



# PACIFIC BIRDS

HABITAT JOINT VENTURE



**Conservation Report 2021-2022**

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## Vision

A Pacific Region United for Bird Habitat Conservation

## Mission

Creating the Ideal Environment for Bird Habitat Conservation

## Land Acknowledgement

Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture acknowledges that the lands on which we work are the traditional lands of more than 250 Indigenous Tribes and Nations—from the Inupiat to the Wiyot to the Kānaka Maoli—who have resided on these lands from time immemorial. Acknowledging these lands is a small step towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and an expression of respect and gratitude for the land.



Bristle-thighed Curlew  
*Numenius tahitiensis*

To meet some of the birds that are benefitting from our partners' conservation work, click on the bird images.

### Cover Photos:

Wood Duck © Barry Troutman

'Alae 'ula or Hawaiian Gallinule / Gary Kramer U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Nicomen Slough, British Columbia © Graham Osborne /

Photo courtesy of The Nature Trust of British Columbia

Ash-throated Flycatcher / Becky Matsubara © Creative Commons



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Rain did not deter partners from gathering in Homer, AK in 2022 to talk about current and future conservation projects.

Left to right: Marie McCarty, Kachemak Heritage Land Trust (KHLT), Monica Iglecia, Carson Chambers (KHLT), Donna Aderhold (KHLT Board President), Syverine Bentz (Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve), Rika Mouw (local artist), and Laura Farwell.

# Note from the Board Co-Chairs

Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture made great strides in conservation for Oak and Prairie, Hawai'i Wetland, and Coastal Wetland habitats over the past year. This report provides a window into some of the achievements of the collective, which are the product of dedicated strategic planning, collaboration, and applied knowledge. In the coming years, large-scale grants acquired in 2022 will result in increased human capacity for conservation, habitats restored or protected, and flyways supported.

While we tentatively emerge from a global pandemic into a changed working landscape, it is a breath of fresh air to reconnect in person with colleagues from across the Pacific Birds geography for the first time since early 2020. This October, the International Management Board met for our first in-person meeting in several years. Together, we spent time deep in discussion, surrounded by the habitats we work to conserve, and enthused by the optimism for our work together. It was a welcome reunion and a reminder that in an increasingly virtual world, our work remains tangible. And by working together, ambitious goals may be within grasp.

There is a sense of renewed energy and growing momentum across Pacific Birds. While we wave a bittersweet farewell to Board members Jeff McCreary, Karyn Gear, and Mark Gloutney, we, in turn, welcome new members to the Pacific Birds leadership, Afsheen Siddiqi and Sarah Nathan.

The latest State of the Birds report reminds us that our work is not done, and that our partnerships remain as important as ever if we are to achieve the large-scale conservation actions needed to reverse bird declines. Our eyes remain steady on that distant horizon, complete with healthy habitats that support birds, other wildlife, and people, from the coasts to the oaks.



**Nanette Seto**

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



**Blair Hammond**

Canada Steering Committee Chair and  
International Management Board Co-Chair



# International Management Board: Welcome and Thank You

Pacific Birds welcomed several new people to the Board in 2022. Joining us from Hawai'i is [Afsheen Siddiqi](#), the Seabird and Waterbird Recovery Coordinator at the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife. [Sarah Nathan](#) joins us from Canada where she is the Manager of Provincial Operations for Ducks Unlimited Canada, British Columbia.



[Afsheen Siddiqi](#)



[Sarah Nathan](#)



[Mark Gloutney](#)



[Karyn Gear & Jeff McCreary](#)

Jeff McCreary, Karyn Gear and Mark Gloutney retired from the Board in 2022. Thank you to all for their dedication and commitment to the Joint Venture and conservation! Most recently, Jeff served as the International Management Board Co-Chair and U.S. Steering Committee Chair, and Karyn as the U.S. Steering Committee Vice-Chair.

## A Growing Team in 2022

We welcomed two additions to Pacific Birds in 2022. [Dr. Laura Farwell](#) is the Conservation Coordinator for Coastal Habitats, and [Eric Riley](#) serves as the Umpqua Oak Partnership Liaison in a cooperative position with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



[Dr. Laura Farwell](#)



[Eric Riley](#)



## Dr. Fern Duvall Conservation & Collaboration Award

In February 2022 we lost a cherished friend and accomplished colleague, [Dr. Fern Duvall II](#). Fern's contributions to Pacific Birds were numerous—as an International Management Board member, Co-chair, Executive Committee member, and Hawai'i Wetlands Committee member. Fern helped shape Pacific Birds' conservation efforts in Hawai'i with infectious enthusiasm, deep knowledge, and calm dedication.

