



SPRING 2004

HELP SAVE BIRDS!!

LIGHTS OUT AFTER 11 PM DURING MIGRATION

Over the past five years, Chicago's tall buildings have served as an example to the nation as they saved the lives of tens of thousands of birds. Last year, participating buildings were recognized locally and nationally for their participation in the Lights Out program.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP:

Tall buildings can save birds by extinguishing decorative lighting on the upper stories after 11 PM each evening and leaving lights off until daylight from March 17 to June 7. Birds migrate throughout these months. Tenants on the upper floors are encouraged to turn out lights or draw blinds after 11 PM. We suggest that these recommendations apply to all buildings of 40 or more stories, and to buildings of 20 or more stories that are isolated from other buildings.

Low buildings along the lakefront with extensive glass exteriors can save birds by extinguishing exterior lighting and extinguishing interior lighting or drawing blinds from March 17 to June 7 each evening after 1 am and leaving the lights off until daylight.

RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

If you plan to participate again this spring and would like to be included in press releases about the program and receive a recognition gift, or if you would like a pdf version of last fall's Crain's ad listing your building's participation, please e-mail Judy Pollock at jpollock@audubon.org.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Why are tall buildings a trap for migrant birds?

It is thought that the lights on tall buildings confuse the navigation systems of birds unlucky enough to have these buildings in their flight path. They circle the buildings repeatedly and die of exhaustion or by colliding with the building.

What kind of birds are they?

Over 250 species migrate through Chicago, about 5 million individuals in all. Many small songbirds such as warblers, thrushes, and tanagers migrate at night. Many birds killed at Loop buildings are small migrants from the tropics – some of which are declining steeply in numbers.

What other hazards do Loop buildings pose for birds?

Reflective windows and lighted atria are significant sources of bird mortality. The Lights Out program will be developing specific recommendations about lighted atria for the fall. Any efforts you can make to reduce lighting in your atrium this spring will be appreciated by the birds.

Register for the Lights Out program on line at www.ci.chi.il.us/Environment/BirdMigration/sub/lights_out_signup.html

For more information, contact Audubon Chicago Region at (847) 965-1150.

To review research used to make these recommendations, visit www.flap.org.