

Effective Conservation for a Better Future

Birds Canada 2020-21 Annual Report





“Not a day goes by where I’m not reminded that North America has lost one in four birds since 1970 – three billion birds. My pledge to you is to work tirelessly to stop that catastrophe in its tracks.”

– Patrick Nadeau, President

COVER PHOTO: Common Loons
Photo: Mark Peck

INSIDE FRONT COVER PHOTO: Tree Swallow
Photo: Natasha Barlow

Effective Conservation for a Better Future

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Effective conservation of Canada’s birds in a rapidly changing world requires sound science, clear communications, strong cross-sector collaborations, and the millions of Canadians, like you, who care about birds. Birds Canada is committed to this full-spectrum approach to helping birds. Our donors, members, and volunteers are at the heart of what makes this work possible.

Thanks to supporters like you, research conducted by the Birds Canada science team and our thousands of volunteers is used to produce important reports such as *The State of Canada’s Birds 2019*. The report revealed shocking declines in some groups of birds, but also showed the successes achieved through conservation actions in others. The continuing declines we see tell us that our work is far from over. But there is hope. Public interest in nature, and birding, has grown during the pandemic,

strengthening our resolve to answer critical research questions and drive conservation results for the wellbeing of all Canadians. Together, we are Canada’s voice for birds.

We thank you for being a part of our mission.

Birds are an iconic element of the biodiversity that sustains us. And now more than ever, we recognize how their enchanting presence helps us, especially during difficult times. As Canada’s national charity for bird conservation, we are committed to providing opportunities for all bird enthusiasts to celebrate and protect Canada’s amazing birds.

As you explore this report, we hope you feel proud of the progress and successes we’ve had deploying a full spectrum of strategies: Conservation Science, Knowledge Sharing, Mobilizing Supporters, and Direct Conservation Action. Every day, we are grateful and inspired by our supporters. With your continued support and innovative thinking, we can reach a better future for both birds and people.



165 peer-reviewed studies and postgraduate theses published.

CONSERVATION SCIENCE

Through this work we fill critical knowledge gaps, solve migration mysteries, and publish peer-reviewed research, all with the goal of informing management actions and policy direction.



Piping Plover chick
Photo: Kerrie Wilcox

ABOVE: Breeding bird atlasers' camp, south shore, Lake Athabasca, SK
Photo: LeeAnn Latremouille

Motus Wildlife Tracking System: 400+ migration studies benefit from our 1200+ telemetry stations around the world.

Partners from ProNatura Noreste at their newly minted Motus station at Golfo de Santa Clara, Mexico. Photo: Julian Garcia Walther



Staff and volunteers followed public health protocols throughout the pandemic. Banders at Wasaga Beach, ON wearing masks.
Photo: Kerrie Wilcox



With your help in 2020-21 we:

- Confirmed loons are producing fewer young each year. This alarming finding was only possible thanks to 40 years of data from caring volunteers.
- Focused on expanding Motus along the Pacific Flyway and in Central America.
- Continue to integrate research findings into large scale collaborations aimed at understanding and promoting migratory bird needs in the Americas.



Volunteer monitors Piping Plover nest at Wasaga Beach, ON.

Photo: Andrea Gress

Recently banded Piping Plover chick released back to its family at Wasaga Beach, ON.

Photo: Kerrie Wilcox

Thanks to your support, we are taking action for:

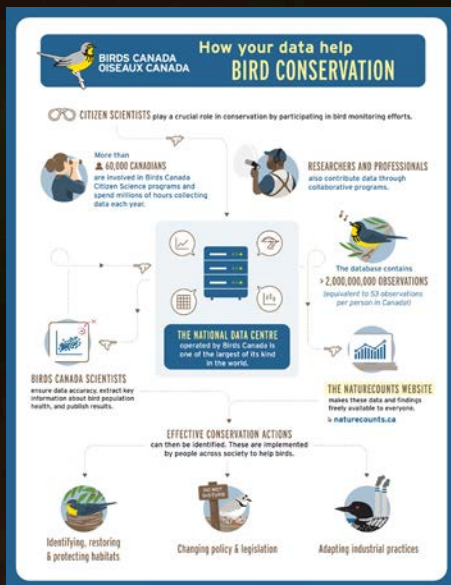
- **Seabirds:** Developing a recovery action plan for Leach's Storm-Petrels, sadly now listed as Threatened in Canada.
- **Aerial Insectivores:** Planning our implementation of the Roadmap to Recovery to bring back populations of swifts, swallows and nightjars.
- **Breeding birds:** Leading three province-wide bird assessment (atlas) efforts in Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, and Ontario, uniting governments, private sector,

nonprofits, communities, and 1500+ amazing volunteers in a powerful collaboration for conservation science.

