

Together **We Act**



Together We Act, the theme of our report, is about the power of partnership—and one of our most important partners is you.

Schoolchildren in the *Sal a Pajarear* (Go Birding) program create a bird-inspired mural in Mexico.
Photo by Dali Tellez Girm



Strength in Numbers, Momentum in Partnerships

I am thrilled to share this annual report to thank you for your steadfast support, and to illustrate how your generosity is transforming our work here at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and out in the world to help birds and biodiversity.

“Together We Act,” the theme of this report, is our rallying cry for a movement now underway as thousands of people, connected by a love of nature, are stepping forward for conservation in their own communities across the hemispheres. As a critical partner, you accelerate this movement by helping the Cornell Lab to protect nature, discover new insights, and transform conservation by delivering technology and inspiration that sparks boundless opportunities.

One of my most vivid recent experiences was visiting *Sal a Pajarear* (Go Birding), a community project in Yucatán, Mexico. There, I met schoolchildren who were using the Lab’s Merlin Bird ID app not only to learn about birds and nature, but ultimately to inspire their community to love and protect the Mayan forests. I was overwhelmed by stories from teachers and parents about how meaningful the project had been for the children, and humbled by their appreciation to the Lab for helping to make that possible.

Your support ignites countless actions like these. Our cover photo shows birders in India at the Great Backyard Bird Count in February. Contributors from 202 countries reported approximately two-thirds of the world’s bird species during the four-day count. Recently, more than 10,000 people participated in a joyful summer of birding with The New York Times Birding Project in collaboration with the Lab. In July, birders surpassed 1.5 billion checklists submitted to eBird, an unparalleled source of data for every country to track and support the health of its birds.

As you’ll read in these pages, you help us forge all manner of partnerships that are solving

environmental challenges. In the Sierra Nevada of California, we’re bringing data-driven conservation to state and federal agencies with our bioacoustics technology and deep-learning models to monitor wildlife and support fire management for healthy ecosystems. Along the South Atlantic coast, we’re helping move knowledge into action with multimedia productions that are giving voice to more than 160 partners working to save one million acres of saltmarsh habitat for the wildlife and human communities that depend on these vital ecosystems.

From Chile to the Republic of the Congo to right here at Cornell University, we are helping hundreds of future scientists, educators, and conservation leaders gain the technology, skills, and experience to join the colossal, shared effort of sustaining our healthy world.

What we do together in the next decade will be critical for birds and biodiversity. Our latest maps from eBird show the trends for 586 species, highlighting ongoing declines in so many populations, and making it clear how urgently we need to turn the tide.

Together, let’s keep building the capacity, commitment, and communities to meet the great conservation challenges of our time. We can take inspiration from those young children in the Yucatán and how they have transformed their community, and say *we can do that too*.

With you by our side, together we can do more today, and we will do even more tomorrow.

Thank you,

Ian Owens
Louis Agassiz Fuertes Executive Director

Cover: Birders in India scan the landscape during the Great Backyard Bird Count. Organizations in India used eBird data contributed by more than 30,000 participants for the *State of India’s Birds 2023*. The report shows declining trends in bird populations similar to those documented in North America, Europe, and Australia.

Photo by Sipu Kumar

Together We Protect

A new era for conservation is underway. It's powered by people and by big data — a movement spurred in equal measure by a love of birds and wildlife and by new advances in technology.

The Cornell Lab is a hub where people and technology come together. It's where the Lab's tech teams build the platforms for individuals around the world to enjoy birds and share their observations. It's where our scientists move these contributions into massive number-crunching analyses to pinpoint where species are declining, and surface solutions.

The key now is to move ideas into worldwide action, to deliver the customizable insights that any person, community, land manager, or policy maker can use to protect nature, locally and internationally. Beyond, through the power of storytelling, we will amplify the voices of those who are rallying for conservation, and combine science with the cinematic beauty of wildlife to inspire decisions to benefit nature.

Together, we are working urgently to counter the steep declines in birds and other wildlife. Together, our opportunity is boundless.



While still abundant, Sandhill Cranes are showing declines across western portions of their range, according to new eBird Trends data.

Sandhill Cranes by Mark Chappell/Macaulay Library

Ranchers and conservationists in the Northern Great Plains are working to restore and enhance grasslands. Their work is featured in one of four new films from the Cornell Lab to help mobilize support for grassland conservation.

Photo by Melissa Groo



Grassroots Action for Grassland Birds

Across North America’s heartland, grasslands sustain wildlife and people, supporting food production, clean water, and recreation.

Habitat loss, invasive plants, and weather extremes are stressing these vital landscapes. Grassland birds in the U.S. have declined by 34% since 1970, the nation’s steepest losses for birds in any habitat.

With so much at stake, the Cornell Lab has launched a multi-year effort to support grasslands conservation by producing media content to increase public engagement, frame science for policymakers, and amplify the voices of diverse groups working to safeguard grasslands.

