



PACIFIC BIRDS

HABITAT JOINT VENTURE



Conservation Report 2020-2021



Staff

U.S.

Monica Iglecia, U.S. Coordinator
Sara Evans-Peters, U.S. Assistant Coordinator
Lynn Fuller, Communications Coordinator
Helen Raine, Hawai'i Wetlands Coordinator
Dave Mehlman, Grants Liaison
Mark Petrie, Waterbird Science Liaison

CANADA

Andrew Huang, Canada Coordinator
Kathleen Moore, Conservation Planner
Bruce Harrison, Technical Team Chair

International Management Board

Jeff McCreary, Ducks Unlimited
Blair Hammond, Canadian Wildlife Service,
Environment and Climate Change Canada
David Bradley, Bird Studies Canada
Nanetto Seto, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
Columbia-Pacific Northwest & Pacific Islands Regions
Nancy Newhouse, Nature Conservancy Canada
Eric Taylor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Region
Glenn Lamb, Columbia Land Trust
Karyn Gear, California State Coastal Conservancy
Jasper Lament, Nature Trust of British Columbia
Fern Duvall, Hawai'i Department of Land
and Natural Resources
Cameron Mack, Wildlife Habitat Canada

Joining the board in 2021

Jennifer Davis, American Bird Conservancy
Sara O'Brien, Willamette Partnership
Davia Palmeri, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Kyle Spragens, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Retiring from the board in 2021

Holly Michael, Retired Wildlife Biologist/Manager



Vision

A Pacific Region United for Bird Habitat Conservation

Mission

Creating the Ideal Environment for Bird Habitat Conservation

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Gadwall / © Barry Troutman

A Note from the Board

Pacific Birds is a collaborative, international partnership of hundreds of organizations and individuals implementing strategic conservation actions guided by the best available information. It is our pleasure to share this report on Pacific Birds 2020-2021 conservation achievements, which represents only a small snapshot of the work accomplished.

Pacific Birds celebrates thirty years of partnership-driven conservation in 2021. As we reflect on the past three decades, it is clear that our collective efforts have led to positive conservation outcomes. Today, across Pacific Birds' vast geography, the importance of collaborative partnerships advancing a shared vision has never been greater.

Throughout this global pandemic, wild creatures and wild places have provided refuge for human communities. The International Management Board is committed to advancing conservation efforts that support healthy bird populations and people across the flyways. From the coasts to the oaks, we believe we are truly *strengthened by the flock*.

We look forward to the next decade of Pacific Birds' conservation, and the opportunities to innovate together. We value all of the contributions that our current partners, friends and associates have made and we welcome new people to join us in advancing bird habitat conservation.



Blair Hammond

Canada Steering Committee Chair and
International Management Board Co-Chair



Jeff McCreary

U.S. Steering Committee Chair and
International Management Board Co-Chair



CELEBRATING **30** YEARS OF PARTNER-DRIVEN CONSERVATION

Dunlin at Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge / Jim Culp © [Creative Commons](#)

Changes to the Staff and Board



Joint Venture Coordination

After eight years of dedicated leadership and a career dedicated to conservation, Brad Bales retired from Pacific Birds in early 2021. Brad guided Pacific Birds through a name change and rebranding effort, through conservation priority-setting and expansion to an all-birds scope, and strengthened the international component of the Joint Venture. He did this with a big heart, a sense of humor, and an adept skill at connecting people. We thank Brad for his leadership and wish him well in retirement!

In February 2021, **Monica Iglecia** was hired as U.S. Coordinator. Before joining Pacific Birds, Monica served as Manomet's Assistant Director of Shorebird Habitat Management where she worked closely with staff, partner groups, organizations, and agencies across the Americas to inspire and facilitate habitat improvements at some of the most important places for shorebirds. Monica is committed to creating and supporting an environment where Pacific Birds can thrive, and we are excited to have her on board.

International Management Board

The Pacific Birds International Management Board (Board) is composed of U.S. and Canada Steering Committees that collectively provide leadership and guidance on the direction and priorities of Pacific Birds. There were several transitions on the Board this year.

After more than a decade of voluntary service on the Board, including two terms as the U.S. Co-chair, **Holly Michael** is retiring from Pacific Birds. Holly brought a wealth of knowledge and leadership to Pacific Birds based on her 45-year career in conservation research, management, and policy across the U.S, including twenty years with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. While Holly will be deeply missed as she steps off the Board, we wish her an exciting future seeking out wild places and traveling the world.

The International Management Board and U.S. Steering Committee also expanded in 2021. Four new members, representing state agencies and nonprofit organizations, bring a diverse set of skills and experiences to the Joint Venture. Please join us in welcoming them to the board.



