

Management Plans for Bird Conservation

The American oystercatcher has become a rarity along the Mid-Atlantic coastline over the past decade, as have several other shore-dwelling birds. These declines have been caused by the loss of shore habitats to development and the regular disturbance of bird breeding grounds.

Professor Julie Lockwood and her students are working to save as many endangered bird species as they can, including the American oystercatcher. They respond to requests for assistance with bird conservation from government agencies and conservation groups around the world. They are currently working on projects in New Jersey, the Florida Everglades, Hawaii, and Bermuda. Her research enables her to produce management action plans for private citizens, nonprofit groups, and government agencies. The decisive sign of their success is the delisting of an endangered species—or the prevention of such a listing altogether.

Currently, Lockwood is able to provide only 10 to 25 percent of the science-based assistance requested of her lab. Additional funding would allow the group to study other critically threatened bird species in New Jersey and elsewhere.

Birds play a critical role in our everyday lives. Birds pollinate or disperse seeds of plants that we enjoy in our gardens, marvel at on hikes, or rely on for food. Birds also eat insects that are considered pests (like mosquitoes). In addition, bird watching contributes millions of dollars to the economies of communities where birds are plentiful and diverse, such as in Cape May County.

You can make a difference in bird conservation by funding Dr. Lockwood's work. Please contact The Office of Development at 732-932-9000, ext. 576 or development@sebs.rutgers.edu for more information.

For more information, visit us at www.sebs.rutgers.edu/development.

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