This year’s productions include a film highlighting the Buffalo Nations

Grasslands Alliance, a Native-led group dedicated to fortifying support for 16 Tribal Nations; a film series for the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation featuring private landowners committed to stewarding working lands; and data visualizations to inspire support for a new North American Grasslands Conservation Act.

Big Data, Bigger Impacts



It was just an idea at first. Birders keep checklists. Scientists need data. What if birders could share observations of the world’s 10,000 bird species, every day of the year? If they did, scientists could use it for conservation...right?

Now just 21 years later, the answer is yes. Inspired by the joy of birds, participants in every country have amassed 1.5 billion observations in eBird. To catalyze conservation, the Lab’s scientists have cracked the code, combining those data with artificial intelligence (AI) techniques to show rapid changes in bird populations with local precision, down to an eight-mile radius. As foundations and philanthropists have backed the work every step of the way, a leap of faith has landed in reality.

It’s a game changer, unheard of just two decades ago: the ability to see both the global connections needed to protect birds across their ranges, and the hyper-local insights to take action on the ground.

Local conservation, multiplied

Today land trusts nationwide are using eBird data to acquire new lands for conservation. In Manatee County, Florida, eBird data showed Florida Scrub-Jays on unprotected lands, helping the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast validate the importance of a nearby acquisition and begin restoring scrub for the threatened jays and other wildlife.

“A single property can act as a nucleus around which other conservation lands will coalesce,” says the Foundation’s land steward, Lee Amos. “You save one piece, then other pieces around it start to fall into place, and suddenly it’s a snowball effect of land preservation.”

This is one of 73 projects the Lab has boosted in 27 states in the first decade of its Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative. The Lab has provided land trusts with technical guidance, \$1 million in awards, and a new tool that identifies the highest value habitats for bird conservation.

These efforts are adding to the 61 million acres protected by land trusts and conservation organizations — twice the area of the National Park System in the lower 48 states. It’s an agile, scalable approach to counter habitat loss and degradation, the single biggest driver of declines in birds.

Data-driven choices for clean energy and birds

Nationally, our work is helping find smart ways to grow economies and clean energy solutions, while saving birds. Wind power generation capacity is projected to grow by about 280% in the United States by 2050, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. As new permit requests proliferate, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is collaborating with the Cornell Lab to support renewable energy goals while helping to prevent eagles from colliding with turbines.

By law, permitting decisions must be backed by evidence. Surveying every location for eagle activity could be cost- and time-prohibitive. The USFWS has proposed using eBird analyses to identify areas with a low risk of collisions at proposed sites.

“The forward-thinking approach of the Cornell Lab is a critical element of informed decision-making,” says Eric Kershner, USFWS division chief for bird conservation, permits, and regulations. “Through its innovative work with eBird data, the Lab provides information and other products necessary for the Service to identify areas of conservation need.”

Above: Bald Eagle by Calvin S/Macaulay Library

Find eBird Status and Trends data
for your favorite species



Conservation Highlights



Photo by Andy Johnson

The 23-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska holds one of the largest concentrations of wetlands and breeding waterbirds in the U.S. By building a resource of visual media of these largely undocumented wild landscapes, the Cornell Lab is serving a growing coalition of environmental groups working to protect key areas in the Western Arctic, and to reenvision Alaska's North Slope as "**America's Arctic**," with national recognition of its importance to Americans and global birdlife. ▼

▲ The Pew Charitable Trusts asked the Cornell Lab to help realize an unprecedented opportunity: to protect one million acres of saltmarsh along the U.S. South Atlantic coast. Our new film, *Marsh Forward*, spotlights the work of the **South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative**, backed by more than 160 organizations committed to protecting critical habitat spanning half the East Coast, from North Carolina to Florida.

Nespresso, a major coffee producer, is using the Cornell Lab's **Biodiversity Progress Index** to quantify performance and progress toward its commitments for sustainability and conservation. The Index paints a vivid picture of the health of bird communities using measures of species richness and composition.



Yellow-billed Loon by Gerrit Vyn

The **BirdCast** project now sends alerts to 44 cities in 19 states when radar detects peak migrations of birds, cueing people to turn out lights and treat glass to prevent birds from colliding with windows.



Osprey by Don Danko/Macaulay Library

1.3 million downloads

of eBird Status and Trends data products
in the past 12 months

(September 2022–August 2023)

WHY WE SUPPORT THE LAB

Ford and David Schumann cannot remember a time they didn't possess a keen appreciation for birds and nature.



Courtesy of The Wesleyan Connection

"We grew up with a birder," David says. "Our father, Robert Schumann, got started when he was a kid. He had bronchitis and had to stay in bed for a long time. Dad would sit in the window for hours, watch the birds, and listen to their songs. That's how it all started."

The elder Schumann would act on this lifelong love, from buying a 60-acre property in Vestal, New York, which he maintained as a wildlife refuge and natural sanctuary for birds, to serving for many years as a member of the Cornell Lab's administrative board.

