

# Saving Birds One Window at a Time

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# Based on the work of the Bird-Window Collision Working Group (BCWG)

A collaboration between

- The Acopian Center for Ornithology
- Muhlenberg College
- Lehigh Valley Audubon Society
- Wyncote Audubon Society
- Audubon Pennsylvania

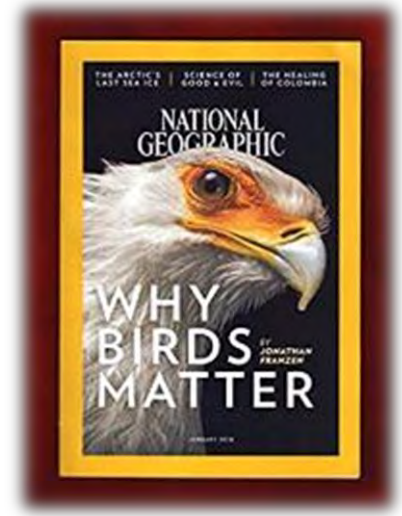


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## What we want to tell you

- Why birds matter!
- Birds cannot see windows
- Birds collide with windows
- They are injured or they die
- Prevention of bird-window collisions
- Products you can purchase to "fix" your windows
- Local project – Tracy Aviary SLACS work



**Bird-window collisions are a big deal**  
**Be part of the solution!**

# Why birds matter!

## Discussion



# Why birds matter!

- They contribute to healthy ecosystems
  - Pollinators, pest control, carrion eaters, seed dispersal
- Biological barometers and environmental indicators
- They mark the passage of the seasons
- They provide a sense of place, connection to the wild
- They are life; if we save the birds, we save the world
- They bring hope, beauty, music and wonder to Earth
- They delight us and enrich our lives

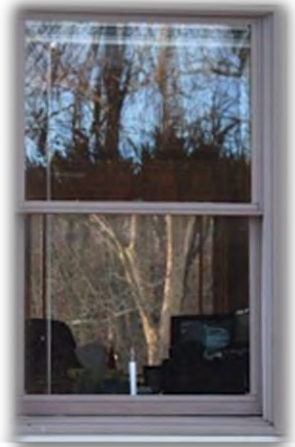
## Why birds matter!

- We invite them into our backyard habitats
- We feed birds
- We spend money on plants, shrubs and water features



# Fact: Birds are dying because they cannot see windows

- Which glass window can be seen by birds?
- Two factors determine whether birds see glass
  - Is it clear or see-through
  - Is it reflective



## Fact: Birds collide with windows

- There are lots of windows out there
- Original bird-window strike studies done by Dr. Daniel Klem, Jr.
- 1974 study results provide evidence that bird-window strikes are a significant contributor to bird mortality
- 100 million to 1 billion bird-window collisions per year

