



adventures

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Safety for Birds in Flight

Windows are helpful for people, but they can be a problem for birds.

When you have to spend time indoors, it's nice to have windows. They let you see the sky even when you can't enjoy the sunshine. You might spot squirrels searching for seeds, see tree branches waving in the wind, or spy birds zipping about. That's what makes windows great: They're clear, letting us see everything on the other side. Although that's good for us, those sheets of glass are a real problem for birds.

Birds don't recognize glass as a barrier. Instead they see what appear to be things like sky and trees. These might be reflections on the glass. If there are windows across from each other, birds might see trees that are actually outside on the other side of a building. Even a potted plant inside the room can fool birds. So what's the problem? Birds try to go through a window and fly smack into the glass. That can lead to injury and even death. The good news? You can help! Read on to learn more.



PROTECT BIRDS AROUND YOUR HOME



- Make sure indoor plants are placed away from a window so they don't look like habitat to a bird.



- Make sure bird feeders are within 3 feet of a window, or even right on it. Birds slow down when they approach feeders.



- Light can attract birds after dark. Close shades or curtains when you turn lights on inside.



- Turn off outdoor lights at night or use motion sensors. Ask the adults in your life to check out this information about safer outdoor lights: audbn.co/darksky

Learning to Spot Windows

Windows seem to disappear into thin air.

So how do people know there's glass? Sometimes we don't. Have you ever seen someone accidentally walk into a big glass door or wall? But we usually have some idea that there's glass because we get clues from the surrounding area. The frame around a window or transparent door tells us there's probably a piece of glass in the middle. A big clear shape cut out of the side of a building tells us it's probably a glass window. We know because we've experienced that before. Birds don't usually experience buildings, except to fly around them. So they don't learn to spot cues that shout, "Glass ahead!"



↑ This is a simple way to prevent birds from flying into glass. Dot decals on the outside of these doors are less than 2 inches apart, so birds won't try to fly between them.

Making Glass Bird-Friendly

What can we do to protect birds?

We can help them see glass and avoid it! There are many ways to do this. Some large glass buildings are designed with a special layer on the outside of the glass that makes it less reflective or less transparent. Birds also fly into windows in homes and low-rise apartment buildings. You and your family can protect birds, too. One easy way is to add screens or netting to the outside of your windows. These break up reflections, signaling to birds that there's some kind of barrier in their way. Or you can get creative by adding stickers, decals, or other designs directly on the outside of the glass.

A decal or sticker here and there won't solve the problem. You need to add a lot of them to protect the many different kinds of birds that live near your home. If there's a gap of even a few inches between decals or stickers, birds might try to fly between them. To protect all birds, small and large, decals or stickers should be placed about two inches apart over the entire window.

You can make a design using any shape. You can even attach colorful ribbons on the outside of your window for a bit of pizzazz. Just make sure they're no more than two inches apart from side to side and top to bottom. Another idea is to use window markers or tempera paint to turn your window into a colorful mural. You can draw birds, butterflies, flowers, or anything you find interesting. Fill in extra spaces with smaller dots and you've got yourself a festive, bird-friendly window.



Watching Out for Birds on the Move

Not all birds are equally likely to crash into windows or buildings.

Some types avoid these structures. Others fly into them much more often, and scientists are trying to figure out why. One thing scientists have discovered is that all species of birds crash into windows more often when they are migrating. When birds migrate between areas where they make their nests and areas where they spend the winter, they pass through many places where they can be exposed to buildings. That increases their chances of crashing into windows.

Among birds that migrate, those that migrate at night face the most dangers. They use the position of stars to help them find their way. These birds can easily be distracted by artificial lights, including lights left on inside buildings and decorative lights left on outside of buildings, including homes. Brightly lit buildings can attract birds, especially during bad weather. Some night-migrating birds might crash into a building, while others might keep flying around the bright lights until they are exhausted. Exhausted birds can be hurt more easily by cats, dogs, hawks, and other predators.

Floodlights surrounding buildings, including houses, all night long can distract migrating birds. This is especially true if those lights shine up into the night sky.

↑ Some migrating birds use the position of stars to find their way at night. Lights in buildings can confuse them.

LIGHTS OUT, PLEASE!



Audubon and other organizations are working together to protect birds from light at night.