"The Lab came to him with this idea for a program tracking birds, where people could share bird lists," recalls David. "They called it eBird. At the time, no one knew about smartphones. I think he gave the Lab a relatively small seed gift to get started."

Today, through the Robert Schumann Foundation, the brothers continue to support the Cornell Lab. Like their late father, they seek to change hearts and minds on behalf of birds.

"We are a small foundation, and we have to make our dollars stretch," David explains. "We often support the Lab's Center for Conservation Media because they have the ability to influence lawmakers and communities to change and take action."

The films they help make combine stunning natural history footage and data visualizations with the voices of local communities to describe the predicaments of some of the world's most imperiled species, such as shorebirds in steep decline because of vanishing habitats. Most recently, a film that chronicled the discovery of a critical migratory stop for Whimbrel in Deveaux Bank, South Carolina, has Ford and David thinking about a larger project.

"We knew we needed to do this for the entire Atlantic Flyway. The Lab is running with the idea. Sure, there's a lot to do, going all the way from South America up, and we need the science to make the case. But that's why we work with the Lab." David pauses and reflects. "I think our father would be proud."

Watch *Marsh Forward*, our new short film to inspire saltmarsh conservation along the Atlantic Flyway



Together We Discover

We accelerate discovery with pioneering research and technology. More than that, we share our passion, tools, and knowledge with others to spark the next discoveries around the world.

Here at the Cornell Lab, scientists and engineers develop techniques to reveal the invisible: elephants rumbling in tropical forests; millions of insects strumming in the rainforest; birds migrating under cover of darkness; the history of a species, written in DNA.

With bioacoustics, radar, and genetic analyses, we have the capability to monitor the heartbeat of the planet. But we can't do it alone.

By teaching the next generation of conservation leaders, and by bringing tools and technology to new communities and collaborators, together we foster the skills and capacity to study and protect wildlife, from whales in Hawaii to penguins in Antarctica.



Postdoctoral researcher Gemma Clucas collects King Penguin fecal samples to monitor how Antarctic warming impacts food availability for the birds.
Photo by Jacob C. Cooper



Cornell undergraduates learn to record sounds during a field training in Hawaii.
Photo by Ian Owens

Hearing the Future

How will we help shape the future? One answer is close to home at Cornell University. The Lab’s faculty and staff engage with hundreds of undergraduate students each year and teach more than 20 courses in ornithology, ecology, and more. This year researchers from the K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics piloted some of the first university bioacoustics courses, including immersive field training in Hawaii. Sixteen undergraduate

and graduate students gained hands-on experience recording whales and coral reef fish, and studying Hawaii’s endangered species. Students also learned and shared data analysis techniques with local partners leading on-the-ground conservation efforts. The courses drive home the interdisciplinary nature of bioacoustics and the many career paths for discovery. “They learn that achieving conservation outcomes

requires a remarkable amount of intellectual diversity,” says extension associate Ben Gottesman. “Generating new discoveries requires experts not only in animal biology, ecology, and population statistics, but also in hardware design, electrical engineering, and computer science in multiple capacities, like storing millions of hours of audio and developing machine learning algorithms.”

The Bioacoustics Revolution

Today, the Lab’s K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics is transforming the ways sound can power conservation. In one of the largest acoustic projects ever conducted, our engineers developed the technology for 1,700 recorders that are now listening across 9,000 square miles – the full length of the Sierra Nevada. Where once a study might have focused on a single bird, landscape-scale bioacoustics monitoring opens up an intricate, whole-ecosystem portrait.

To reveal the full picture, researchers use the Lab’s BirdNET algorithm, built in collaboration with Chemnitz University of Technology, to identify birds, wolves, amphibians, and other wildlife across the Sierra Nevada. With data on diverse wildlife coming in all at once, the Lab’s scientists work with the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and other agencies, to reveal how fires and other disturbances affect the whole forest. The results can inform measures such as thinning forests or removing dead wood to benefit entire ecosystems.

“We’ve opened a world of possibilities. Everyone in the Forest Service is excited. They’ve never been able to dream this big,” says Connor Wood, leader of the Lab’s BirdNET ecology team. “But it can’t happen fast enough. The future of the Sierra Nevada is being decided right now. We will soon know whether the trees of the Sierra Nevada – some of the biggest and oldest on Earth – can survive another 50 years, or whether it might cease to be a forest ecosystem.”

Now, as bioacoustics technology yields vast and nuanced data, these breakthrough projects carry global implications.

Amplifying the capacity for discovery

“In addition to being an engine of data generation, the Sierra Nevada project has yielded tools people in other places can take, model, and use,” says Laurel Symes, the Yang Center’s assistant director. “For example, right now we’re working with 40 researchers and conservationists in Malaysia and Indonesia over the course of a year on every stage, from collecting the initial data to organizing, managing, and acting on it. They are planning big projects of their own, such as developing a research plan and monitoring protocol for migratory birds in the East Asian Flyway.”