Jennifer Davis

Northwest Regional Director,
American Bird Conservancy



Sara O'Brien

Executive Director,
Willamette Partnership



Kyle Spragens

Waterfowl Section Manager,
Washington Department
of Fish and Wildlife



Davia Palmeri

Conservation Policy and Special
Programs Coordinator,
Oregon Department
of Fish and Wildlife

Conservation Priority Action Plans and Committees

In 2020, Pacific Birds developed strategic action plans for three conservation priorities: Oak and Prairie, Coastal Wetlands, and Hawai'i Wetlands. To support and provide guidance in the implementation of these plans, we expanded the size and scope of our conservation priority committees. This expansion represents a near tripling of the number of active partners engaged in collaborative work advancing mutual conservation objectives.

	Name	Organization	Title
Oak and Prairie	Glenn Lamb	Columbia Land Trust	Executive Director
	Holly Michael	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	Retired
	Jaime Stephens	Klamath Bird Observatory	Science Director, Klamath-Siskiyou Oak Network Coordinator
	Lindsay Cornelius	Columbia Land Trust	Natural Area Manager, East Cascades Oak Partnership Coordinator
	Monica Iglecia	Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture	U.S. Coordinator
	Nicole Maness (Chair)	Willamette Partnership	Partner, Resilient Habitat for Willamette Partnership
	Sara Evans-Peters	Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture	U.S. Assistant Coordinator
Coastal Wetlands	Brandon Reishus	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	Migratory Game Bird Coordinator
	Eric Taylor	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Division Chief, Migratory Birds - Alaska Region
	Greg Green	Ducks Unlimited	Manager of Conservation Programs - Pacific Northwest
	Jeff McCreary	Ducks Unlimited	Director of Operations - Western Region
	Karyn Gear	California State Coastal Conservancy	North Coast Regional Manager
	Kathleen Moore	Environment and Climate Change Canada	Conservation Planner
	Kyle Spragens (Chair)	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Waterfowl Section Manager
	Mark Petrie	Ducks Unlimited	Director of Conservation Planning
	Michael Bowen	California State Coastal Conservancy	Project Manager
	Michael Daigneault	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Coastal Program Regional Coordinator - Alaska
	Monica Iglecia	Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture	U.S. Coordinator
	Sara Evans-Peters	Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture	U.S. Assistant Coordinator
	Vanessa Loveri	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Regional Shorebird Biologist
	Jasper Lament	Nature Trust of British Columbia	Executive Director
	Stan Senner	Retired	
Hawai'i Wetlands	Afsheen Siddiqi	Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife	Biologist
	Fern Duvall	Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife	Maui Nui Program Manager for Native Ecosystems Protection and Management Program
	Helen Raine	Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture	Conservation Coordinator
	Jared Underwood	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Marine Protected Area Manager
	Jason Misaki	Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife	Wildlife Manager
	Judy Drexler	United States Geological Survey	Research Hydrologist
	Kristin Harmon	University of Hawai'i- Manoa	PhD Candidate
	Monica Iglecia	Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture	U.S. Coordinator
	Nanette Seto	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Division Chief, Migratory Birds - Columbia-Pacific Northwest and Pacific Islands
	Scott Fisher	Maui Land Trust	Director of 'Āina Stewardship
	Sheldon Plentovich	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Coastal Program Regional Coordinator - Pacific Islands

