



LIGHTS OUT LOUISVILLE: BIRD-FRIENDLY HOMES

The Issue

Twice a year, billions of birds travel between their wintering and breeding grounds. Most of them migrate at night, using celestial objects to navigate.

Along the way, birds face innumerable threats. Many of these hazards are due to the built environment, with artificial light at night one of the biggest issues.

Light emanating from human-built infrastructure, including buildings and residential homes, attracts and disorients birds. Some collide with windows and are injured or killed. Others circle buildings until they drop from exhaustion.

The Impact

This issue impacts hundreds of migrating and nocturnal bird species of all types, from hummingbirds to owls.

Researchers estimate more than 1 billion birds are killed each year due to collisions with artificially lit buildings. Another recent study suggests—in the U.S. alone—that number could be 1.92 to 5.19 billion, with potentially billions more worldwide.

This data shows the magnitude of the problem—but it also highlights a simple yet critical part of the solution: reducing unnecessary lighting at night.

The Solution

Lights Out Louisville—a voluntary program sponsored by the Louisville Audubon Society—asks residents of Kentucky and Southern Indiana (as well as building owners/operators and businesses) to help us make migration safer for birds by reducing their use of artificial light at night, especially during peak migration months.

Benefits

- Save money by lowering energy usage
- Demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and conservation
- Preserve views of the night sky
- Lower your carbon footprint
- Minimize needless bird injuries and deaths

How You Can Help

- Turn off interior lights when no one is in a room.
- Draw window coverings (blinds, shades, curtains) after dark.
- Turn off decorative or unnecessary outdoor lighting, or limit lighting to ground level.
- Use timers or motion sensors for essential outdoor lighting where possible.
- Add “down-shields” to outdoor lighting to point light toward the ground versus at the sky.
- Choose warmer-toned bulbs (2700 Kelvin or lower) for outdoor lighting.

WHEN TO GO LIGHTS OUT IN LOUISVILLE:

Bird-building collisions occur all year long and at all times of day, but numbers spike during peak migration months—especially at night. You can help make migration safer for birds by reducing artificial light as much as possible during:

Peak migration months

- April and May
- September and October

Peak migration times

- 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

JOIN THE LIGHTS OUT LOUISVILLE PROGRAM:

Learn more and enroll for
\$0 and in <1 minute at
[LightsOutLouisville.org/
Go-Lights-Out](https://LightsOutLouisville.org/Go-Lights-Out)