to die later of their injuries.**
- **Birds most often suffer concussions and internal injuries which can take days to kill them.**
- **If a collision kills a parent bird, the young will most likely also die.**
- **This is all preventable if people take action at their own homes.**

Blackpoll Warbler

Why Collisions Happen

Collisions occur for two main reasons: Reflective or transparent surfaces and artifical lights at night.

Glass: Glass and other reflective or transparent surfaces can confuse birds by reflecting realistic images of the surrounding environment or by appearing transparent and invisible.

Lights: Artificial lights and skyglow around buildings can distract and disorient birds, especially when they are migrating at night. Some birds will circle in confusion until dawn, when they land and are subject to other urban threats.

YES—IN YOUR BACKYARD

Skyscrapers aren't the only collision culprit. Low-rise and residential buildings account for an overwhelming proportion of annual bird-strike deaths nationwide, a 2014 study showed.

What You Can Do

There are easy, economical ways to help birds see your windows.

AT HOME

MOVE FEEDERS

Place bird feeders and baths less than three feet from the nearest window to prevent birds from gaining deadly speed as they take off. Even better: place the feeder directly on the window.

FIX WINDOWS

Face the problem head-on by making windows and glass doors more visible to birds. A wide variety of store-bought and DIY solutions have proved effective (the next panel offers a few options).

LIMIT LIGHTS

Nighttime lighting can draw in and disorient birds, particularly during migration season. Close curtains, shades, or blinds and limit exterior illumination. Direct outdoor lights downward and, where possible, set up motion sensors to ensure bulbs only switch on when needed.

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

JOIN EXISTING EFFORTS

Check out audubon.org/lights-out and also try searching online for local efforts to increase awareness, monitor for collisions, encourage building owners to take action, and advocate for legislation.

START SOMETHING NEW

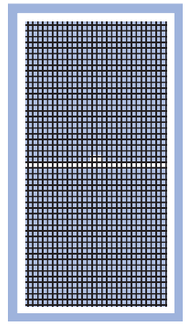
If no one in your community is working on preventing collisions, you can be the first. Contacting local conservation groups is a good place to start.

DOCUMENT THE TOLL

If you find a dead or injured bird, take a photo and report the details on dBird.org or the iNaturalist app. Gently place injured birds in a paper bag and bring them to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Clear Winners

Options abound for window treatments to keep birds safe—many easy to make or install yourself. Find a method that fits your budget and preferences.

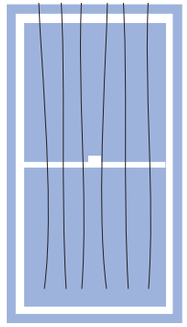


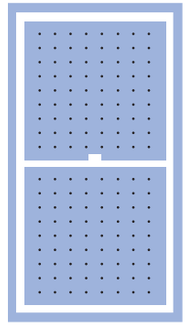
INSECT SCREENS

One of the most effective collision deterrents—when installed on the exterior of windows—does double duty by also keeping unwanted bugs out of your home.

HANGING CORDS

Either secured above and below or left to dangle in the breeze, closely spaced vertical cords on the outside of windows prevent most strikes—and many enjoy the design. Options are available on the Acopian BirdSavers website: www.birdsavers.com





PATTERNED DOTS

On window exteriors, place ready-made films or tape or paint your own dots no more than 2″ vertically and 2″ horizontally apart (or even better for tiny birds: in a 2″-by-2″ grid). Some examples:

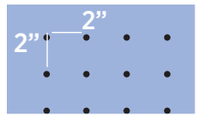
Feather Friendly:
shop.featherfriendly.com

CollidEscape:
www.collidescape.org

What Does Not Work

Single stickers of any shape or size are ineffective and prove why the 2 x 2 rule is so important. Another reason to use smaller markers, spaced properly: Save your view while saving birds.

SPACING IS IMPORTANT



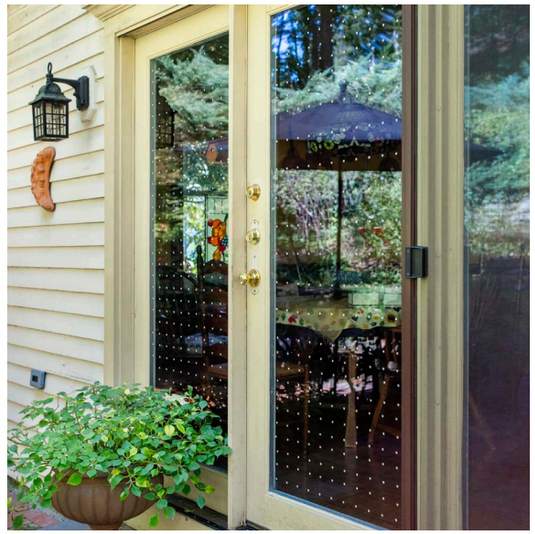
Keep In Mind

OUTSIDE IS BEST

Anything you use to help birds realize there is a glass barrier in front of them works best, and sometimes only, if it is on the outside of the window.

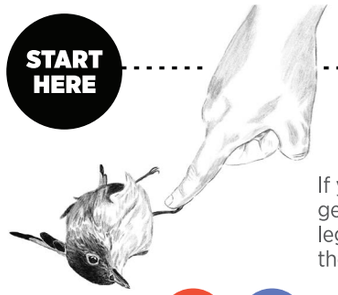
DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOR

Birds that repeatedly fly against a window are fighting their own reflection, thinking it is a rival bird. This situation is best handled by temporarily covering the entire window to block the reflection. You can use anything, even simple bar soap or tempera paint. After a few days simply wash it off. Reapply if needed.



I Found a Bird That Crashed Into a Window! ...Now What?

START HERE



Is the bird dead?

If you can't tell, gently brush its legs. If they're stiff, the bird is dead.

NO — YES → **Take pictures and report the finding on dBird.org or iNaturalist.**

Do you have a safe container for the bird?

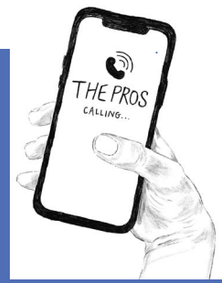
NO — YES

A paper bag or shoebox lined with soft material is best.

If the bird is directly in harm's way, it's okay to move it a short way to a safer spot. If possible, gather materials and return to the bird.

Carefully approach the bird, from behind if possible, and gently pick it up and place it in your bag or box.

Take action at home to prevent collisions. Visit bit.ly/bird-collision to learn more.



Call the Pros

A bird that hits a window needs medical help as soon as possible. Find a licensed wildlife rehabilitator to bring it to.