- **Coastal marine ecosystems:** Completing the first-ever Salish Sea Marine Bird and Mammal Atlas via our National GIS lab. This web resource will be a critical tool for environmental and regulatory practitioners. And this globally significant and threatened ecosystem needs all the help it can get.



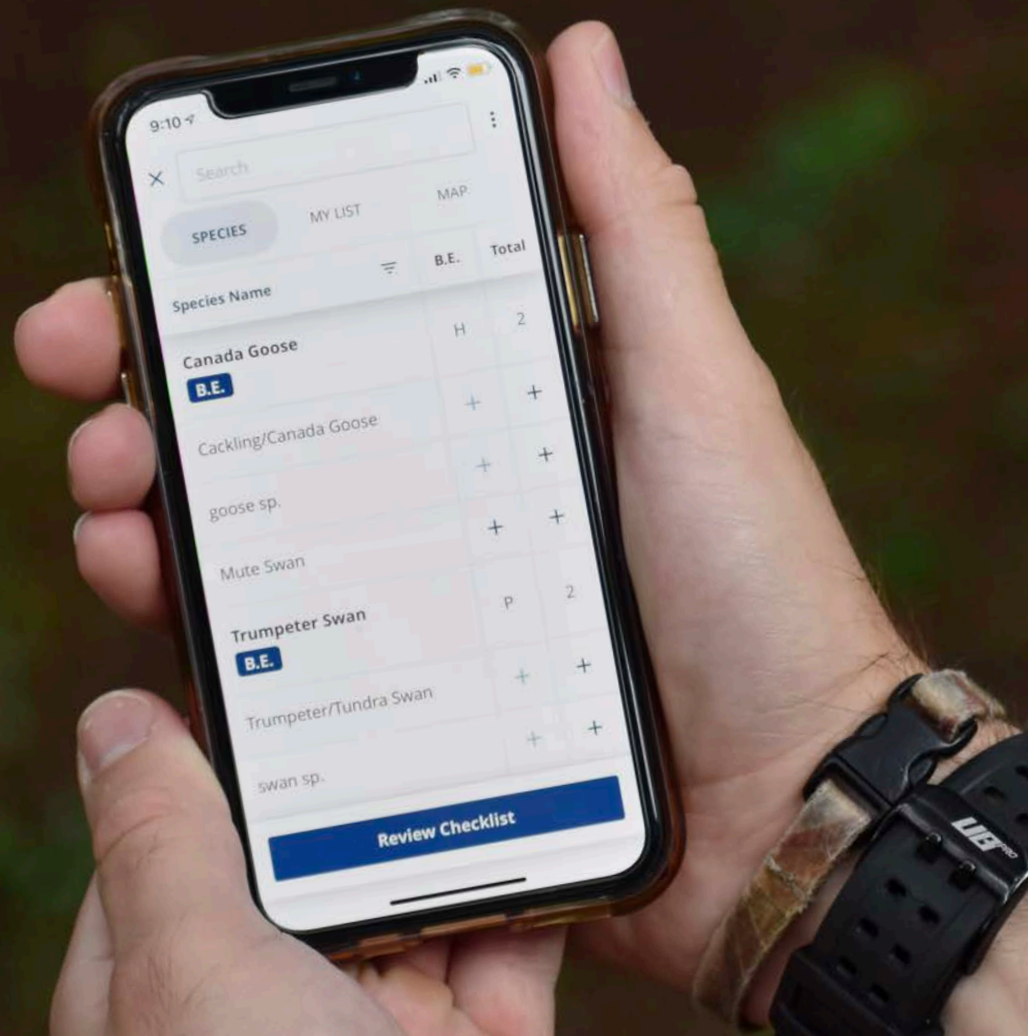
KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND OPEN ACCESS DATA



National Data Centre Infographic. Birds Canada is the hub of an international knowledge transfer system.

We launched a Birds Canada-specific app for our volunteers in the field to submit data directly to our databank.

The Birds Canada National Data Centre and GIS Lab is one of the largest collections of bird information in the world – containing close to 4 billion observations and more than 10,000 maps. This Centre provides accessible and relevant data and tools to governments, biologists, industry, the general public, and fellow conservation groups.