In his honor, an annual *Dr. Fern Duvall Conservation and Collaboration Award* will recognize individuals working in the Pacific Birds region who embody the innovative, inclusive, humble, and collaborative spirit that Fern brought to conservation endeavors.

# CONSERVATION PRIORITY

## Hawai'i Wetlands

Local partnerships are key to successful conservation in Hawai'i and those partnerships continued to grow, strategize and implement projects during the past year. The [Moloka'i Wetland Partnership](#) had a transformational year, collaboratively completing a draft goals and objectives document, and assessing wetlands for restoration—as part of a major, climate-focused prioritization project led by the U.S. Geological Survey and supported by a Pacific Islands Climate and Adaptation Science Center grant. Sites were assessed based on the impacts of future sea level rise and wave-induced flooding scenarios, the potential for high quality wildlife habitat, sustainable food production, and community support.

The Kehaka Agricultural Association, as a member of Mānā Plains Wetland Partnership, secured a major grant this past year. A \$1 million U.S. Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program Challenge Grant award will create open floodable space in the plain, to the far west of Kaua'i. Hawai'i's native and migratory birds, and local communities, will benefit from these efforts.

Pacific Birds was involved with several other successful grant applications over the past year. The Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) was awarded a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant to assess the feasibility of introducing 'alae 'ula to a third island, and also received a Competitive State Wildlife Grant to develop a mongoose control tool. On Moloka'i, Ka Ipu Makani was awarded a County of Maui grant to support wetland restoration planning.



Michelle Bogardus (USFWS), Helen Raine, Carrie Harrington (USFWS), Monica Iglecia, Sheldon Plentovich (USFWS), Afsheen Siddiqi (Hawai'i DOFAW), and Aaron Nadig (USFWS) after reviewing a site for potential restoration.

*Photo courtesy of Michelle Bogardus.*

'Alae 'ula  
*Gallinula chloropus sandvicensis*



A 2021 Pacific Birds Partnership Grant helped uncover some of the challenges that nesting 'alae 'ula face, including predation by introduced American bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*).

*Photo © Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources.*



Working with local non-profits, artists and agencies, Pacific Birds helped develop and share key conservation messages over the past year.

In partnership with the Kaua'i Humane Society (KHS), Pacific Birds [held two workshops about the importance of keeping cats indoors](#)—to keep cats safe and to reduce predation on Hawai'i's native wildlife. With the KHS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Pacific Birds developed a Cat Safe Kaua'i leaflet, a potential model for other islands.



Pacific Birds teamed up with artist Seth Womble on a successful grant application to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, resulting in a new mural in Hanapēpē, West Kaua'i. The [highly visible highway mural](#) features four endangered species, including the graceful Ae'o (Hawaiian Stilt, *Himantopus mexicanus knudseni*).



# CONSERVATION PRIORITY

## Oak and Prairie

As the result of a long-term investment in relationship building and collaborative planning, the past year brought major investments in oak conservation. In 2022, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board awarded over \$14 million to oak partners (see [OWEB Invests in Oaks](#)) that will result in the protection of 1,500 acres and the restoration of 4,180 acres of oak habitat. Pacific Birds has provided funding and expertise to both oak-related OWEB awardees—the Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network and the East Cascades Oak Partnership—over the last 5 years to help with capacity, planning and grant seeking.



Oak Titmouse  
*Baeolophus inornatus*

“ Consistent support for convening around oak conservation was an essential piece of our growth. We wouldn’t be where we are today without the help of Pacific Birds and other entities who believe in the power of partnerships. ”

Jaime Stephens, Klamath Bird Observatory Science Director  
and Klamath-Siskiyou Oak Network Coordinator



Oaks and People in the Umpqua. Photo © Jeff Krueger

In 2022, with support from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Pacific Birds piloted a new position, the Umpqua Oak Partnership Liaison. The intent is to accelerate oak and prairie conservation on private lands by helping connect landowner priorities with voluntary incentive programs and financial or technical support. This increased focus on Douglas County advances NRCS’s strategic priorities in Oregon, advances the goals outlined in the Umpqua Oak Partnership, and aligns with the conservation priority goals of Pacific Birds.