Next year, the Yang Center will collaborate with researchers and conservationists from Brazil, Ecuador, and Argentina focused on the Pantanal, the world’s largest tropical wetlands. These donor-funded projects will build bioacoustics capacity, paving the way for future discoveries.



Learn more about how the field of bioacoustics is changing the face of conservation science



Discovery Highlights

Song Sparrow by Mason Maron / Macaulay Library



▲ As climate change alters how we live and work, animals too must adapt. Research associate Jen Walsh is studying **Song Sparrows across North America** in a groundbreaking effort to determine how genetic variation has allowed 25 subspecies to emerge, each with finely tuned adaptations that help them thrive in their local environment.

Photo by Emily Vo



With the new **Seabird Conservation Analytics Team (SCAT)**, postdoctoral researcher Gemma Clucas and 10 undergraduates are using fecal DNA and drone surveys to monitor seabird populations around the world. They're investigating how climate change and overfishing are affecting the seabird prey in the world's largest penguin colonies on the Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia, and South Sandwich Islands (see photo on pages 8–9).

Birds of the World revolutionized ornithological research by bringing together comprehensive information on all the world's bird species in one living publication. Generously, scientists from countries all around the world are sharing their discoveries, enriching this ever-evolving online resource. The Lab provides free access to 36 countries to increase shared knowledge and spark action around the world.

WHY I SUPPORT THE LAB

K. Lisa Yang believes in the power of discovery, which opened her eyes to the Cornell Lab.



Photo by Peter Edward Quinn

For decades, Lisa's affinity for all things Cornell had not yet revealed one of the University's greatest assets.

"I graduated from Cornell and serve as a trustee, but had never been to Sapsucker Woods," recalls Lisa. "Until, at a university board meeting, the Lab appeared on a list of places to visit. I came here knowing nothing, but I was fortunate. That day happened to be the Migration Celebration."

Lisa struck up a conversation with Ashakur Rahaman, a researcher who shared the story of the Bioacoustics Research Program and its technological advances using sound to study, monitor, and protect birds and other wildlife, including his work on endangered whales.

A conservationist and a donor versed in academic institutions and novel, collaborative scientific enterprise, Lisa saw the potential. "Here is a group of scientists coming at important problems from a new direction. For conservation to succeed, we need to identify people with specialized skills and invest in them and their vision."

Lisa kept visiting the Lab, envisioning how bioacoustics can inform data-driven decision-making not just on behalf of birds but all life on Earth. "As I met researchers like Chris Clark and Holger Klinck, I realized this work must be taxonomically agnostic [include all species]. And it needs infrastructure — a scaffold, if you will — not just of technology or the science it makes possible, but of people."

Lisa, who considers herself "an investor for the future," stepped in, endowing the program as the K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics. With greater resources, the Center has grown, pioneering the analysis of massive datasets with machine learning to yield powerful insights about wildlife health on land, in the sky, and in the oceans.

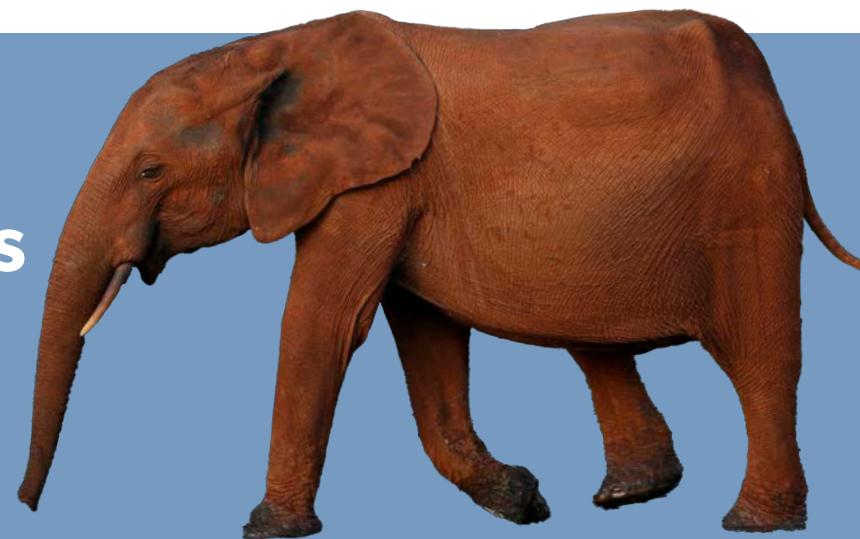
What comes next again depends on capacity — at the Lab and far beyond, by Lisa's estimation. "We need more collaborators in tech, more partners in the field acting on findings. If we want to bend the curve on conservation, let's keep building this scaffold of people invested in making sure we preserve as much life as we can."

We have collected

2.6 million hours
of acoustic data in the rainforests in Africa.

That's equal to

300 years
of data.