Birds Canada processed a record 20,000 requests for bird data through our main data portal, NatureCounts

With your help in 2020-21 we:

- Provided the information needed for municipal planning, environmental impact assessments, land developments, status assessments for Species at Risk, campaigns by local conservation groups, and much, much more!
- Established Canada's Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) database. Once completed, this new tool will be key to measuring progress toward national and international biodiversity protection, such as Canada's commitment to reach 30% of land and water conserved by 2030.
- Taught approximately 150 undergrads from four universities how to use the NatureCounts databank. The lectures led by our lead biostatistician, Dr. Danielle Ethier, allowed us to connect with this growing user group for both learning and conducting new research.

Volunteer monitoring loon productivity
Photo: David Gignac



MOBILIZING SUPPORTERS

Birds Canada strives to make birding available for all, welcoming all bird enthusiasts to discover birds, adopt bird-friendly actions, participate in conservation efforts, and advocate for meaningful change.

“I loved how even though you are in SK and I’m in Ottawa, there are many shared species. This workshop was a great way to spend a sunny Saturday afternoon stuck inside. I’d love to watch more in the future.”

— Julie S., participant in a bird ID webinar hosted by our Saskatchewan staff





Photo: Ally Manthorne

Jerry Berrier smiles as he tells stories of his birding by ear during the “Enabled: Connecting with birds despite a disability” panel.



With your help in 2020-21 we:

- Quickly pivoted to fit pandemic conditions and welcomed thousands to innovative virtual bird programming. Popular topics included gardening for birds, bird identification, atlassing 101, drawing birds, and online courses such as “birding by ear”.
- Welcomed 30% more eBirders throughout the county—now 28,000!
- Led the Canadian voice for greater equality and accessibility in North American birding, hosting webinars on challenges to inclusivity and accessible birding, and participating in international panels to promote changes to bird names to better reflect nature and help communities move on from colonial legacies.
- Worked with Indigenous peoples of the Salish Sea to co-develop workshops on marine bird monitoring, knowledge sharing, and bird identification. We held tailored online workshops for seven Indigenous communities and provided marine birding backpack kits to participants.



40,000+

viewers participated in 162 virtual presentations!



50,585

people joined the global Great Backyard Bird Count webinar held in partnership with Cornell Lab and Audubon.



71,174

Despite the pandemic, more volunteers than ever (71,174!) were able to safely contribute to conservation efforts following provincial health and safety regulations.

Photo: @only1phoenixx



55

schools participated in distance learning programs with Birds Canada ornithologists and educators.



10,000+

bird enthusiasts joined the Toronto Bird Celebration "Take Home Edition" virtual events.

Photo: Bill Curry



4,820

people in Canada participated in Project FeederWatch (53% increase over 2019-20)

Photo: LeeAnn Latremouille



600+

More than 600 students and families participated in our new Bird Blitz at Home.

DIRECT CONSERVATION ACTION

Through our work in the field we focused on improving the conservation status of birds and their habitats.

The Fraser River Delta is Canada's most important piece of bird habitat on the Pacific Flyway and it is under threat. Birds Canada is active in efforts to establish a new Fraser River Estuary Management Plan to address the conservation challenges. Photo: James Casey

Thanks to your support we:

- Took action for grassland species by producing a single-source guide of incentive programs for landowners and ranchers in Prairie Canada who steward their land for birds and biodiversity.
- Are empowering individuals to improve habitat for birds in the spaces they steward with our groundbreaking Bird Gardens web resource and online workshops.
- Promoted the establishment of new protected areas, with an emphasis on Forest Stewardship Council-related opportunities in Ontario and protected areas in Newfoundland and Labrador.

“I’m really looking forward to learning more about how our farm is contributing to biodiversity and how we can do more. The Bird-friendliness Index being developed will give us a way to measure the effect we’re having and to show consumers the impact their food choices are having.” – Cameron Hodgins, Lenore, MB

Automated Recording Units (ARUs), like this one on a Manitoba pasture, record the birds present. The data will be used in our development of the Bird-friendliness Index.
Photo: Ian Cook



Looking down on shorebird resting beach at The Guzzle, near Wolfville, NS
Photo: Laura Bartlett

We are:

- Working directly to balance the needs of people and shorebirds around the Bay of Fundy as the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions has potentially prevented shorebirds from using their favoured fall resting sites.
- Nurturing a Long-billed Curlew conservation community amongst the farmers and landowners around Prince George, BC.



