



Audubon Science

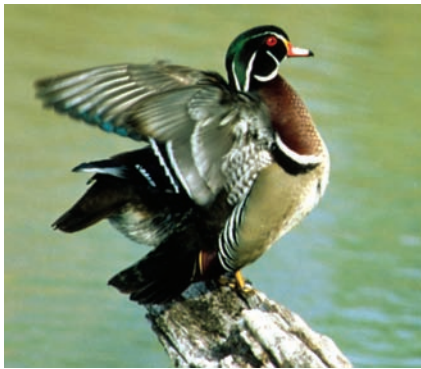
WATERBIRDS AND WORKING LANDS



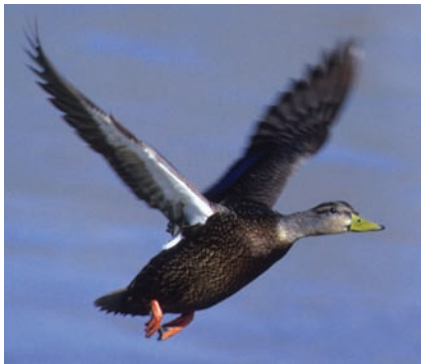
PAUL & ENGH GREEN



GARY STOLZUSPWS



GARY STOLZUSPWS



STEVE MASLOWSKIUSPWS

Vision

More than four of every ten acres of land in the United States is farmland. Farms and ranches comprise more than 930 million acres. These privately owned, “working lands” dominate the American landscape. While Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and wildlife reserves can protect vulnerable populations of some species, farmland and ranchland can provide larger areas of healthy habitat for birds and other wildlife. A strong land ethic continues among our nation’s farmers and ranchers as they strive to minimize agriculture’s contribution to water and air pollution. As crop production technologies improve and Federal farm programs increase their focus upon conservation, farmers will have more opportunities to adopt cultural practices that preserve water quality and accommodate wildlife. New practices and conservation programs will lead to significant environmental improvements that positively affect bird populations and conserve critical habitats.

Working lands contain islands of rich ecological resources that support diverse plant, animal, and avian populations. On a landscape committed to food and fiber production, it is important to preserve valuable environmental assets such as wetlands, forests, and grasslands. These components of the landscape buffer critical water, carbon, nitrogen and oxygen cycles while filtering, purifying, and replenishing essential natural resources like air and water.

Goals

Audubon’s Waterbirds and Working Lands program aims to identify and promote practical, agricultural practices that will maintain the economic viability of farms while measurably improving environmental health and wildlife habitat value on private lands. Initially, the program is focusing upon waterbirds, water quality, and the health of aquatic ecosystems.

Waterbirds have great potential to be indicators of environmental health. Accordingly, it is worthwhile to examine their activities on working lands and determine if the presence of waterbirds signals a healthy, rural environment. With its long history and extensive knowledge of waterbird conservation, Audubon will be able to increase awareness of waterbird importance in the agricultural community and help rural

PROMOTING A CULTURE OF CONSERVATION BY CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

AUDUBON SCIENCE PROGRAMS >> IBAS >> WATCHLIST >> BIRDS & AGRICULTURE >> AUDUBON AT HOME >> CITIZEN SCIENCE >> COASTAL BIRD CONSERVATION >> SEABIRD RESTORATION >> INTERNATIONAL

GOALS

- Build a science-based conservation framework for engaging agricultural producers in measurably improving wetlands and agricultural lands for waterbirds.
- Establish the science of “waterbirds as indicators” of the environmental health of agricultural lands.

FUTURE

- Identify and encourage agricultural management practices that will support the conservation of self-sustaining populations of waterbirds.
- Develop Audubon components of the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan.
- Build public appreciation and understanding of our nation’s waterbirds as barometers of the health of our aquatic ecosystems.
- Communicate the benefits of the project at the landscape level to the nation.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Offer your time and skills.
- Make a donation.

“Waterbirds have great potential to be indicators of environmental health.”

Tess Present, National Audubon Society

landowners improve waterbird habitat on their property. On working lands, the result should be more waterbird habitat and more waterbirds.

Audubon’s goal is to build a science-based, conservation framework that encourages agricultural producers to preserve wetlands and increase waterbird use of privately owned, agricultural lands:

- Audubon will identify and encourage adoption of agricultural management practices that support the conservation of self-sustaining populations of waterbirds.
- Audubon will build public appreciation and understanding of our nation’s waterbirds as barometers of the aquatic ecosystem health.
- Audubon will communicate the findings of the project at local and national levels.
- Audubon will work with our conservation partners to further the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan.

The mission of the National Audubon Society (NAS) is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth’s biological diversity. As one of the nation’s oldest and largest grass roots environmental organizations NAS is uniquely suited to assume a leadership role in promoting the implementation of wildlife and environmentally friendly agricultural production practices on the nation’s working lands.

Northern Pintail

Composite Index, counts 66-103
(includes all BCRs where at least 4 CBCs reported Northern Pintail)

