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# Do Feral Cats Decimate Songbirds and Wildlife?

## Community Cats and Birds

Bird lovers have claimed for years that cats, specifically feral or community cats, are to blame for killing too many of our birds. Even the Audubon Society is finally beginning to understand that cats are probably least of the overall bird population problems. In a study published by the Audubon Society, climate change is predicted to “severely” affect approximately half of our North American bird populations drastically. The global warming caused by man is directly related to these climate changes.



## Bird Habitat

Another human intrusion is the destruction of breeding areas that once contained tall grass of prairie land but has now been transformed into agricultural farmland, or worse yet, mining operations, shrinking the habitat these birds need to survive potential extinction. Audubon studied 588 species and found that 314 are “climate endangered”. For some birds, habitat is shrinking from 50 to as much as 90 percent, and subjects them to possible extinction by the year 2080.



## Butterflies & Insects

Unfortunately, the plight of our songbirds doesn't stop there either. Humans are using more pesticides, insecticides, and even neonicotinoids- a product that is built into the plant itself. The US government has recently admitted that neonicotinoids are killing our bees, but when you spray any of these products, chemical or

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natural, it does not only kill the “bugs” you are trying to rid yourself of, but it also kills beneficial insects (honeybees and butterflies) that we know are pollinators, as well as others such as the praying mantis which eat large quantities of unwanted insects like aphids. These sprays do not just disappear and the affected insects do not usually die immediately, but rather live some period of time after exposure. In this already poisoned state, they can be eaten by their usual predators, like songbirds, effectively poisoning the beautiful feathery predator as well.

In essence, it is the human animal that will be fundamental in the outcome of the future of our birds. Without a willingness to accept responsibility for, and dedicate ourselves to change behaviors that are impacting these winged creatures, we will lose our potential to enjoy them in the future.