



Ornithological Council Strategic Plan

Approved April 2024

The [Ornithological Council](#) (OC) was founded in 1992 as a consortium of scientific societies of ornithologists. The research conducted by OC societies spans the globe and the cumulative expertise of the members comprises the knowledge that is fundamental and essential to science-based bird conservation and management. The current scientific society members of the Ornithological Council are:

- Association of Field Ornithologists
- Birds Caribbean
- CIPAMEX: Sociedad para el Estudio y Conservación de las Aves en México
- Neotropical Ornithological Society
- North American Crane Working Group
- Pacific Seabird Group
- Raptor Research Foundation
- Waterbird Society
- Wilson Ornithological Society

The Ornithological Council is also supported by our [Supporting Members](#), other organizations that value its work and its mission.

The limited capacity of the organization and the fact that it is physically based in the United States dictates that most of our work is conducted in the U.S., though we hope that our work will be impactful and be useful elsewhere. We will support our societies' work in other regions to the extent that we are able, and will also assist our societies through advice and counsel on issues where we cannot take direct action.

Our Mission

The Ornithological Council seeks to:

1. Ensure that the best ornithological science is incorporated into policy, research, and management decisions that affect birds and the study of birds;
2. Safeguard and enhance the ability of ornithologists to pursue professional activities; and
3. Serve as the collective voice of the ornithological community in amplifying the influence of ornithological knowledge in public affairs.

Our Vision

We envision the recognition of ornithological science as highly valued by society. In this vision:

1. Research policies will be conducive to the conduct of ornithological research and its applications,
2. Decision-makers will seek and use ornithological knowledge when making decisions that affect ornithological research, conservation and management of wild birds and other wildlife, human health, and other matters to which ornithological knowledge is relevant, and
3. All ornithologists will have access to the resources and tools they need, and be supported by strong ornithological societies that together form a united and collaborative ornithological community.

The OC, as part of the broader ornithological community, promotes the following common values:

1. Ornithological research in all its forms is intrinsically valuable and helps society understand the natural world and make decisions about a wide range of human activities that affect the natural world and human well-being.
2. Science informs policy and management decisions affecting birds.
3. Policies governing the conduct of ornithological research are based on scientific understanding of the impacts of those policies on birds and bird populations and appropriately weigh any impacts versus the scientific value of the research.
4. Ornithologists promote and practice the humane treatment of the birds they study and continually develop the scientific understanding of the impact of research methods on birds.
5. Ornithologists understand the rules and regulations that govern research, their responsibilities under these rules and regulations, and the processes that generate these policies.
6. The ornithological community recognizes the value and importance of including the richness of human and geographic diversity in the ornithological community and literature.

Our Organizational Values

Permitting Rules and Regulations

GOAL: Permitting regulations and policies are biologically justified, practically feasible, and provide conservation benefits to birds and bird populations.

Objectives:

1. Encourage timely development of permitting regulations and policies that are biologically based and implemented in a consistent manner.
2. Educate permitting decisionmakers about the importance of research and the value of ornithological knowledge for bird conservation and management.
3. Educate ornithologists about federal and state permitting systems, including new regulations and regulatory revisions, and how to ensure success in obtaining permits.

Animal Welfare Rules and Regulations

GOAL: Policies and regulations governing research involving live birds are based on science, do not include restrictions that do not protect bird populations, and reference the community-wide standards for humane research methods, set the by Ornithological Council through the *Guidelines to the Use of Wild Birds in Research*.

Objectives:

1. Educate government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and institutional bodies that oversee or guide implementation of the animal welfare laws about research involving wild birds in the field and laboratory and the role of relevant federal and state agencies in issuing permits for those activities.
2. Work with animal care and use committees and federal agencies to ensure the appropriate and consistent application of animal welfare laws and policies.
3. Encourage more timely development of animal welfare regulations and policies that are biologically appropriate and implemented in a consistent manner.
4. Provide ornithologists with information and resources about animal welfare law implementation, animal care and use committee responsibility, and how to work with committees.

Communicating ornithological information to decisionmakers and the public

GOAL: The Ornithological Council provides the best available ornithological science and objective analysis to decision-makers on scientific and conservation issues related to birds and their habitats.

Objectives:

1. Provide the best scientific information available to government agencies, conservation organizations, and private landowners who make decisions that affect ornithological research or birds.
2. Provide OC member societies and individual ornithologists with the expertise, assistance or access to knowledge they need to communicate scientific information about birds.
1. Assist OC member societies in communicating expertise relevant to pending decisions affecting birds or the study of birds in a manner that is useful to decisionmakers.

Providing Knowledge and Tools for Ornithologists

GOAL: Ornithologists have the skills and knowledge to effectively study, manage, and conserve birds, to grow in their skills and abilities and advance professionally, and to effectively voice their views about policy matters that affect their profession.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that ornithologists know and understand the regulations that pertain to their research activities.
2. Ensure that ornithologists have access to an updated version of *Guidelines to the Use of Wild Birds in Research*.
3. Keep ornithologists aware of the activities that affect the birds they study and have the skills and information needed to participate in the policy discussions regarding those decisions.
4. Provide ornithologists access to information about funding opportunities.

Research Policies and Funding

GOAL: Policies, programs, and funding levels encourage the conduct and application of ornithological research, ornithological education, and information-sharing about avian research, conservation, and management decisions.

Objectives:

1. Encourage increases in funding for programs that fund intramural and extramural ornithological research, education, application of research and information-sharing.
2. Encourage the development and implementation of policies that advance research.
3. Educate decisionmakers about the importance of ornithology and the value of ornithological knowledge.
4. Educate ornithologists about the processes through which decisions about funding levels are made and facilitate and encourage their participation in the process.