

Lights Out for Birds

Spring Migration: February 15 through May 31, 2010

Lights Out for Birds during Migration

San Francisco is part of the Pacific Flyway, a migratory route for hundreds of species of North American birds. Over 250 species of birds migrate through each year. Many migrate at night and are confused by the city's lights, particularly those on tall structures. Lights left on in tall buildings lure many birds into fatal collisions, resulting in millions of bird deaths throughout the United States each year.

Lights Out for Birds is a program where building owners, managers, and tenants turn off lights within their buildings during the bird migratory season (February to May and August to October). The program has spread and is now active in Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Flagstaff, Houston, Indianapolis, New York, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Portland and Toronto.



Why are tall buildings a trap for migrating birds?

The lights on tall buildings confuse the navigation systems of birds. The birds circle the buildings repeatedly and may collide with the building or suffer from exhaustion and die.

What kind of birds are they?

Songbirds including warblers, thrushes, and tanagers migrate at night. Many migratory bird populations are already in significant decline.

What are the economic benefits of the Lights Out Program?

Building operators and tenants have reported significant savings on energy bills as a result of participation—one building operator reported a savings of \$200,000. Also, reduced energy consumption reduces overall greenhouse gas emissions, which can intensify global warming. Also protecting bird species before their populations decline to the point of being endangered makes good financial sense because protecting endangered species is extremely costly to businesses and taxpayers.

How to Help?

Your company can participate in **Lights Out for Birds** by **turning off lighting after dusk** each evening and **leaving lights off until daylight**. Tenants are encouraged to turn out lights or draw blinds at dusk. This is particularly important for tall buildings and buildings with glass exteriors or windows, especially those near the Bay.

If you plan to participate please e-mail us at mlynes@goldengateaudubon.org.



For more information, contact Golden Gate Audubon www.goldengateaudubon.org