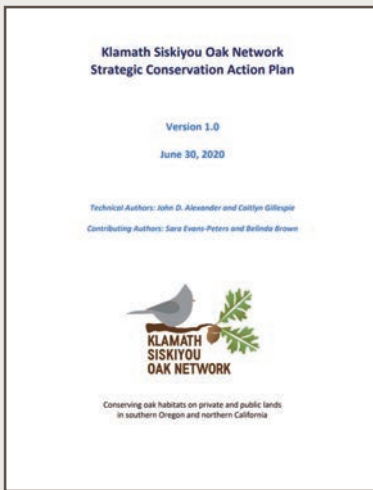
Conservation Priority: Oak and Prairie



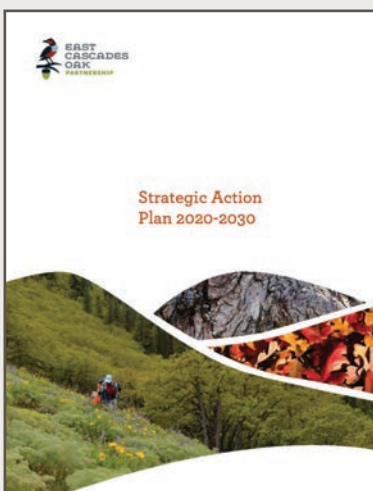
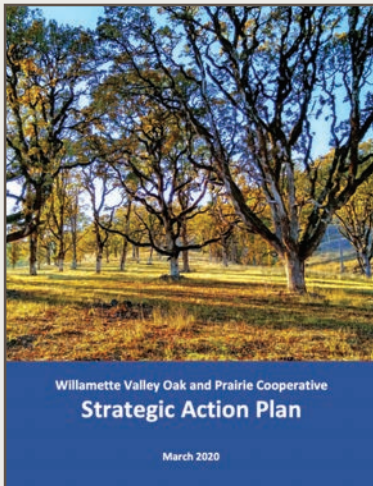
Oak and prairie habitats were selected as a Pacific Birds conservation priority in 2015, due to the substantial loss of these habitats over the past 150 years. Since then, Pacific Birds' Oak and Prairie Program has helped catalyze a regional movement to restore and conserve the Pacific Northwest oak and prairie habitats that birds need and people love. A strong and growing network of partnerships are working to conserve local strongholds and increase the biodiversity and resiliency of oak and prairie ecosystems throughout their historic range. [Acorn Woodpecker](#) (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), [Western Bluebird](#) (*Sialia mexicana*), Oak Titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*) and many other avian species will benefit.

Pacific Birds invested significant resources in 2020-2021 to strengthen partnerships and advance planning initiatives. Several local partnerships are now well positioned to access programmatic funding and implement conservation actions. The Klamath-Siskiyou Oak Network, the Willamette Valley Oak and Prairie Cooperative, and the East Cascades Oak Partnership have completed strategic action plans and are now implementing recommended actions. Pacific Birds recently facilitated the development of strategic plans for the Umpqua Oak Partnership and the Intertwine Oak and Prairie Working Group.

Cherry Hill Willamette Valley © Sara Evans-Peters



Iris seed © Institute for Applied Ecology



Four Pacific Birds Partnership grants were awarded to Oak and Prairie partners in 2020. Three grants supported the transition towards implementation of the recently completed strategic plans. One of the actions identified in the Willamette Valley Oak and Prairie Cooperative Strategic Action Plan is to increase the availability and reduce the cost of native plant materials for restoration. The Institute for Applied Ecology is helping to address this need, as described in [It All Starts with a Seed](#).

In 2021, with Pacific Birds support, a new multi-state coalition was formed around common oak and prairie conservation issues, needs, and goals. In addition to the five partnerships above, the coalition is composed of agencies and organizations from several states and has an activation network of more than 150 people. To date, the coalition has developed a regional oak and prairie threat analysis, a Funding Strategy, and a Marketing and Communications Plan. The coalition is providing a magnified, collective voice about the value of oak and prairie conservation for both wildlife and people.

“*Pacific Birds has made a substantial contribution to our work at Klamath Bird Observatory. Their recent support, whether in facilitating planning or building capacity, has directly benefited our programs which in turn benefits birds, their habitats, and people.*”

- John Alexander, Executive Director,
Klamath Bird Observatory

Conservation Priority: Coastal Wetlands

North American coastal wetlands within the Pacific Birds region span 30 degrees of latitude from northern California to Alaska, making this the conservation priority with the largest geographic scope. These coastal ecosystems support hundreds of bird species using several global flyways. Conserving coastal wetlands not only benefits fish and wildlife populations, but increases the resilience of coastal communities.

Pacific Birds has supported partner-driven, coastal wetlands habitat conservation in the U.S. and Canada since 1991. In 2020-2021, coastal wetland partners were involved in planning, habitat prioritization and on-the-ground conservation, research, and gathering and sharing Indigenous Knowledge.

The Coastal Wetlands Committee initiated a planning process that will culminate in a Coastal Wetlands Plan to guide our conservation work over the next decade. Using methods from the Conservation Standards, the Committee selected and ranked focal habitats based on potential impacts, conservation urgency, and potential partner engagement. Out of seven habitats considered, the highest ranked were eelgrass, tidal wetlands and intertidal mudflats, and freshwater wetlands and lakes.



Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*) © Barry Troutman

It is estimated that more than four million Western Sandpipers pass through Alaska's Copper River Delta during migration, and those same birds rely on the network of coastal habitats along the Pacific coast during their annual cycles.