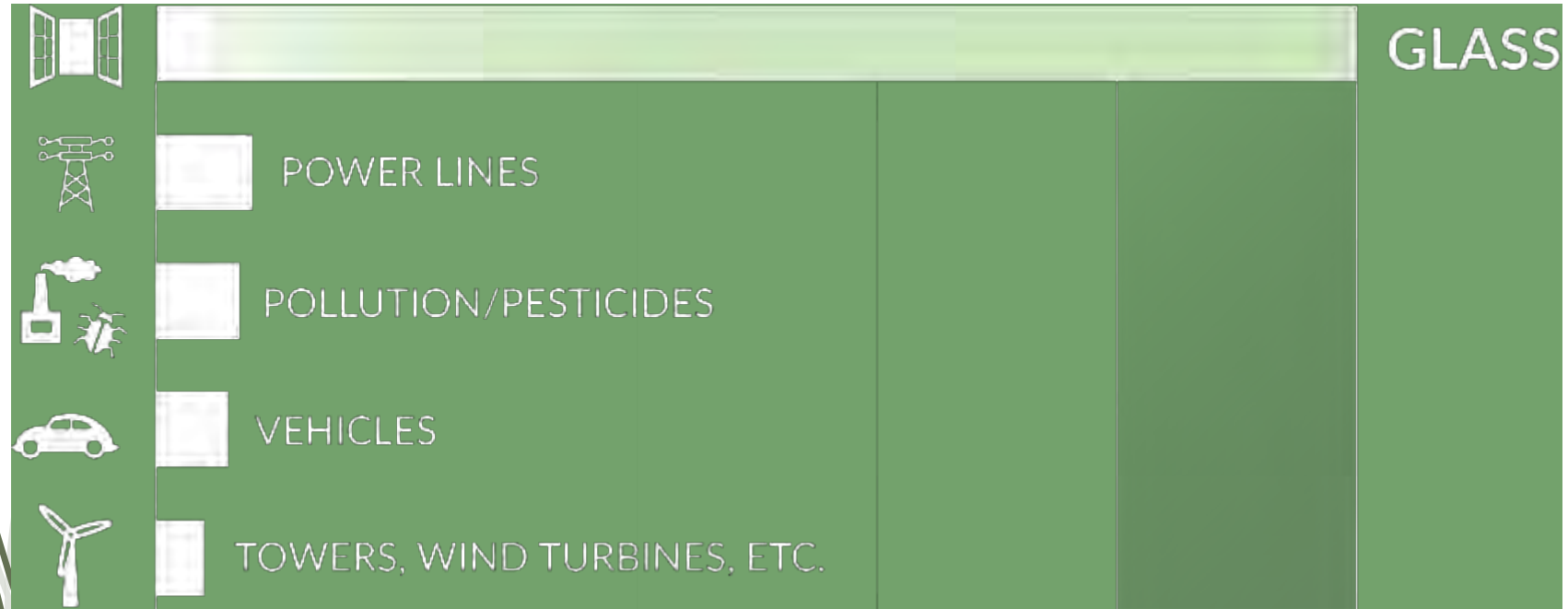




## Bird mortality numbers

- According to a 2014 study by Loss, et. al., bird-window collisions are estimated at between **365** and **988 million** strikes per year
- They calculated the median annual mortality in the USA alone due to bird-window collisions at **599 million**
- This is close to **DOUBLE** the entire population of the USA
- The problem is lots of dead birds because they just do not see glass as an obstacle to avoid

# Leading causes of bird mortality



After habitat loss and cats, glass is the third leading human cause of bird mortality worldwide.

# Conditions leading to bird-window strikes

- Any size window, in any location
- Any season
- Any time of day
- Any place
- Big cities, small towns
- Bright lights
- Majority of strikes occur year-round at residential & low-rise buildings



## Best predictor of the number of bird strikes

- The density of birds in the vicinity (within ~30 feet)
- Food, water and vegetation account for increases in bird density near windows



## Fact: Birds are injured or die

- Concussions and blunt-force trauma are the most common injuries
- Many birds that do fly away after a collision are estimated to die later
- Collisions with glass kill both the unfit and the fit
- 25-50% of all window collisions do not leave any evidence of a strike
- This leads to people thinking they do not have window kills at their home
- Studies show, windows kill birds

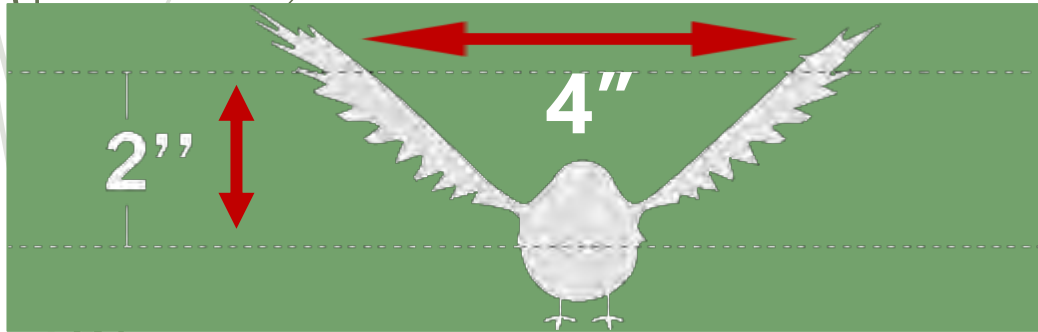


Have you had bird-window strikes at your home?



## Prevention of bird-window collisions

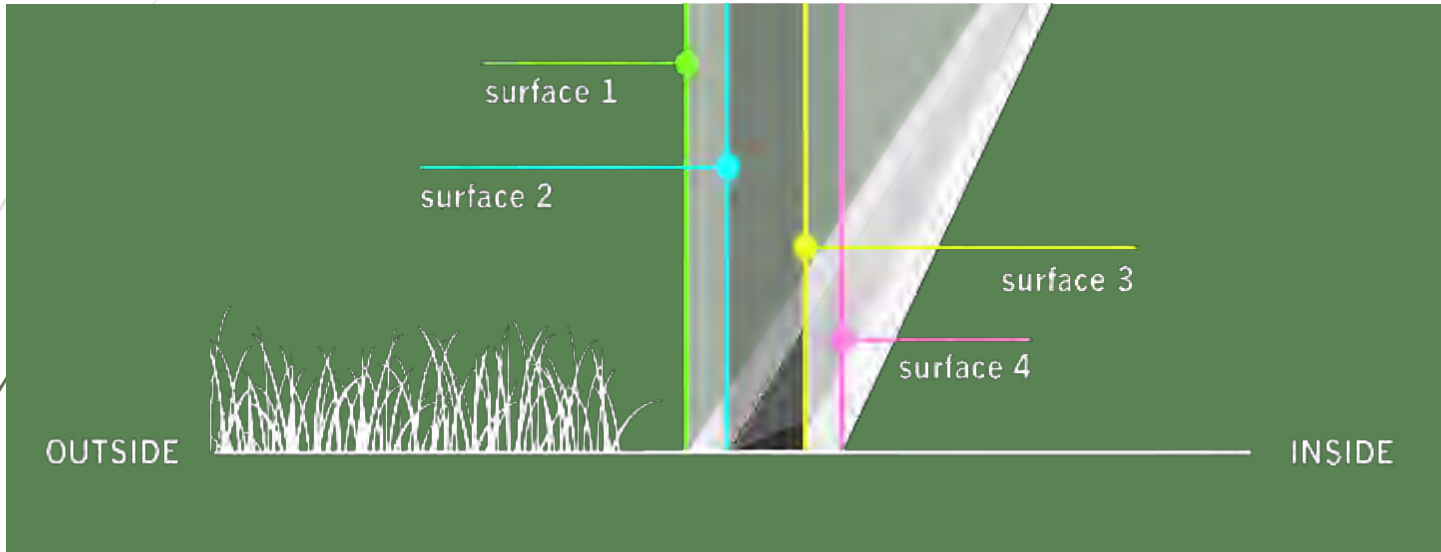
- ▶ Make your windows visible to birds
- ▶ Provide a physical barrier to prevent birds from flying into the windows