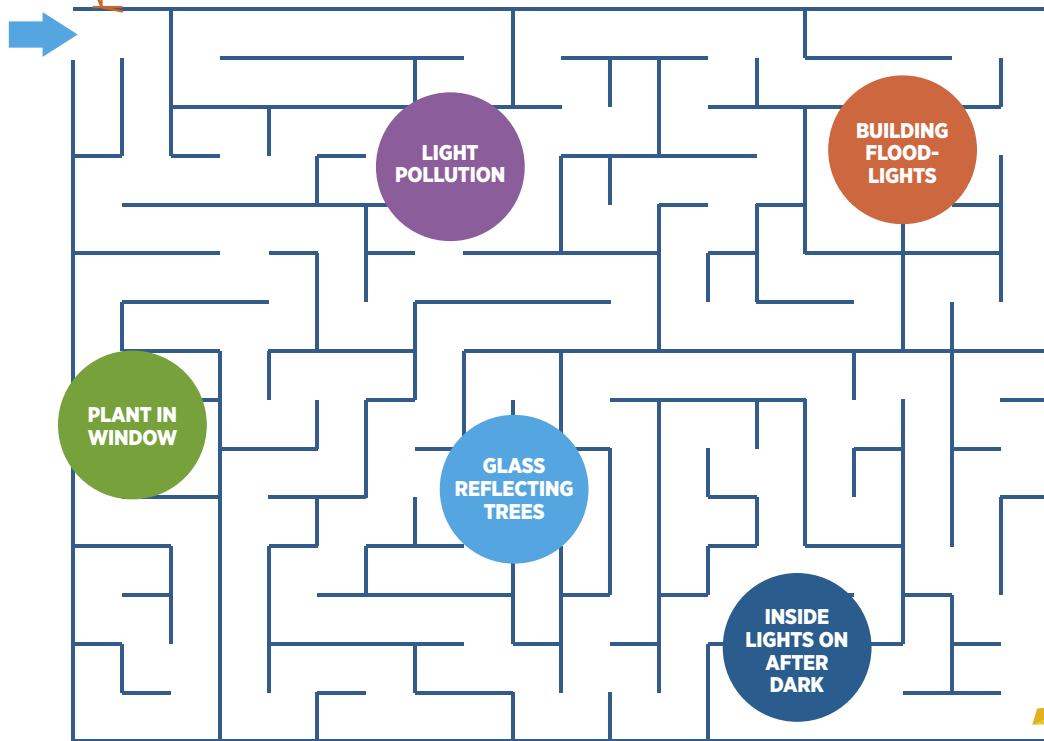
The Lights Out program works with cities and building owners to turn off lights. It makes a huge difference! A tall building in Galveston, Texas, caused hundreds of bird injuries and deaths. Since the outside floodlights were turned off, people have found very few dead birds around the building.

Tall buildings are not the only problem. Turning off lights inside a three-story building in Chicago, Illinois, has saved hundreds of birds each year. Want to find out more, including what you can do?

Check out the Lights Out program: audbn.co/lightsout



Migration Mission!



Wylie the Yellow Warbler is ready to migrate! You can help her navigate through the maze and safely reach her migration destination. Draw a line from Wylie perching, top left, to Wylie flying, lower right. Don't cross any blue lines or fly into any of the hazards.



Who's Stopping Through?

In spring and fall, many birds migrate between winter feeding grounds and summer breeding grounds.

It's a long trek! To fly those long distances, birds need to stop to rest and eat along the way. You can spot migrants in your yard or neighborhood as they travel through. You can also learn about the birds that live in your area all year.

Grab a pencil and some paper so you can make notes about the birds you see. If you have bird feeders, watch them for a while. (If you haven't already, move them close to the windows—within three feet, please!) Or find a comfy spot outside. Sit still like a statue, stare off into the distance. Watch for movement of birds in trees or bushes, or even on the ground. They're probably busy looking for some bugs or chowing down on seeds.

Make notes about the birds you see, and draw quick sketches of them, too.

For each bird you see, write down its characteristics, or field marks:

- **How big is it, compared to your fist? About the same size, smaller, bigger, a lot bigger?**
- **What are its main colors?**
- **Does it have any markings or features that really stand out?**
- **What does its beak look like?**
- **What is it doing?**
- **Did it make a sound? If so, describe the sound.**



BIRD ID HELP

It's fun to see a bird. Often the next thing we want to do is identify it. Here are some resources that will help you identify birds you see wherever you live.



Open the "Get to Know Birds" magazine on the Audubon Adventures website: audbn.co/gettoknowbirds

If you think you know the name of a bird but want to confirm that you're right, go to Audubon's online bird guide: audbn.co/guide

Audubon also has a free bird ID app you can download. Look for it wherever you get your apps. audbn.co/app

And for lots more fun bird information and do-it-yourself activities, go to: audbn.co/kids



How many different birds did you see?



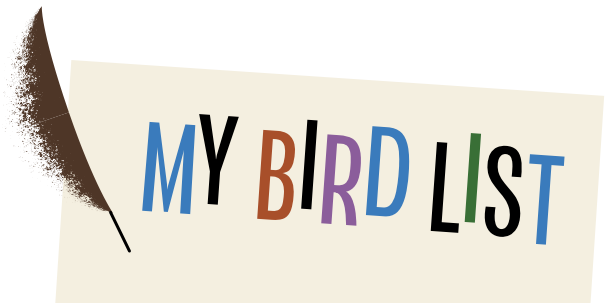
Use a bird book, a website, or an app to try to identify the birds you saw.



Do the birds live in your area year-round? Or are they just passing through on migration?



Make a list of all the birds you identify. Keep adding to the list from now on!



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Project Team: Elaine O'Sullivan, Managing Editor; Alison Pearce Stevens, writer; Lorin Driggs, principal editor; Alonso Ponce, education intern; John Rowden, Keith Russell, Connie Sanchez, scientific and educational reviewers. **Audubon Art Department:** Kristina Deckert, Art Director; Melanie Ryan, Assistant Art Director; Alex Tomlinson, Graphic Designer; Sabine Meyer, Photography Director; Camilla Cerea, Contributing Photographer/Photo Editor; Jovelle Tamayo, Contributing

Photo Editor; Luke Franke, Network Photographer/Photo Editor; Mike Fernandez, Video Producer. **Credits:** Cover: Mike Fernandez/Audubon. P2, from top: Adam Betuel/Georgia Audubon; Mike Fernandez/Audubon. P3: Luke Franke/Audubon. P4, from top: Sandy Ashley/Audubon Photography Awards; Mike Fernandez/Audubon. All illustrations: Alex Tomlinson/Audubon.

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