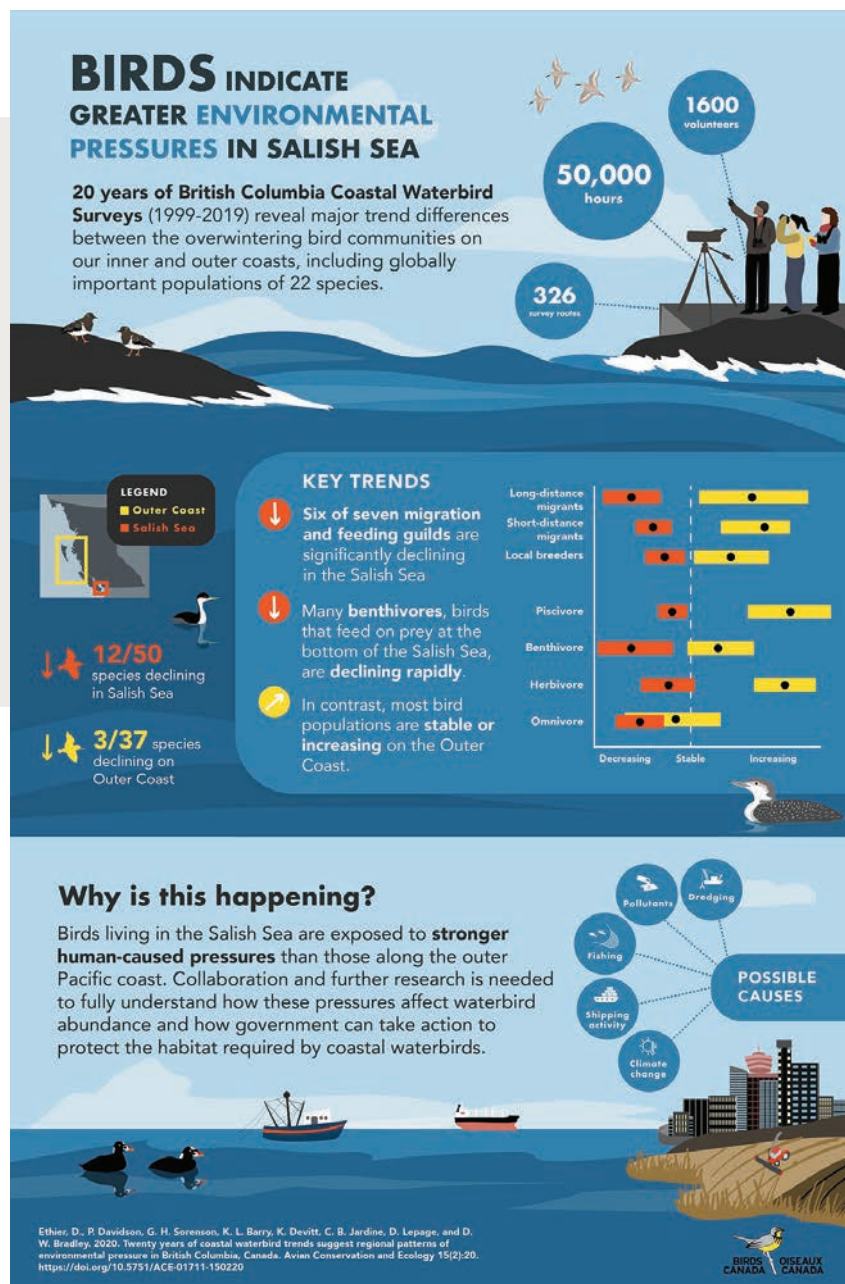
Padilla Bay © Washington State Department of Ecology

Partners advanced our understanding of environmental pressures on coastal waterbirds with a [2021 paper that analyzed data from the British Columbia Coastal Waterbird Survey](#). Waterbird abundance is considered a useful indicator for environmental or habitat quality. Twenty years of monthly observations provided a long-term data set from which to draw conclusions about species abundance—and inform future conservation.

Partner projects collectively conserved thousands of coastal acres in 2020–2021. Columbia Land Trust and partners conserved [2500 acres of working forest lands on the Oregon Coast](#), while in California’s Humboldt Bay a 357-acre parcel was acquired through the [Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Acquisition and Restoration Partnership](#).



