

Grassland Birds Are In Trouble

Grassland Nesting Birds Are in Trouble!

The numbers of these birds have dropped precipitously, many losing 80% of their population in the past 50 years. Habitat loss, land use changes, pesticide application, and other causes are all conspiring against birds such as: Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Bobolink, Savannah Sparrow, Northern Bobwhite, Ring-necked Pheasant, Vesper Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, and others.

They Need our Help NOW!

The Grassland Birds Initiative supports landowners in managing fields to provide the essential elements these species need for survival: cover, nesting places, food, and water. By providing high quality habitat, undisturbed during nesting season, these species can rebound.

Restoring grassland bird populations will ensure that future generations can witness the courtship ritual of the American Woodcock, experience the explosion of a covey of quail at their feet, and enjoy the caroling of the Eastern Meadowlark, Northern Bobwhite and other grassland birds drifting over local farms and fields. We hope you'll join the effort.

Benefits of Grasslands

Preserving Grasslands has Numerous Benefits:

- Increased success of grassland nesting birds raising young
- Possible return of species that have disappeared from our area
- More birds means more bird song and fewer insect pests
- Reduced fuel usage and reduced wear and tear on equipment
- Establishment of a functional grassland habitat
- Improved soil health
- Increased fertility of the land

Managing land in the Grassland Birds Initiative will help to ensure that future generations can experience and appreciate the wonderful birds and other wildlife that make grasslands their home. Allowing large areas to function as a grassland ecosystem will benefit a number of species of animals and plants. Allowing the soil to rest will benefit the micro-organisms that make soils function properly. The increase in bird life that follows proper land management will reduce insect pests since grassland birds feed their young exclusively insects.

Grassland Wildlife

Birds that Benefit:

Eastern Meadowlark
Northern Bobwhite
Eastern Bluebird
Grasshopper Sparrow
Henslow's Sparrow
Red-winged Blackbird
Horned Lark
Loggerhead Shrike
Ring-necked Pheasant
Vesper Sparrow
Eastern Kingbird
Field Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Red-tailed Hawk
American Kestrel
American Woodcock
Northern Harrier

Other Wildlife that Benefit:

Meadow vole
White-footed mouse
Numerous species of:
Butterflies
Dragonflies
Damselflies
Moths
Grasshoppers
Katydid
Crickets
Fireflies

Grassland Birds Initiative

How can you participate?

- Enroll your property in the program and agree to let PVAS know of any changes in your land management practices.
- Practice reduced mowing, rotational mowing, late season mowing, or mowing every four to five years. This maintains a functional grassland ecosystem on lands that are not in production while keeping woody species from encroaching.
- Plant warm-season grasses that are more beneficial to wildlife.
- Reduce the use of pesticides and consider alternative pest management practices.
- Preserve and protect other grasslands for wildlife by using your project as a model for others.
- Coordinate with other land owners to link grasslands, creating larger tracts to increase the effective acreage of grassland habitats.
- Cooperate with state and federal programs to offset costs associated with conversion to warm-season grasses.
- Certify your land and project through PVAS as a "Grassland Birds Preserve" and display your certificate for others to see.

The Potomac Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to preserving, restoring, and enjoying the natural world through education and action.



Potomac Valley Audubon Society
<http://www.potomacaudubon.org>
P.O. Box 578, Shepherdstown, WV 25443
Phone: 304-676-3397

For additional information please visit our web page at:

www.PotomacAudubon.org/GBI

Or email us at:

GrasslandBirdsInitiative@gmail.com

Images provided by Wil Hershberger,
Nature Images and Sounds, LLC

Potomac Valley
Audubon Society's

Grassland Birds Initiative



Saving Grassland Birds for
Future Generations