

# Climate change threatens half of North American bird species



LTWC volunteer Wayne McKnight throws a golden eagle into the air as way to exercise it. Photo/John Adamski

**By Louis Sahagun, Los Angeles Times**

Half of all bird species in North America – including the bald eagle – are at risk of severe population decline by 2080 if the swift pace of global warming continues, the National Audubon Society concluded in a study released Monday.

“The scale of the disruption we’re projecting is a real punch in the gut,” said Gary Langham, chief Audubon scientist.

Langham led an Audubon study that examined more than 500 bird species and determined that more than 300 in Canada and the United States face large climate shifts that could reduce their habitat by half or more by 2080. The changing environment will force birds to adapt to new habitats with different temperature and precipitation rates if they are to survive.

The first comprehensive species study of its kind, it will be used to help federal wildlife officials develop improved strategies to conserve bird species, whose abundance and migratory patterns depend on specialized habitats, such as forests, grasslands and coastal areas.

By 2080, the bald eagle, the national symbol of the United States, could see its habitat decrease by 75 percent, the report says.

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