Birding at Samoa Dunes
© Friends of the Dunes

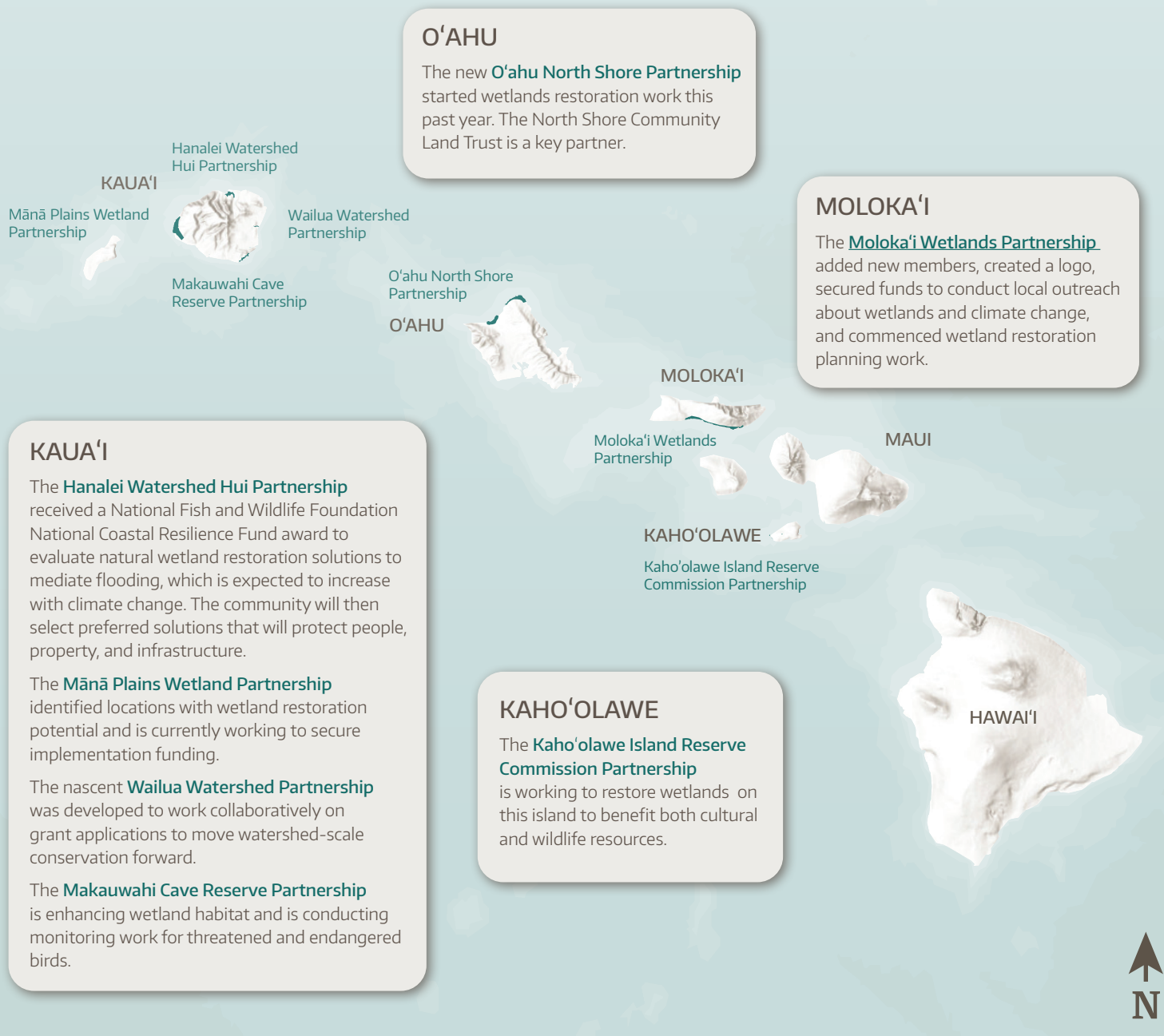


“The Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Conservation Area includes bay and tidelands parcels frequented by shorebird species in decline, including Dunlin. These are the lands and waters that we are working to convey to the Wiyot Tribe for long-term conservation ownership. This is truly an amazing place, and Pacific Birds is playing a critical role in a historic land conservation and land return project.”

– Mike Cipra, Executive Director,
Friends of the Dunes

Conservation Priority: Hawai'i Wetlands

The Hawaiian Islands are a stronghold of globally endemic species. While several conservation partners are dedicated to saving forest and sea birds in Hawai'i, Pacific Birds is catalyzing a needed network of wetland and waterbird focused conservation partnerships to address the concurrent threats of invasive species, non-native predators, and climate change.





Meet the Kickboxer ('alae ke'oke'o) of the Hawaiian Islands

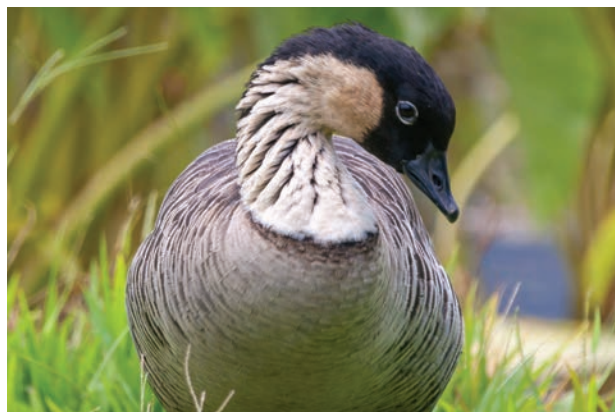
See the 'alae ke'oke'o or Hawaiian Coot (*Fulica alai*) come to life as Hawaiian artist Trysen Kneshige paints a mural of it in real time, aimed at connecting local people with native Hawaiian wildlife.