**Use the 2" inch x 4" inch rule!**



# Decal and sticker placement



**To make glass visible to birds and be most effective,  
use the surface on the outside of the window unit**



## Products you can purchase to "fix" your windows

- Acopian BirdSavers
- BirdTape
- CollidEscape
  - Informational signs
  - Decals
- Tempera paint
- Products endorsed by American Bird Conservancy

## Acopian BirdSavers

- Simple cords are easy to install
- Hang on outside of windows
- Don't block your view
- Gently sway in wind



## Patterned CollidEscape<sup>®</sup> and decals

- Film or tape is available in white, clear, tinted or with images
- Installed on exterior surface
- You hang like wallpaper
- Custom order designs



## BirdTape

- Easy to install, long-lasting and affordable
- Highly effective when installed as recommended
- Translucent tape allows light in; partially obscures views
- Lasts four years when installed on the exterior window surface



## Tempera paint

- ▶ Use tempera paints on outside surface
- ▶ Relatively fast-drying paint that uses colored pigments which are mixed with a binder medium that is soluble in water
- ▶ Use powdered tempera paints and mix just a little bit of water in a tray



## Placement of Bird Feeders near windows can save lives

- Place birdfeeder close to window
- Birds won't be able to build up momentum if startled
- Can prevent injury to birds



## Architect and industry solutions

- Fritted glass
- Etched glass
- UV-reflecting and absorbing film

Note: angled glass has not been shown to be effective

## Fritted glass

- Birds can see this glass
- Energy-saving
- Smooth, gradient aesthetic
- Has a ceramic component that can be laid out into an assortment of patterns, typically dots or lines





## Etched glass

- Glass treated with hydrofluoric acid to give its surface a frosted look
- Can be cut into any shape or size and then tempered
- Birds can see this glass



## UV-reflecting and absorbing film

- Example of an exterior film (right)
- Still being evaluated for bird-collision prevention
- Birds see it, we don't
- Walker Glass-AviProtek® T is a product on the market with some effectiveness (right)



## Promising future

- The good news is that industry is taking notice of the growing demand for solutions and options for bird-friendly products!
- Birds can see in the Ultraviolet (UV) spectrum, we can not. Work is being done to develop a product that has a pattern birds can see and use to avoid the glass, but humans can not see, therefore does not interfere with our view.

# Lots of choices!



## Consumer beware!

- Currently, no official standards for bird-friendly glass
- Do your homework
- Talk to experts
- Be skeptical
- You can help locally . . .





# SLACS – Salt Lake Avian Collision Survey



## What we talked about!

- Birds are important to us
- Bird-window collisions are a problem and you can be part of the solution
- Birds cannot see windows and therefore collide with them
- Birds are injured or die when they hit windows
- We can prevent bird-window collisions by making windows visible
- There are products you can purchase to “fix” your windows
- Get involved locally with Tracy Aviary SLACS



## We all can make a difference!

- 350+ bird species in Utah
- Help our birds
- Share this information with family and friends
- Contact us for more information
  
- **Share pictures of your mitigated windows with us; we will post to Pennsylvania Audubon FB page**





# Thank you from Utah's birds!



## Selected product websites

### ➤ **Acopian BirdSavers**

- <https://www.birdsavers.com/>

### ➤ **American Bird Conservancy**

- <https://abcbirds.org/program/glass-collisions/bird-friendly-window-solutions/>

### ➤ **Bird Screen Company**

- <https://www.birdscreen.com/>

### ➤ **CollidEscape**

- <https://www.collidescape.org/>

### ➤ **ORNILUX Bird Protection Glass**

- <http://www.ornilux.com/>

### ➤ **WindowAlert, Inc.**

- <http://www.windowalert.com>

## Contact us!

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- **Questions?**