African Forest Elephant by Ivonne Kienast/Yang Center and WWF

Look at how Yang Center scientists help protect elephants



Together We Transform

Moving the needle toward a healthier world means helping people connect with their surroundings. People will take action for what they understand, care about, and love.

The Cornell Lab supports millions in these actions when they carry the Merlin Bird ID app with them everywhere, enjoying instant access to information about birds and nature in 17 languages and counting. Beyond that, we ensure science and discovery take root in learners of every age through Bird Academy and K-12 education. And we help many more take action through international participatory science projects like Global Big Day, Great Backyard Bird Count, NestWatch, and Project FeederWatch.

This model goes far beyond ideas and apps. You can find the beating heart of a movement in the groups, organizations, and communities that are partnering with the Lab wherever birds and nature inspire the change the world needs.



Members of partner organization Red de Observadores de Aves y Vida Silvestre de Chile — or ROC — are essential to collaborative conservation efforts in Chile.

Photo by @fernando.carrasco.fotografias



Brown Agbleta, with the Merlin Bird ID app in hand, and Yao Foli are partners in the “Bring Back the Birds” project in Ndor Eco Village, Ghana.

Photo by Marilú López Fretts

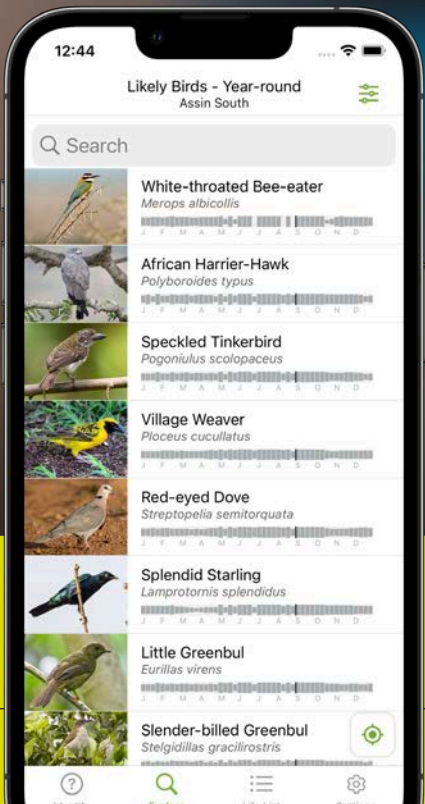
An App for Any Bird

Ten years after its launch, the free Merlin Bird ID app reached a new milestone this year: people can now use Merlin to identify and learn about 10,670 species of birds from any part of the world.

“We couldn’t have built Merlin without the contributions of birders, photographers, and sound recordists around the world,” says program coordinator Alli Smith. “Merlin is really a tool built by the birding community, for the birding

community — and beyond! We want Merlin to be a way for anybody to learn about birds, whether they’re a seasoned birder or just getting started, and no matter where in the world they are.”

Merlin is now available in 17 languages, including Spanish, Korean, Thai, and Hebrew, with more on the way. More than 15 million people around the world have downloaded Merlin.



Communities Spark Action

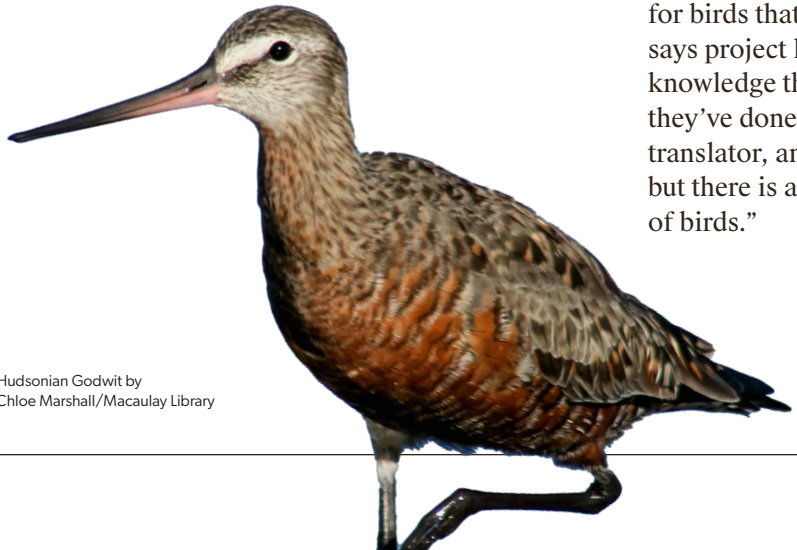
Small beginnings can turn into inspiring, game-changing enterprises, given the right combination of enthusiasm, expertise, and teamwork.

Just ask members of the nonprofit Red de Observadores de Aves y Vida Silvestre de Chile, or ROC. In 2009, a small group of naturalists discovered eBird and, with it, a new opportunity to advance knowledge.

With a 4,000-mile coastline, Chile is central to Western Hemisphere bird conservation, especially for shorebirds using the mudflats, shorelines, and coastal wetlands during their transcontinental journeys.