Two recently released landbird plans will assist Joint Venture partners in their oak and prairie related strategic habitat conservation efforts. [Population and Habitat Objectives for Landbirds in Prairies, Oak, and Riparian Habitats of Western Oregon and Washington \(Rockwell et al 2022\)](#) provides quantitative, multi-scaled population and habitat objectives for focal and imperiled bird species.

The new Partners in Flight plan, [Conservation of Landbirds and Associated Habitats and Ecosystems in the East Cascade Mountains of Oregon and Washington \(Altman and Stephens 2022\)](#), also considers focal species—including oak woodland species—and includes recommendations for supporting and conserving the habitats and ecosystems needed to support and sustain landbirds in the region.

Our land trust friends and partners have conserved numerous properties in the oak and prairie landscape. In 2020, a property at Kanutchan Creek in southern Oregon was burned in one of the massive fires in the area, but that did not stop the [Southern Oregon Land Conservancy](#) (SOLC) from finalizing a conservation easement on the land, which harbors diverse habitats and an impressive suite of wildlife. While fire can be devastating to communities, the [property is undergoing rapid renewal](#) and provides a living laboratory for learning about fire and ecosystem resilience.



The Fender's blue butterfly (*Icaricia icarioides fenderi*), Kincaid's lupine (*Lupinus sulphureus* ssp. *kincaidii*) and other species all contribute to the health and biodiversity of oak and prairie ecosystems.

*Photo: Army Corps of Engineers*

“**Conditions across our region are changing with the warming climate. Conserving intact, functioning landscapes like Kanutchan Creek bolsters future climate resilience. Protecting this area will help us learn how these landscapes and their habitats can recover after they burn.**

Steve Wise, SOLC Executive Director

”



California Quail  
*Callipepla californica*

# CONSERVATION PRIORITY

## Coastal Wetlands

### U.S.

Coastal wetland habitat conservation has been central to the work of Pacific Birds since its inception in 1991. Healthy coastal ecosystems support birds as well as human communities and play an increasingly important role in carbon storage and resilience to climate change.

In 2021-2022, Pacific Birds supported two acquisition projects related to migratory birds and Indigenous culture. The Conservation Fund completed the purchase of 309 acres within the Kasilof River Flats Important Bird Area on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, including 264 acres of freshwater palustrine wetlands, a nationally declining wetland type. An astonishing 165 bird species have been observed in the Kasilof River area, including 37 identified by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as Species of Greatest Conservation Need. The newly conserved parcel will be permanently protected as part of the Alaska State Park system.



Western Snowy Plover  
*Charadrius alexandrinus*  
*nivosus*

In California, Friends of the Dunes, the Wiyot Tribe and additional partners have all contributed to ongoing acquisition, stewardship and restoration projects in and near the Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Conservation Area. Two Pacific Birds Partnership Grants have helped propel these projects forward.



The Kasilof River  
Photo courtesy of The Conservation Fund.



Pribilof Rock Sandpipers (*Calidris ptilocnemis ptilocnemis*)  
Photo: Dan Ruthrauff, USGS





Cable Bay. Photo courtesy of The Nature Trust of BC

## British Columbia

The Pacific Birds region in British Columbia (BC) is part of a unique, coastal temperate rainforest that extends north to Alaska. Pacific Birds has six key partners in BC: Ducks Unlimited Canada, Birds Canada, The Nature Trust of British Columbia, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service, and Wildlife Habitat Canada. Joint venture accomplishments in Canada are summarized annually in [Habitat Matters](#). In the 2021-2022 reporting year, partner accomplishments for Pacific Birds included 1,323 acres secured, 419 acres enhanced, and 18,974 acres influenced. Ducks Unlimited Canada conducted a study of built up tidal marshes along the [Fraser River Estuary](#). Birds Canada has been identifying Key Biodiversity Areas, such as the Fraser River Estuary, as part of a global effort to identify, and engage people in conserving and safeguarding, the world's most important areas for biodiversity.

In early 2022, Pacific Birds released the final [British Columbia Implementation Plan 2020-2030](#). The plan is a guidepost for work in coastal British Columbia and provides background and strategies related to habitat protection, threat assessment, research and monitoring, outreach and communications, and Human Dimensions.

Partners in British Columbia are leading the way in meaningful engagement with First Nations. Ichhewani, a conservation area of the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) in the Bella Coola Valley, straddles the Bella Coola

River and includes wetland and riparian areas. The land, in the traditional, unceded territory of the Nuxalk Nation, was donated to NCC by the previous owners with the support of the Nuxalk Nation who are committed to protecting the area's ecosystems.

