



Act for Songbirds Talking Points – for use with editors, interviews, or at presentations

Approximately 350 species of birds migrate between their winter homes in Latin America and their breeding grounds in North America.

Habitat loss due to deforestation and development, as well as mortality from human-caused hazards, threaten these Neotropical migrants. Conservation is crucial to ensure their continued survival.

Of the 178 continental bird species included on the U.S. WatchList 2007 (www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/science/watchlist/watchlist.html), more than one-third are Neotropical migrants.

At least 29 species of Neotropical migratory birds listed on the U.S. Watchlist are estimated to have experienced population declines of 45% or greater since surveys began in the 1960s.

The Cerulean Warbler and Olive-sided Flycatcher have each declined more than 70%.

Conservation programs can help reverse downward trends.

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) established a matching grants program that supports migratory bird conservation projects in the United States, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and has a proven record of success.

Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act is America's only source of federal funds specifically dedicated to conserving migratory birds.

Partners in 44 U.S. states/territories and 34 other countries have been involved in 225 Act-supported projects. More than \$21 million in Act grants has leveraged \$97 million in total partner contributions. Land conservation projects have impacted almost three million acres of bird habitat.

The Act passed in 2000 with a maximum authorization of \$5 million per year.

In its first year of funding in 2002, appropriations fell \$2 million short. Current authorization is \$6 million per year, but in 2008, the Act was only appropriated at \$4.5 million.

Representatives Ron Kind (D-WI) and Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD) introduced H.R.5756, and Senator Benjamin Cardin of Maryland introduced legislation S.3490, bills that reauthorize the existing NMBCA at significantly higher funding levels (\$20 million by 2015), to meet the growing conservation needs of Neotropical migratory birds.

Everyone can Act for Songbirds – www.actforsongbirds.org