In the ensuing decade, 300 Chilean eBird users became 3,000, and the all-volunteer group became 10 paid employees working to transform the way their country thinks about birdlife and conservation. Through productive collaborations with the Cornell Lab and others, Chile now has a National Bird Conservation Strategy, a National Shorebird Conservation Plan, and South America’s first-ever breeding bird atlas.

“Cornell Lab tools have been a fundamental element for the development of ROC’s activities,” says ROC executive director Ivo Tejeda. “The products developed by the Lab have a high potential to contribute to public policy and conservation initiatives...eBird made it possible for 1,600 people to participate [in the atlas], collecting five years of data and accounts on the natural history and distribution of more than 300 species that breed in continental Chile.”



Hudsonian Godwit by
Chloe Marshall/Macaulay Library

The growth of the Merlin Bird ID app, as well as free access to the Cornell Lab’s Birds of the World, supported by donors, has helped to deepen knowledge and connections with birds. And that knowledge flows both ways: Chilean ornithologists have generously contributed their expertise to help enhance more than 30 species accounts in Birds of the World.

In countless communities, people are joining a growing movement to make our shared planet a better place for wildlife and people.

The lasting value of partner-led projects

In Ghana, where Ewe (EH-weh) youth are determined to “Bring Back the Birds” to their Volta Region, Cornell Lab education specialists accepted an invitation to work alongside local educators and leaders to support the project and foster deeper ties to birds and conservation. Local teachers have created a sustainability curriculum focused on birds, welcomed elders and their chief into their school, and planted fruit trees to attract birds to the schoolyard.

“Partnerships like the one in Ghana are most successful because the community has taken the lead,” says Mya Thompson, co-director of the Lab’s Center for Engagement in Science and Nature. We trust our partners to know how we can be of service, and it’s our goal to meet those needs.”

The inspiration is mutual.

“These young people are rescuing native Ewe names for birds that had been lost along with the habitat,” says project leader Marilú López Fretts. “That’s knowledge the Lab is gaining, as we discover how they’ve done birding for generations. We have a translator, and English is often a common language, but there is another language we all share: the love of birds.”

Discover inspiring stories from our
partners in Latin America and the Caribbean



Community Highlights



Photo by Eden Strachan/Black Girls Don't Get Love

This spring Cornell Lab social scientists surveyed more than 1,000 **Great Backyard Bird Count** participants about their attitudes and behaviors around gardening for birds. They also ran focus groups to understand what motivates people to make positive changes for birds and nature. The learnings will inform strategies to compel more people to create habitats that help birds and pollinators.

▲ Last year **Celebrate Urban Birds** awarded 19 Equity, Birds, and Culture Mini-Grants that helped engage nearly 10,000 people from Venezuela to Texas to Ghana in habitat restoration, participatory science, Indigenous history, and public art.

The inaugural **Coastal Solutions Summit** in February brought together three cohorts of Fellows representing eight Latin American countries for a week of capacity building and strategic planning. After five years, there are now 30 Coastal Solutions early-career professionals leading projects that are improving life for birds and people throughout the Pacific Americas Flyway. ▼



Photo by Eliana Montenegro-Pazmino

Birdability is a nonprofit group that shares the joys of birding with people who have disabilities and ensures that birding is accessible for everybody. The Lab's **Conservation Media** team produced a film for use on social media that helped the Birdability campaign's messages of inclusivity reach 15 times more people in 2022 (in 53 countries) as compared to the previous year.

WHY WE SUPPORT THE LAB

Carlyn and Tom Jervis fell in love at Cornell. With birds — and each other.



Courtesy of Carlyn and Tom Jervis

When they met, Carlyn was completing her master's thesis studying chick mortality in Herring Gulls. It led to a career in conservation, including positions in the Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service. An applied physicist, Tom was teaching in academia before returning to research at the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Throughout it all, birds — and the science and scientists that reveal their magic and ensure their well-being — remained a shared priority for the couple.

Life took Tom and Carlyn many places: New Hampshire, Washington state, Nevada, and finally New Mexico, where they have retired. Yet a piece of their hearts remained in Sapsucker Woods. By the 1980s, this abiding connection convinced them to join the Lab as members.

"Reading *Living Bird*, we learned about everything the Lab was doing, so when we could afford to be donors, we started contributing," says Tom. "Our overall giving philosophy is not to support

organizations for their own sake. We want to support organizations actually doing things."

Eventually, one Lab program, Coastal Solutions, spoke to the Jervises, while harkening back to Carlyn's work all those years ago, living on an island and studying the Herring Gulls.

"We wanted to direct our giving to something research-oriented, and more and more, we are recognizing that there are complex social, economic, and political dynamics to conservation," explains Carlyn. "The Coastal Solutions Fellows program is training young scientists in all these aspects, as well as in the biology of helping and saving the birds. It's a very good program."

Hearing from Fellows, young conservation professionals working in Latin America, via Zoom sessions deepens the couple's natural affinity for this work. "I've always been enamored by seabirds," Carlyn says. "Having grown up in the middle of the country, this relationship to the ocean and its birds is simply wonderful."