**“ Ichhewani is the second project we have undertaken in the territory of the Nuxalk Nation, representing an important milestone in achieving Pacific Birds' goals of further partnerships and engagement with First Nations groups to increase conservation. ”**

Nancy Newhouse,  
NCC Regional Vice-President, BC Region

A 65-acre project on the Strait of Georgia was conserved this year by The Nature Trust of British Columbia and partner Galiano Conservancy Association. The property includes coastal rainforest, springs, creeks and shoreline habitats that support a diverse suite of resident and migratory birds. See [Safeguarding Biodiversity in British Columbia](#).



American Wigeon  
*Mareca americana*





Geese at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon's Willamette Valley.  
Photo: George Gentry, USFWS

## NAWCA

North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants have been an important source of support for habitat projects in three countries for more than thirty years. In 2021 and 2022, Pacific Birds U.S. and Canada partners were awarded ten grants to conserve wetlands and associated uplands habitats.

Ducks Unlimited will use a U.S. Standard Grant and match funds to protect, restore and enhance 1,920 acres in the Willamette Basin. Multiple partners, including but not limited to state agencies, land trusts, and watershed groups will work with Ducks Unlimited to bring back wetlands for birds.

Pacific Birds partners in British Columbia were awarded three Standard NAWCA grants in the spring of 2022. Cumulatively, these projects will acquire, enhance, manage or steward an impressive 469,121 acres.

Hawai'i partners have been increasingly successful at securing NAWCA grants, with five Small NAWCA awards in 2021 and 2022. On Kaho'olawe, [a project led by the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission](#) (KIRC) enhanced 23.5 acres of wetlands habitat, supporting Hawai'i's endangered waterbirds and several migratory shorebird species of concern, and provided cultural opportunities for Hawaiians.

**“Restoring and enhancing the wetlands of Kaho'olawe provides much more than ecological benefits. We see the restored wetland habitats and the return of native seabirds to Kaho'olawe not only as saving critical biodiversification and native ecosystems, but also as opportunities for the Indigenous people of Hawai'i to rediscover our traditional relationships to the land and its creatures that created the native Hawaiian culture that we have today.”**

Michael Naho'opi'i, KIRC Executive Director







A field session with the East Cascades Oak Partnership.  
Photo courtesy of Columbia Land Trust

# Partnership Grants

## Investing in People

In the past three years, Pacific Birds has awarded \$451,066 to 24 partner organizations in five states. The awards have been leveraged by \$1,895,842 in partner funds. Two 2020 partnership grant awards of \$10,000 to oak partners led to increased capacity, partnership building and strategic planning. That early work was a springboard for two recent Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board awards totaling \$14.1 million for conservation implementation. Similarly, a \$12,000 award in Hawai'i helped set the stage for a \$1 million U.S. Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program Challenge Grant for a restoration project on the Mānā Plain.



Habitats found in the Kasilof River  
Flats Important Bird Area in Alaska.  
Photo © The Conservation Fund

Koloa Maoli or Hawaiian Duck  
(*Anas wyvilliana*)

## Habitats Conserved

To date, partnership grant awards have helped protect, restore, or enhance 825.5 acres and steward 357 acres.

Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Conservation Area  
© Mike Cipra

## Connecting with Community

Partnership awards are connecting people with the natural world around them. In a project with the Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife, students at Le Jardin Academy on O'ahu, and community members helped implement a restoration project at a State Wildlife Sanctuary.



A student prepares to plant in an area that used to be overrun with invasive weeds. 438 students were involved over 21 work days in this restoration project.

Photo: Hawai'i DLNR

## Plan, Inform and Inspire

In addition to empowered partnerships, conserved acres and work in the field, Partnership Grant Awards have supported plans, MOUs, GIS layers and species maps, [partner web pages](#), [a research study](#), technical documents, a wetlands assessment, landowner contacts, [story maps](#), and virtual and [on-the-ground tours](#).

# Featured Projects



Indigenous Fire Practitioners  
training 2021 at Andrew  
Reasoner Wildlife Preserve  
Photo © Katie MacKendrick

## Oak and Prairie

In the Willamette Valley of Oregon, oak and prairie systems were historically maintained by Indigenous people using frequent, low intensity fire. Grants to the Long Tom Watershed Council and Ecostudies Institute are supporting the efforts of area Tribes, multiple agencies, and additional partners to increase regional training opportunities and establish a year-round ecological fire team. This project has led to new positions and increased burning on non-federal lands. The work is centered on Indigenous priorities and improving habitats and community health. Oak-associated bird species benefit from the improved habitats in these fire-dependent oak ecosystems.

