

Convention & Treaty



The first Migratory Bird Treaty signed between the United States and Great Britain (acting on behalf of Canada) in 1916, reaches its centennial anniversary this year, leading many bird enthusiasts, wildlife experts and conservation organizations to reflect on its international success.

The Migratory Bird Treaty is the first major international agreement signed by the U.S. that protects birds that migrate across international borders. The two countries were responding to the extinction or near-extinction of a number of bird species that were hunted either for sport or for their feathers. The two countries also agreed to establish specific hunting seasons for game birds.

To better enforce the Treaty, Congress passed the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) in 1918. The Act grants full protection to live or dead birds, including their feathers, parts, eggs and nests, unless permitted by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

One successful conservation story that resulted from the signing of the Migratory Bird Treaty is that of the Snowy Egret. Once hunted extensively for its feathers, the Snowy Egret was near extinction in the early 20th century before the population rebounded under the protections of the MBTA. Now experts estimate a population of 1.3 million individuals in the continental United States.

The first Migratory Bird Treaty also paved the way for several other international treaties to protect migratory birds. After the Treaty with Canada was drafted in 1916, similar agreements soon followed with Japan, Russia, and Mexico.

The treaty connects the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service with our federal, state, private, non-government, tribal, and international partners who share a long, successful history of conserving, protecting, and managing migratory bird populations and their habitats. Celebrating the centennial of the first treaty allows us to bring together those who have contributed to its success, and to galvanize efforts to protect migratory birds for generations to come.

Migratory Birds

connect

people with nature and add beauty, sound and color to our world. They provide countless opportunities for enjoyment by birders, hunters, and outdoor enthusiasts, and they have cultural and spiritual importance.

contribute

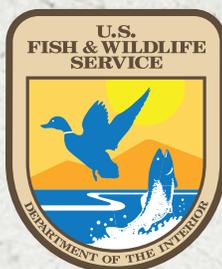
environmental benefits, including pollination, insect and rodent control, and seed dispersal.

indicate

environmental health because they are so visible and are relatively easy to study. Studying birds can give us a picture of what is going on in the natural world.

and

play a key role in the U.S. economy, supporting recreational opportunities that create jobs and generate billions of dollars in revenue.



Give the World Wings



Join the Celebration

Throughout 2016 the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is working with partners to create awareness, promote actions, increase support, and expand engagement in the conservation of migratory birds. Here are some centennial projects that you can participate in:

Follow the Flyway Ambassadors

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, together with a collection of federal, NGO and international partners, are highlighting the incredible journey of migrating birds. Follow the journey through the eyes of two young bird novices on birdtrippers.com

#100birdwalks

Join the Pacific Region of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's #100birdwalks campaign. Find a walk among our list of 100 "knock your socks off" bird walks in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Hawaii. Visit the Pacific Region's Facebook page and search for #100birdwalks to see posts with more information highlighting these walks. We encourage you to take a walk and tell us what you see using the hashtag #100birdwalks.

bird festivals

Numerous bird festivals or treaty centennial themed events are happening throughout the year. Here are some highlights:

The manu-o-Kū festival, May 14 - Honolulu's, Hawai'i

The festival will be held at the 'Iolani Palace's Coronation Lawn from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. The festival is free and open to the public.

Tualatin River Bird Festival, May 21 - Sherwood, Oregon

The Friends of the Refuge, in conjunction with Tualatin River-NWR, welcome you to their 20th Annual event, a family-friendly affair!

Mountain Bird Festival, May 20-22 - Ashland, Oregon

The award winning festival celebrates the natural wonders of southern Oregon and northern California. Register at www.klamathbird.org.

3 things You can do for Birds

1

Reduce bird collisions with windows - leave blinds or curtains partially open during the day and move house plants away from windows.

2

Keep bird feeders less than 3 feet OR greater than 30 feet from any window or reflective surface to reduce collision risk.

3

Support conservation - buy a Duck Stamp, join a bird club or other conservation organization, or volunteer at a National Wildlife Refuge.

Visit www.fws.gov/birds/MBTreaty100/ to get involved and find events near you