Long-billed Curlew Photo: Katelyn Luff



Buller's Shearwater
Photo: Yousif Attia

“I donate annually to Birds Canada because of their rich history and bright future. I’ll continue to support them forever with a gift in my Will. I have trust and confidence that Birds Canada will always be on the front lines of bird research, conservation, and habitat protection.” – Linda

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 other levels – your combined
 contributions totalled \$724,693.**

*Deceased



1 APRIL 2020 – 31 MARCH 2021

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\$1,000,000+

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- Atlantic Ecosystem Initiatives
- Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy
- Employment & Social Development
- Environment & Climate Change Canada
 - Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk
 - Canadian Wildlife Service
 - Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk
 - Science and Technology Branch
- Environmental Careers
- Environmental Damages Fund
- Natural Resources Canada
- Natural Sciences & Engineering Research Council (NSERC)
- Parks Canada
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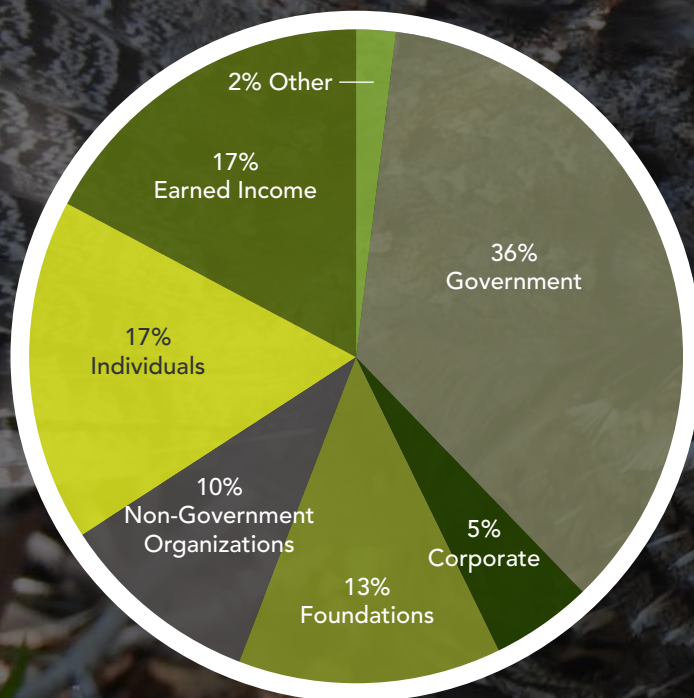
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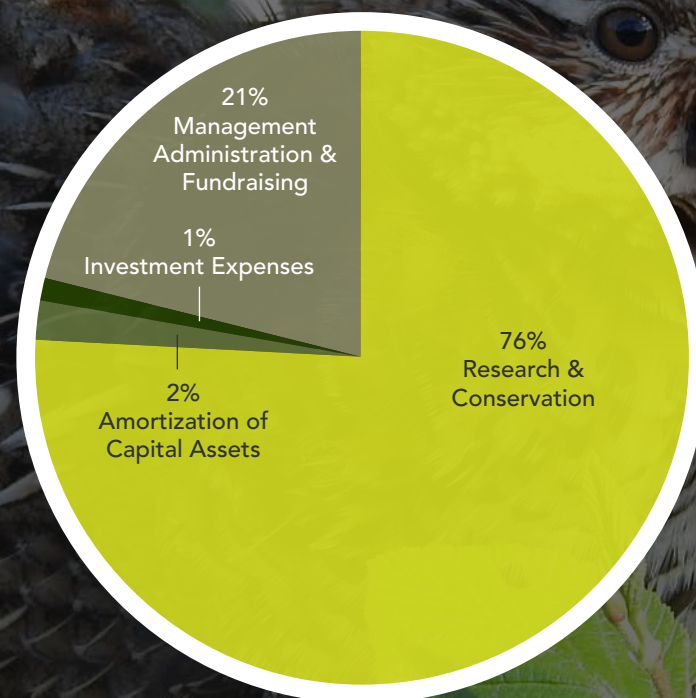
SOURCE OF FUNDS



TOTAL REVENUE: \$7,048,790

Note: Unrealized investment gains and losses are excluded

USE OF FUNDS



TOTAL EXPENSES: \$6,822,045

Our audited financial statements are [available online](#) or by request.Ruffed Grouse
Photo: Catherine Dale

Our Mission

To conserve wild birds of Canada through sound science, on-the-ground actions, innovative partnerships, public engagement, and science-based advocacy.

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