Conservation Plan Implementation: Engaging People in Conservation Behaviors through Collaboration with Educators

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Conserving birds and their habitats
Bird Education Alliance for Conservation

• BEAC’s mission is to
  o advance and promote bird conservation education,
  o engage new audiences in conservation action,
  o develop effective tools and strategies to integrate bird conservation messages into education,
  o and incorporate education as a tool into conservation efforts.

• BEAC is a coalition of educators and biologists from all sectors - join us!
  o Facebook, listserv, monthly conference calls
  o Bird Education Resource Directory (www.birdday.org)
Bridging the ecological – social science gap
What is the idea?

• To use existing bird conservation plans to develop messages for educational programs, exhibits, brochures, etc.

• Bird conservation plans?
  o Conservation plans identify the top priorities for bird and habitat management.
  o Typically, plans highlight priority bird groups, species, or landscapes, identify population or habitat goals, and describe threats and challenges, as well as potential solutions to these issues.
Why?

• Solutions in the plans most often call for changes in human behavior. Education programs play an essential role in changing people’s actions, changing policies, or increasing resources for conservation.

• “Unlocking the content” in these plans improves the work of educators and scientists and more importantly, benefits wildlife and habitat.
A. **Description** of Habitat and Priority Species

B. **Problems** affecting species and habitats:
   - Conversion to pine plantations

C. Priority research, survey, and monitoring efforts **needed** to identify factors to assist in restoration/conservation of species
   - Determine the interactions between fire ants and ground nesting birds, small mammals and reptiles in disturbed forests, along edges of forest, and at road/forest interfaces.

D. Conservation **actions** necessary to conserve the species and habitat and priorities for implementation
   - Promoting management practices that enhance habitat conditions, including selective thinnings and controlled burning.
Case Study: Seabirds on Alcatraz Island
The Untold Story on Alcatraz

Brandt’s Cormorant

Pigeon Guillemot

Black Oystercatcher

California Gull

Western Gull
The Conservation Problem/Threats

- Marine/Air Traffic
- Uninformed Visitors
- Conflict with Cultural Resource Priorities
- Fireworks/Special Events
- Trash/Debris
Disturbance monitoring...
Solution: Education and Outreach

- Marine/Air Traffic
  - Pilots, Fishing Boats, Kayaks, Paddlers
- Uninformed Visitors
  - Island Tourists
- Conflict with Cultural Resource Priorities
  - NPS Cultural Resource
- Fireworks/Special Events
  - Opportunistic Groups
- Trash/Debris
  - Public
- All of the Above
  - Public, Students
What did PRBO & NPS do?

- Pilots, Fishing Boats, Kayaks, Paddlers
  - Letters, Signs, Presentations, Kayak trip, Dock outreach
- Island Tourists
  - IMBD for Seabirds, Docent Program, Island Signs and Bird Display
- NPS Cultural Resource Staff
  - Island presentations, Shadow Biologist tours, monthly bird email update, person to person communication
- Public, Students
  - Media outreach, public presentations, Bay Area magazines, school program
Disturbance to Birds on Alcatraz

Frequency and types of disturbance per hour to Brandt's Cormorants on Alcatraz Island from 1997–2006.
Workshops with Educators
Which plan?

What story do you have to tell?

• In what group are the majority of birds at your site? (i.e., landbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, or gamebirds?)

• Where are you located? What habitat types are predominant?

• Will your programs be at one site, address local conservation issues, or does your organization have a regional, national, or international scope?
Finding Plans

- North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI)
- Partners in Flight (PIF)
- Association for Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Joint Ventures
The Bird Conservation Toolkit:

An Overview:

Step 1. Choose your geographic area of interest.

Step 2. Choose habitat(s) and bird group(s).

Step 3. Select conservation threats(s).

Step 4. Identify key concepts to be communicated.

Step 5. Choose your target audience(s).

Step 6. Plan your program and craft messages.

Step 7a. View existing resources and materials.

OR

Step 7b. Create your own targeted resource.
Step 1. Choose Geographic Area

Continent, Country, State, Bird Conservation Region (BCR), other?
Step 2. Choose Habitats/Bird Groups

- Desert
- Riparian
- Oak Woodland
- Coastal shores and wetlands
- Interior wetlands
- Upland pasture/ag
- Open ocean

- Shorebirds
- Seabirds
- Landbirds
- Waterfowl
- Gamebirds
- Waterbirds
Step 3. Select Conservation Threats*

- Habitat loss and degradation – salt pond restoration.
- Habitat loss and degradation – development.
- Exotic plants.
- Introduced predators.
- Beach recreation.
- Climate change.

*as identified by the Southern Pacific Shorebird Conservation Plan
Step 4. Identify Key Concepts*

- SF Bay is used by over 1 million shorebirds each year.

- Shallowly flooded ponds, salt ponds, and mudflats provide feeding and stopover habitat for migrating shorebirds.

- 42% of tidal flat has been lost in the SF Bay.

- Maintain shallow ponds in restoration design.

*as identified by the Southern Pacific Shorebird Conservation Plan
Step 5. Choose Target Audience(s)

- Restoration planners
- Conservation organizations
- Educators
- Recreationists
- Public
- Land Managers
Step 6. Craft Your Messages

- Maintain salt ponds as shallow ponds or mudflats for shorebirds.
- Species that rely on south San Francisco Bay salt ponds include:
  - >70 species of shorebirds and waterfowl.
  - Half a million migrating shorebirds.
  - 10% of breeding Western Snowy Plovers (Threatened).
  - Thousands of breeding Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets.
- Restoring ponds to historic tidal marsh will remove shorebird and duck habitat.
Step 7. View or Create Materials

**Step 7a.** View existing resources and materials.
- SF Bay Pocket Guide to Birds.
- SFBJV podcasts.
- South Bay Restoration audio tour.
- SFBJV presentation on restoration and birds.

**Step 7b.** Create your own targeted resource/program.

OR
Bird Education Resource Directory

www.birdday.org/education/resource-index

5 Ways to Search
Category
Audience, Habitat, Threats, Language
Resource Type
Curricula, Media, Careers & more...
Location
By state, province, or country
Keyword
All Resources

Register Your Resources!
We need your help to make this a great resource. Please add your resources!

Why Register Your Resources?
Share with others - Leverage the reach of your work - Help others find your resources - Free advertising!
I’m trying it!
My project: Grasslands Education

- Starting with PIF plan for Central Shortgrass Prairie and RMBO biologists familiar with ecosystem and community
  - How to integrate needs of agricultural producers and bird populations?
Questions?