“ We are working to contribute to a paradigm shift (shift back) in fire management at a time when increasing capacity is absolutely necessary—a paradigm that acknowledges the vital role of Indigenous people in land stewardship—a stewardship that includes fire as one element in a year-round, reciprocal relationship with place and within community. ”

Katie MacKendrick, Ecologist and Program Manager, Ecostudies Institute



Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge  
Photo: Helen Raine

## Hawai'i Wetlands

Five endangered, native waterbird species can be found at Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge. The health of these species depends on a predictable water supply, which has been hampered by aging infrastructure. Through a grant to the Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges, a collective effort with Refuge staff, farmers, and partners is improving the water infrastructure at Hanalei. This project helps keep habitats safe for birds and maintains sustainable food production and additional ecosystem services. A [2021 Partnership Grant](#) from Pacific Birds and a Fish and Wildlife Service North American Wetlands Conservation Act award supported this project.

## Coastal Wetlands

In 2022, a land return project was completed on the surprisingly wild and still forested shores of Wigi (Humboldt Bay, California). The Wiyot Tribe now owns and stewards Mouralherwaqh, a wetland-rich coastal property that includes egret and heron roosting areas. Thanks to a \$1.2 million grant from the Ocean Protection Council and the support of many partners, this land is now forever protected by the Wiyot Tribe. With two Pacific Birds grants, Friends of the Dunes has brought more than a dozen partners together for a suite of acquisition, restoration and stewardship projects, including the newly protected 357-acre Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Conservation Area and the Wiyot Tribe's 46-acre Mouralherwaqh.



Great Blue Heron  
Photo: Chris Campbell  
© Creative Commons



# 2022 Awards

In the most recent grant cycle, Pacific Birds awarded eight grants totaling \$96,753. These awards will catalyze and empower partners to build programs, do outreach, conduct planning, seek funding, and secure funding, build cultural and community connections, and implement on the ground projects.

[Learn more about the 2022 projects.](#)

- Kennedy Creek Coastal Wetlands Partnership
- Kākaha‘ia Community Restoration Project
- Establishing the Willamette Valley Fire Collaboration Program
- Inspiring Stewardship of Alaska’s Coastal Wetlands through Place-based Education
- Expanding Capacity for Endangered Wetland Bird Rehabilitation on Kaua‘i
- East Cascades Oak Partnership: Implementation
- Coastal Wetland Community Outreach and Ecological Enhancement
- Umpqua Oak Partnership Capacity Growth and Strategic Plan Initiation

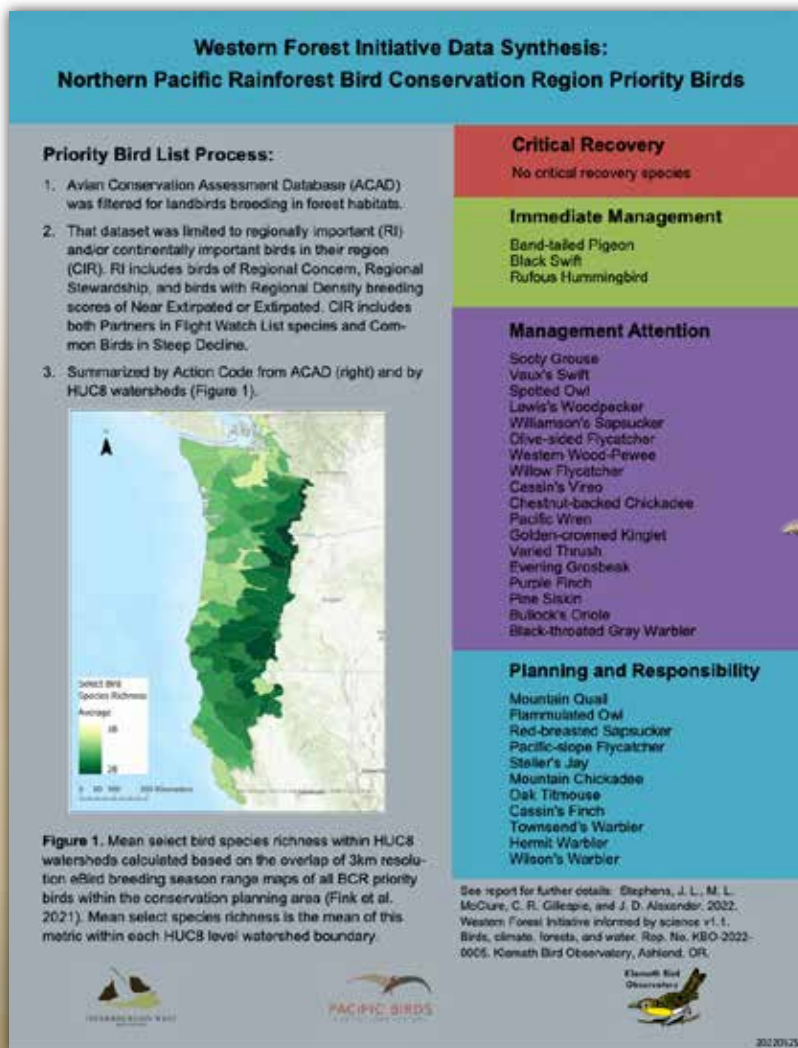
## Partnership Grants are Planting Seeds for Success