Over the past year, Pacific Birds staff and partners focused on implementing actions from the Hawai'i Wetlands Strategic Action Plan. Pacific Birds helped partners complete ten grant applications this year, with a success rate of 75%. As a result, \$558,770 in grant awards, along with \$1,146,592 in leveraged funds, will be directed towards the conservation of wetlands habitats. Grant funds will be used for ungulate-proof fencing, waterbird protection at Makauwahi Cave Reserve, wetland habitat enhancement on Kaho'olawe, wetland restoration on O'ahu, and Indigenous-led communications work on Moloka'i. The Moloka'i Wetland Partnership was awarded a \$269,932 grant from the Pacific Island Climate Adaptation Science Center to identify wetlands with 'climate safe' restoration potential. '

Communications and outreach were also an important part of Hawai'i Wetlands work in 2020-2021. Pacific Birds developed an extensive [virtual library](#) of Hawai'i wetland-related resources. We provided assistance to the [Wildlife Friendly Business Initiative](#) on Kaua'i, aimed at amplifying conservation-minded businesses, and were involved with the production of several community outreach products.

“ *The Moloka'i Wetland Partnership has already given me an incredible opportunity to coordinate efforts to assess wetlands for the purposes of improving endangered waterbird habitat and expanding cultural uses.* ”

- Dr. Judith Drexler,
U.S. Geological Survey



Nēnē (*Branta sandvicensis*) / Public Domain

NAWCA Awards Benefit Wetland Species

Partners in the U.S. and Canada have conserved more than 345,000 acres through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) program. The Nature Trust of British Columbia was awarded its first NAWCA grant in 2021, which contributed to the acquisition of three properties along the British Columbia coast. [Five additional partners in Canada, Hawai'i and Oregon also received NAWCA grants in 2021.](#)



A tidal slough connected to the Salmon River Estuary on Vancouver Island. The area is a critical stopover for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, and passerines.

Pacific Birds Partnership Grants

Partnership grants are awarded to U.S. partners to advance Pacific Birds' conservation priorities. These small grants can catalyze larger initiatives, or may lead to increased capacity, outreach, or conservation planning. Thirteen grants were awarded in the fall of 2020, including a [Botulism Reporting Network](#) in Hawai'i, [implementing strategic conservation actions](#) in the East Cascades, and [research on the 'ālae'ula or Hawaiian Common Gallinule](#) (*Gallinula galeata sandvicensis*). See the [Partnership Grants](#) web page to learn more and see the 2021 grant awards.

	Project Name	Partner
Oak and Prairie	East Cascades Oak Partnership Capacity Building	Columbia Land Trust
	Umpqua Oaks Partnership	Partnership for Umpqua Rivers
	An Innovative Communication Strategy for Oak and Prairie Conservation in Oregon	Willamette Partnership
	Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network: Advancing the Conservation of Oak Habitat and Oak-associated Birds in Southern Oregon and Northern California	Klamath Bird Observatory
Coastal Wetlands	History and Change in Tidal wetlands of Willapa Bay Estuary	Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
	Conservation Assessment of Dabob Bay Natural Area	Northwest Watershed Institute
	Southcentral Alaska Migratory Bird Wisdom Keepers Workshop	Chugach Regional Resources Commission
	Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Acquisition and Restoration Partnership	Friends of the Dunes
Hawai'i Wetlands	Botulism Alert System	University of Hawai'i
	'Alae 'Ula Research	Oregon State University
	Kawainui Restoration Ponds Enhancement	Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife
	Mānā Plain Coastal Wetland Partnership Initiative	Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation
	Strengthening Partnerships and Virtual Reserve World In O'ahu	Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife

Conservation Impacts of the 2020 Grants:

