

Hopeful Solutions for North Carolina's Birds in the Face of Climate Change

Andeck, Greg

Audobon North Carolina

Audubon North Carolina, a state office of the National Audubon Society, has launched a new climate initiative, driven by the alarming reality of a groundbreaking 7-year scientific study and follow-on Birds and Climate Change Report showing that over half of North America's birds are threatened by climate change. Changes in temperature and precipitation brought about by climate change are already impacting the areas where some of our most cherished birds can survive. Without action, the threat of extinction for many of North Carolina's most iconic birds within our children's lifetime is real.

To rise to the scale of this challenge, Audubon is engaging our conservation partners, state agencies and lawmakers, and mobilizing our grassroots network like never before to promote both adaptation and mitigation strategies to protect our most climate threatened birds. Birds offer appeal to people across the political spectrum, offering a way to depoliticize the climate conversation in North Carolina and focus on solutions.

As a signal of what is possible, over just two years, Audubon chapters, members and partners have:

- Installed over 10,000 nest boxes for the Brown-headed Nuthatch, a climate threatened bird
- Scaled the market for bird-friendly native plants in NC by building public and corporate demand for native plants and partnering with over 65 nurseries to expand native plant selection and advertising
- Trained over 165 passionate Ambassadors who are engaging their local communities and policymakers to scale practical solutions for climate threatened birds and build support for bird-friendly clean energy

Over the next 5 years, we aim to reach 1.5 million bird lovers in North Carolina, creating a heightened level of public advocacy to protect critically important natural habitat, or "climate strongholds" for birds, deploy immediate solutions to help climate threatened birds find food and shelter in urban and suburban areas, and secure passage of clean energy policies that will address the underlying cause of the climate problem.

In this presentation, we will review the science behind Audubon's Birds and Climate Change report, discuss strategies and solutions to protect the most climate threatened birds, and offer a hopeful vision for breaking through the political gridlock on climate change.