During the past year,

8 million people

around the world used Merlin Bird ID, identifying

460 million birds

with sound ID.

The most-identified species was the **Northern Cardinal** (27 million IDs!)



Northern Cardinal by Gary Mueller/Macaulay Library



Meet our 2023 Coastal Solutions Fellows

Why We Support the Lab

“I can’t imagine a more compelling place to put our conservation-targeted philanthropic dollars. The Cornell Lab is one of the most important ornithological research and education centers in the world, making major contributions in every arena and creating extraordinary tools for people of every age all over the world.”

OWEN DEUTSCH, Chicago, IL

“I support the Cornell Lab because I trust the foundation of its broad connection to birds and to birders. The tools it offers, such as Merlin, FeederWatch, and Living Bird, allow for meaningful participation and education. The Lab is always with me!”

KAY JAACKS, Cowan Heights, CA

“As a retired special educator, I’m delighted to see the Lab’s development of materials to teach children with different abilities and backgrounds. This kind of discovery provides a wonderful inspiration for children. The little guys can win!”

MARILYN SCHOETTL, North Bethesda, MD

Every gift to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a gift to our Spark Campaign

Our visionary comprehensive campaign brings together committed people and partners the world over to do the greatest good for birds and our planet through these four strategic priorities:

Interdisciplinary Science — Building teams of scientists, engineers, academics, professionals, and creatives with diverse perspectives and backgrounds, to solve the biggest problems.

People Power — Engaging millions, harnessing participatory science data, and inspiring stewardship through education and action.

Science to Action — Translating big data and research into conservation strategies, and moving ideas into action through partnerships that galvanize solutions on the ground.

Technology and Innovation — Generating new advances that increase capacity for discovery, education, and conservation worldwide.



To find out more about our campaign and its vision, please contact Mary Guthrie at 607-254-2157, msg21@cornell.edu, and visit our campaign website: spark.birds.cornell.edu

Thank you for making possible all that we accomplish — together!

Just like the birds we all love, the Cornell Lab finds special strength in numbers.

That’s why we collaborate with an expanding network of communities and organizations, nationally and globally, and why we turn to committed supporters like you, at every level, to strengthen the capacity of the Lab and engage so many in learning about birds and biodiversity.

Thank you for all you do to advance our work, as well as a shared understanding of nature.

You are part of a mighty and growing flock of members and supporters who power these local, national, and global collaborations, committed to the notion that by working together, we will bring about a healthier planet and more hopeful future.



Cornell Lab members watch birds early in the morning at the Sapsucker Woods pond.

Photo by Erin Pierce

More than
177,000 supporters invest in the Cornell Lab
(as of June 2023)



Please view our list of legacy society members and honor and memorial tributes at birds.cornell.edu/donors

Financial Report

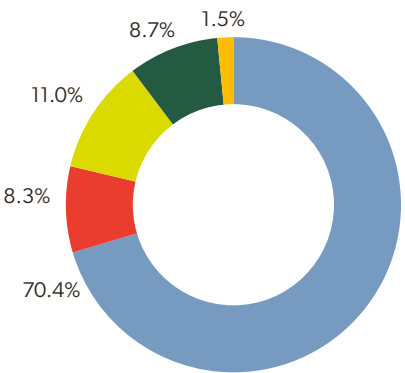
2023 Fiscal Year: July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023

Thank you for supporting the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. In fiscal year 2023, thousands of members and donors provided more than 70% of our annual revenue, a total of \$32.2 million that expands our capacity to promote global conservation through research, education, and participatory science.

As a mission-driven nonprofit organization nested within a world-class academic research institution, the Cornell Lab leverages our strength to provide

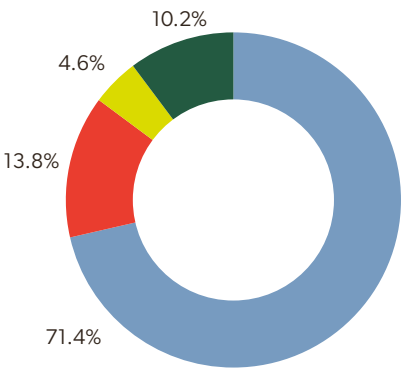
information, tools, and inspiration to people and partners around the world to help reverse the decline in birds and biodiversity.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, strong philanthropic support combined with a minimal increase in expenses resulted in an uncommon surplus of funds for several years. As we returned to pre-pandemic levels of activity this year, we have invested these surpluses in people, technology, and innovative ideas to accelerate our work.



