



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

The voice of Louisiana's wildlife and natural resources since 1940.

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Resolution No. 2, 2023

SUBJECT: Lights Out to Save Migrating Birds

WHEREAS, North American bird populations have trended downward in the past half century, with an estimated decline of 29% (3 billion birds) since 1970, according to an article in *Science* titled “Decline of the North American Avifauna” published online in September 2019; and

WHEREAS, migratory birds (except for waterfowl and raptors), which are exposed to many habitat threats because of human-caused changes to their environments, have suffered a disproportionate share of this decline; and

WHEREAS, according to the *State of the Birds Report 2022*, birds in North America have declined to historically low levels and among the species on the tipping point toward extinction many nest, migrate through, or over-winter in Louisiana, e.g., Wood Thrush, Prairie Warbler, LeConte’s Sparrow, Seaside Sparrow; and

WHEREAS, collisions of birds into buildings during migration is a huge source of bird mortality, estimated to be 365 million to 988 million birds per year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, migratory birds usually fly at night in the spring and fall and are drawn to well-lit areas where they crash into the reflective and lighted windows of buildings of all sizes and types, in many cases dying from the impact; and

WHEREAS, the peak migration months of April, May, September, and October are known to produce the great majority of bird-building collisions, resulting in thousands of bird deaths per night during episodes of concentrated migration; and

WHEREAS a five-year study on the Louisiana State University campus determined that several buildings caused the deaths of hundreds of birds and that many species in decline were especially vulnerable to the hazard of brightly lit and reflective buildings; and

WHEREAS, night-time lighting of buildings often far exceeds requirements for identification and security; and

WHEREAS, bird deaths from collisions in several Texas cities led the Texas Conservation Alliance to promote a voluntary Lights Out Texas program encouraging building owners to shut off their lighting from 11 pm to 6 am each night during the months of heavy migration, and this program received widespread positive publicity and support; and

WHEREAS, “lights out” saves energy as well as birds’ lives; and

WHEREAS, “light pollution” from excessive nighttime lighting has other deleterious effects such as hampering views of the night skies in urban areas and harming the programs and research of observatories; and

WHEREAS, mankind has historically relied on views of the heavens for navigation, inspiration, and scientific inquiry.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Louisiana Wildlife Federation recommends and encourages building owners and in fact all property owners and managers to observe “lights out” during bird migration periods in the spring and fall, principally in the months of April, May, September, and October during the hours of 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Louisiana Wildlife Federation requests that all public buildings observe “lights out” as official policy of the State of Louisiana, City of Baton Rouge, and other governmental entities.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Louisiana Wildlife Federation requests that associations of building owners and managers recognize the underlying issue and recommend to their members that “lights out” be observed to the extent feasible with provisions in tenant leases suggesting lights out in certain hours during peak migration months.

Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation Board of Directors at its meeting on February 11, 2023 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.