124+

Organizations Engaged

1

Position Established

3

Conservation Plans

2

MOUs

384

Acres Protected or Enhanced

5

Acres Restored

2

Spatial Data Layers

62

Species Range Maps

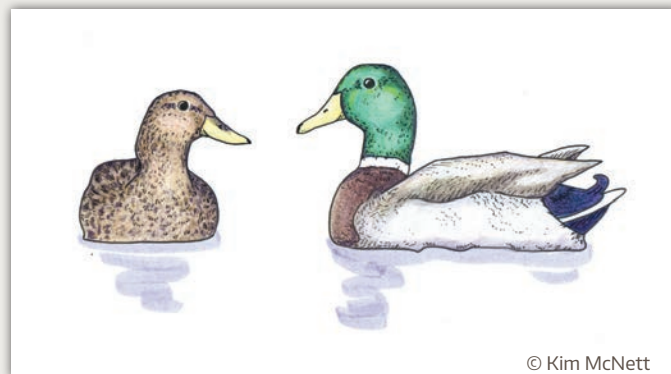
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Botulism Alert Network

Eric Ellingson © [Creative Commons](#)

Sharing Knowledge in Southcentral Alaska

In the spring of 2021, Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC) hosted the Southcentral Migratory Bird Wisdom Keeper's Workshop that brought Elders, youth and other Tribal members, and federal and state managers together around birds. They discussed the history, traditional management, and conservation of migratory birds and shared stories. The Workshop was part of a larger project, partially funded by a 2020 Pacific Birds Partnership Grant, to collect and share Indigenous Knowledge related to migratory birds that are used as subsistence foods in Alaska.



© Kim McNett

Art, science, conservation, subsistence and culture are all woven together in the CRRC project. A pair of (AdA)ch'Aq'iinq' (Eyak language) or Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*).



(AdA)ch'Aq'iinq' range in Southcentral Alaska, one of 62 maps made showing species range and Native place names.

Bringing Birds Back

The 2019 paper, *Decline of the North American Avifauna* (informally known as 3 Billion Birds), galvanized a new effort by the bird conservation community to address major declines in North American bird populations. [The study](#) estimated a net loss of 2.9 billion birds between 1970 and 2017, a 29% decrease.

Pacific Birds staff reviewed the report to help guide how we can be part of bringing birds back. Several trends were striking. Out of the 529 North American breeding species considered in the report, 339 species are found within the Pacific Birds region. Coasts, Western Forests, Arctic Tundra, and the Boreal Forest each have 50% or more of associated species in decline.

In 2021, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released an updated [Birds of Conservation \(BCC\) list](#). The BCC list identifies bird species that, without intervention, would likely become candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Out of the 269 avian taxa presented, 148 birds of concern occur within the Pacific Birds region.

Habitat loss and degradation is one of the most significant drivers of bird declines. Looking forward, we will continue to assess how and where we can address the results of these compelling new syntheses through communications, science, and targeted conservation actions.

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) declined by an estimated 2,372,38 individuals from 1970 to 2017.

They are on the 2021 Birds of Conservation Concern list.



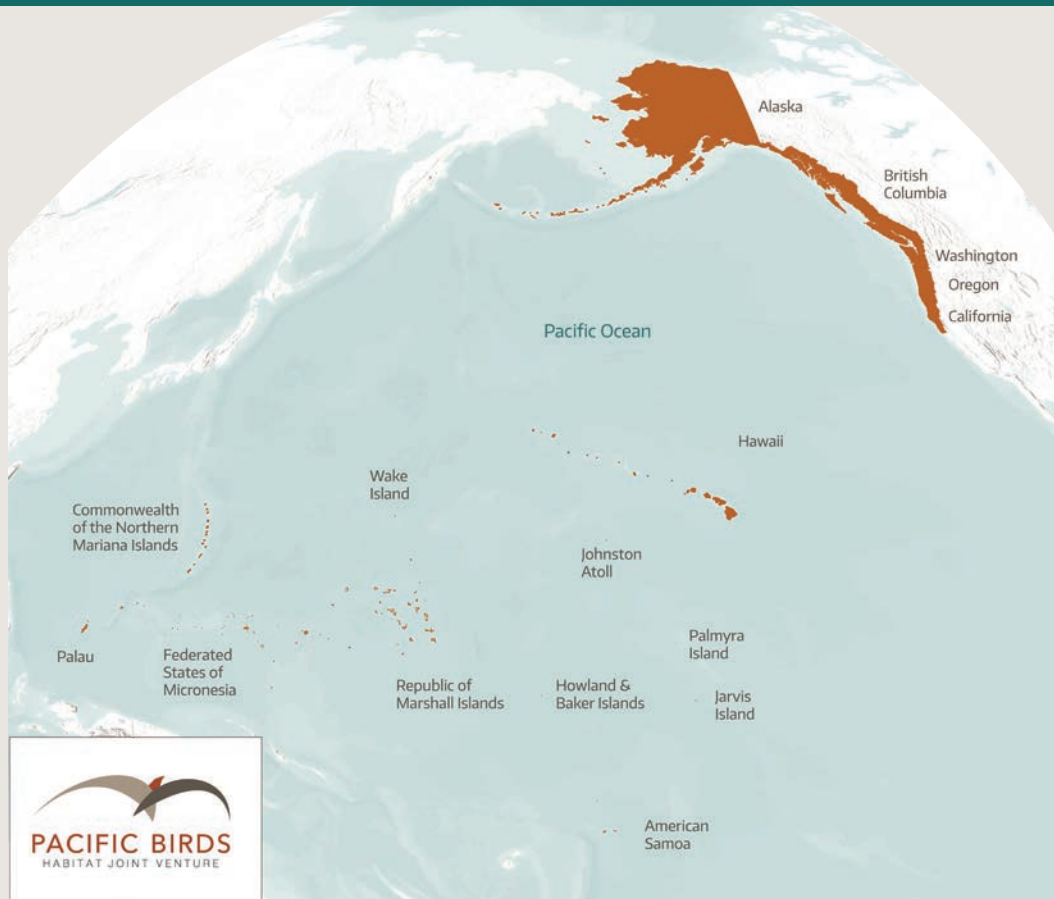
Nigel © [Creative Commons](#)