FY23 REVENUE

Membership & Gifts	\$32,244,891
Grants & Contracts	\$3,799,794
Program Income	\$5,053,448
Invested Funds Income	\$3,997,392
Other	\$704,686
Total Revenue	\$45,800,211



FY23 EXPENDITURES

Program	\$32,446,609
Development & Membership	\$6,254,268
Administration & Infrastructure	\$2,088,994
University Administrative Support Costs	\$4,647,000
Total Expenditures	\$45,436,871

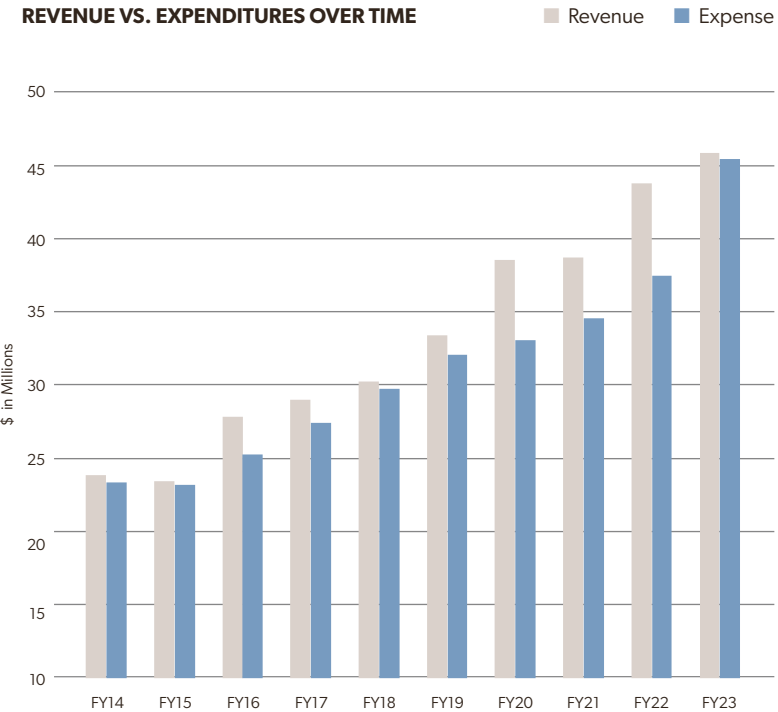
If you have questions, comments, or requests for the Cornell Lab's membership and development team, please contact Bramble Klipple at 607-254-1105, bck42@cornell.edu, or Mary Guthrie at 607-254-2157, msg21@cornell.edu.



A young Ewe birder near the Wli Falls in Hohie, Ntor Eco Village, Tonglo, Ghana

Photo by Marilú López Fretts

REVENUE VS. EXPENDITURES OVER TIME



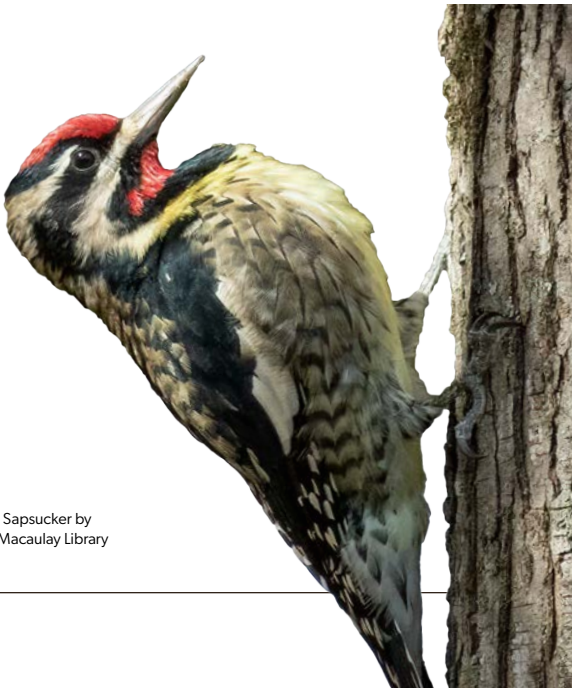
Our Corporate Sponsors

Through partnerships with these companies and organizations, we grow our capacity to reach and engage new audiences to improve the understanding and protection of birds, from backyards to ecosystems around the world.

The Cornell Lab is grateful to these sponsors for their support during the past year.

- Acopian BirdSavers
- Aramark
- Better Bird
- Birds & Beans Coffee
- Celestron
- Enthusiast Hotel Collection
- LOWA
- Pennington Wild Bird Feed
- Perky-Pet
- Princeton University Press
- Swarovski Optik
- Wild Birds Unlimited, Inc.
- Wild Birds Unlimited at Sapsucker Woods
- Wild Delight
- Wingscapes
- Viking
- Zeiss
- 3-D Pet Products

For information about partnership opportunities, contact Justin Cleveland, manager of corporate partnerships, at jbc258@cornell.edu.



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker by Iris Kilpatrick/Macaulay Library

“Together, we are part of a global movement. Our collective action and commitment will surely change the future.

Your generosity propels us to create new knowledge, train the next generation of scientists and conservationists, and expand our work in partnership around the world.

Thank you for all you do for the Cornell Lab!”

LINDA MACAULAY, Chair, Cornell Lab Administrative Board



