

# DoD PIF Key Focus Area: Monitoring

## *Bird Conservation in the Military*



### Mission

*To conserve migratory and resident birds and their habitats on Department of Defense lands.*

### DoD Partners in Flight

The Department of Defense (DoD) Partners in Flight (PIF) Program identifies strategies, goals, and priorities for eight key areas that support and enhance the military mission: stewardship, partnerships/cooperation, communications, habitat and species management, bird/animal aircraft strike hazard, monitoring, research, and information and education. These goals and priorities outline the DoD PIF Program vision for developing and implementing conservation actions that support the mission while minimizing impacts to bird species and their habitats. One of these key focus areas is **monitoring**, which enables DoD to better integrate programs for migratory and resident birds into existing natural resources and land management programs.

### Goal

Develop and implement a monitoring strategy that fulfills regulatory requirements and improves understanding about the status of bird populations and bird responses to environmental conditions and management activities.

### Background

Successful conservation of both listed and common species requires complete, accurate, and current information about the species, its population, habitat, and life-cycle. Understanding the status of bird populations on DoD installations is important from both regulatory and ecological perspectives. Bird population data is of much greater value when assessed at the appropriate temporal and spatial scales, and collected to assess the impacts of both military readiness and non-readiness activities. Appropriate monitoring helps managers gauge long-term responses to biological changes, such as vegetation succession or climate change. In most cases, learning about the overall status of bird populations, including size and trend, requires working at regional and national scales.

The DoD Coordinated Bird Monitoring (CBM) Plan, prepared specifically for DoD by the U.S. Geological Survey, provides guidance to DoD natural resources managers on migratory bird monitoring programs. The CBM Plan provides a thorough set of guidelines for

designing bird monitoring surveys on DoD lands (exactly when, where, and how to monitor), and for sample monitoring programs that are designed for specific installations or purposes. The CBM Plan also describes how to monitor species of concern on DoD lands, and provides recommendations for DoD's role in continental bird monitoring programs. A CBM database is also available and can be used in combination with the eBird program and the Avian Knowledge Network to ensure inventory and monitoring datasets are collected and permanently preserved for future use.

### Priorities

DoD PIF developed the following priorities to help DoD achieve its monitoring goals:

- Ensure monitoring programs support the mission, as well as active and passive migratory bird management.
- Implement practices described in the DoD CBM Plan, including standardized protocols and methodologies for bird monitoring, proper data entry, and archiving.
- Ensure DoD monitoring efforts provide pertinent data for Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans (INRMP) and National Environmental Policy Act documents.
- Support the DoD PIF Research and Monitoring Working Group by providing information relevant to military installation monitoring questions.
- Maintain information on migratory bird populations through monitoring, as required by the DoD/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service MOU and other requirements.
- Contribute monitoring information to the CBM database and other regional and national databases.
- Support identified DoD migratory bird monitoring requirements.



*The Pinyon Jay can be found in Pinyon-juniper woodland habitat in the western U.S. A multi-year DoD project monitored Pinyon Jays on three installations to provide natural resources managers recommendations on how to better manage this species while continuing military training activities.*  
*Photo: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*

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**Enabling the Mission, Defending the Resources**  
Department of Defense Natural Resources Program