Celebrating 30 Years 1991-2021

Pacific Birds began in 1991 as the Pacific Coast Joint Venture, working in coastal Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. The early Joint Venture partnerships were a new conservation model, bringing partners together to plan, share resources, secure funding and implement on-the-ground projects to conserve wetlands and migratory waterfowl in the Pacific Flyway. In 1999, Joint Ventures expanded their focus to include all birds and all habitats.

Over the next 20+ years, Pacific Birds' geographic scope expanded to include the Pacific Coast of Alaska (2001), Northwest California and the Willamette Valley of Oregon (2004), Hawai'i (2005), Interior and Northern Alaska (2010), and the rest of the U.S. Pacific Islands (2015). Pacific Birds now encompasses over 473,000,000 acres (~191,400,000 hectares).

In 2015, the Joint Venture went through a rebranding process. We updated our name, logo, and website to reflect new landscapes, new birds and the increasing use of digital platforms to share information. We completed a comprehensive review of where to best use Joint Venture resources, resulting in the International Management Board identifying Oak and Prairie, Coastal Wetlands and Hawai'i Wetlands as priority landscapes.



From the regional conference rooms of the 1990s to the Zoom rooms of 2021, the enduring power of partnerships has been a consistent thread in the Joint Venture. We are still working with some of the people we brought together in our early years, and have added many partners along the way. We are excited to bring in new people and perspectives for the conservation work ahead.

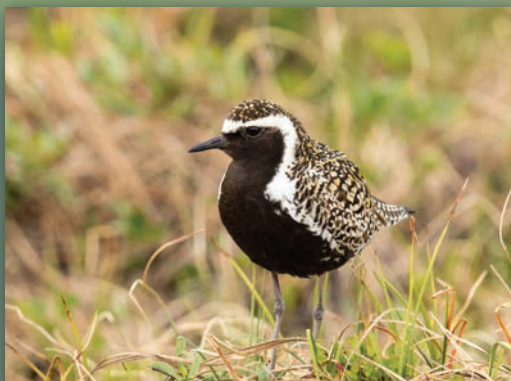


Photo courtesy of Carey Smith

*Thank you to our partners for helping
birds across the landscapes.*

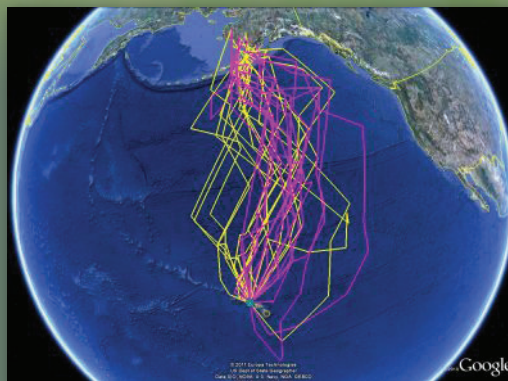
A Bird's Eye View

We approach our work with a flyway and landscape perspective in order to best support the life-cycle needs of migratory birds.



See the April 2021 post [Pacific Golden-Plovers Connect Us](#) to see why habitats in both Alaska and Hawai'i matter to these shorebirds.

Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) in Alaska
/ Mick Thompson © [Creative Commons](#)



The Alaska-Hawai'i Pacific Golden-Plover Connection. The yellow tracks show the path of geolocator equipped birds traveling north in spring to nesting grounds, the purple shows the southward return in fall.

Migration Map: Dr. Oscar W. Johnson, used with permission.

Above Photo: Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) in Hawai'i
/ Shanthanu Bhardwaj © [Creative Commons](#)