*Photos (Left to Right): Acorn (A. Davey © Creative Commons), Baby Oak (Sara Evans-Peters), Oak at Baskett Slough NWR (Sara Evans-Peters)*

# Emerging Areas: Western Forests

In 2021 and 2022, Pacific Birds and Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV) considered how the Joint Ventures could strengthen momentum for a Western Forest Initiative. Klamath Bird Observatory, supported by both Joint Ventures, [completed a data synthesis](#) that considered forest types and priority birds within each Joint Venture's geography. Priority species for Bird Conservation Regions within each Joint Venture were then categorized based on management needs, and areas for conservation were identified. This work informs the next steps for the Joint Ventures and key partners, with the ultimate goal of fostering collaborative forest conservation to address bird declines, wildfire risk, forest health, water quality and other community concerns.



Varied Thrush  
*Ixoreus naevius*



# Meet the Bird Beneficiaries

Learn more about some of the bird species that benefit from the collaborative conservation underway in the Pacific Birds geography.



The aptly named **Wood Duck** can be found in wooded, wet habitats, nesting in holes in trees. They are found year-round in much of the Pacific Northwest.

*Photo: © Barry Troutman*



The endangered **'Alae 'ula** (Hawaiian Common Gallinule) remains on only two islands in Hawai'i, but partners are looking at the feasibility of returning them to a third island.

*Photo: Gary Kramer, USFWS*



The **Ash-throated Flycatcher** breeds in the pine-oak woodlands in the East Cascades, nesting in large oaks or coniferous trees with cavities.

*Photo: Becky Matsubara © Creative Commons*



**Bristle-thighed Curlews** breed in western Alaska, and winter across the Pacific islands, including the Hawaiian Islands. They are known as **Kioea** in Hawai'i and **Ciivikaaq** in Alaska.

*Photo: Aaron Maizlish © Creative Commons*



Restoring, enhancing and protecting habitat is critical for the graceful **Ae'o** (Hawaiian Stilt), currently listed as an endangered species.



The **Oak Titmouse** is a quintessential bird of oak or oak-pine woodlands that ranges north to Southern Oregon. Protecting and restoring the habitats they need will help this species.

*Photo: Doug Greenberg © Creative Commons*



The relatively common **California Quail** frequents scrub, chaparral, open woodlands and other semi-open habitats—including urban and agricultural settings.

*Photo: Mick Thompson © Creative Commons*



**Pribilof Rock Sandpipers** breed only on a few islands in western Alaska. In winter, they are sustained by bivalves found in the mudflats of Upper Cook Inlet.

*Photo: Dan Ruthrauff, USGS*



Two **Western Snowy Plover** nest sites were established along the beach in front of the new Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Conservation Area in California.

*Photo: Kim Stark*



The **American Wigeon** is a relatively secretive dabbling duck that breeds in the boreal forests of Alaska and Western Canada.

*Photo: Mick Thompson © Creative Commons*



The **Varied Thrush** is a bird of western forests. It is listed in the Western Forests Initiative Data Synthesis as needing Management Attention.

*Photo: Mick Thompson © Creative Commons*





Dusky Canada Goose  
(*Branta canadensis occidentalis*)  
nest, Copper River Delta  
© Blake Richard

Thank you to our conservation partners.



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