

# Making your Windows Safer for Birds

A collaboration between the Acopian Center for Ornithology, Muhlenberg College, Lehigh Valley Audubon Society, Wyncote Audubon Society, and Audubon Pennsylvania.



## The Problem

Windows in our homes kill hundreds of millions of birds every year. **One million a day** is the low estimate!



Most of us have heard the “thud” of a bird crashing into one of our windows. Most collisions are not as obvious as the one above of a Mourning Dove.

## Why collisions happen

Collisions occur for two main reasons: **Reflections** and the “**see-through**” effect.



**Reflections** Birds see habitat and open sky reflected on our windows. Almost any glass can act like a perfect mirror under certain lighting conditions. Deceived by the reflection, they crash into the solid glass trying to reach what they see.



**See-through** Wherever birds can see habitat or sky through glass, such as windows opposite one another (above), glass walkways, sunrooms, glass enclosed porches, etc., the result can be lethal. This is one time where closing blinds can be very effective in preventing collisions.

## What we are doing

The **Bird-window Collision Working Group (BCWG)** is actively reaching out to our communities to educate the public about the serious threat windows pose to our birds and how to prevent collisions.

**Between 365 million to one billion collisions annually** in the USA. This is perhaps the leading human-caused avian mortality our birds face on a daily basis.

**For more information visit:**

<https://pa.audubon.org/birds/windows>

<http://ACO.muhlenberg.edu>



Designed and produced by the **Bird-window Collision Working Group (BCWG)**, a collaboration between:  
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Cover Photo: Yellow-throated Vireo.  
All uncredited photos: Peter G. Saenger

## SAD FACTS:

- ◆ Up to 50% of bird-window collisions leave no evidence at all.
- ◆ Many of the birds that fly away, likely die later of their injuries.
- ◆ Birds most often suffer concussions and internal injuries which can take days to kill them. They do not break their necks.
- ◆ If a collision kills a parent bird, the young will most likely also die.
- ◆ Window collisions kill both the fit and unfit, risking weakening the gene pool.
- ◆ This is all preventable if people took action at their own homes.

## What you can do

There are easy, economical ways to help birds see your windows.

### Simple and it works!

Hanging cords, strings, or ribbons in front (outside) of your windows on 4" centers can be effective and unobtrusive. Simple and easy to do yourself.



Visit the Acopian BirdSavers website for plans or to order them custom made for your windows.



Feather Friendly® Do-it-yourself Tape



Photo credit: Katherine Sheppard

American Bird Conservancy Bird Tape

**Less can be more!** Smaller markers can be effective and block less of your view.

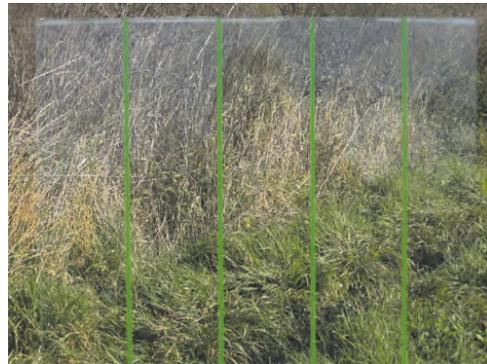


Photo credit: Martin Rossler

Be creative! Tape, stickers, tempera paint, about anything that will not harm the glass can be used to make patterns to save bird lives.

### Surface Treatments

Any visible marker you place on the window can be effective. The shape does not matter, but spacing does; must follow the 2 x 4 Rule.



Other things you can do include keeping light colored blinds partially closed, leave exterior screens in year-round, move house plants back from windows.

Tempera paint can be a good temporary solution—paint a picture, draw lines, or cover the entire window.

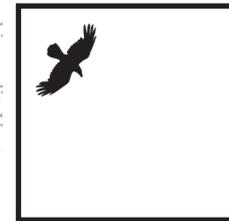


Keeping blinds partially closed can help when a window is not reflective or when there is more light inside, than outside.



Photo credit: Gail Walter

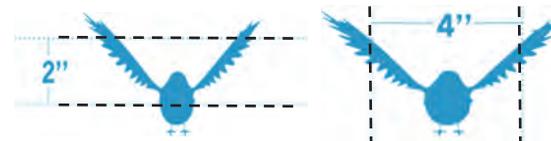
## What does NOT work!



Graphic credit: Veccezy.com

Single stickers of any shape or size are ineffective and why the 2 x 4 rule is so important. One reason to use smaller markers, spaced properly: Save your view, while saving birds.

### Spacing is important



## CollidEscape™

A perforated window film appears solid from the outside, but allows viewing from the inside. Can be printed in any color to match your home or with any image you would like.



## Keep in mind.....

**Outside is best.** Anything you use to help birds realize there is a glass barrier in front of them works best and sometimes only, if it is on the outside of the window.

**Location and numbers matter.** The more birds in close proximity to a window, the more potential for bird-window collisions. Windows facing feeders and good habitat should be treated first.

**Defensive behavior.** Birds that repeatedly fly against a window are fighting their own reflection, thinking it is a rival bird. This situation is best handled by temporarily covering the entire window to block the reflection. You can use anything, even simple bar soap or tempera paint. After a few days simply wash it off. Reapply if needed.