

# Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

25 Years  
Bird & Habitat Conservation  
1988-2013



**R**ocky Mountain Bird Observatory is a nonprofit organization that works to conserve birds and their habitats.

We pursue our mission through advancing science and engaging people to conserve western birds and landscapes.

We work across the breeding, wintering and migratory ranges of birds of the Rocky Mountains and Great Plains.

# Our Approach

Birds are a wonderful part of our natural world. Unfortunately, many species are declining, but we all can help. Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory creates solutions for bird and habitat conservation through an integrated approach of science, education and stewardship.



## Science

Our scientists conduct innovative monitoring and research programs to determine the distribution, size, trends and habitat needs of bird populations for at-risk and common species.

Our research helps managers and landowners make informed decisions that ensure the health of bird populations and enhance wildlife habitat.

What we learn through science informs our education and stewardship programs at RMBO.

## Education

Since RMBO's inception, our educators have helped connect people with nature through the wonder and science of birds. Our dynamic, hands-on education programs encourage people to get outdoors and be good stewards of the land and its resources. We offer:

- Summer camps
- Classroom, homeschool & family programs
- Field trips & adult programs
- Bird banding stations
- Citizen science & naturalist programs
- Educator workshops

## Stewardship

Our biologists work with resource professionals and landowners across the western United States and Mexico to conserve birds and other wildlife on private and public lands.

RMBO biologists raise awareness for conservation needs; offer technical assistance to landowners and managers about how to engage in wildlife-friendly management practices; and collaborate with landowners and other partners to implement habitat enhancement projects.

# Our Milestones

We share these milestones with the many partners, funders, volunteers and supporters that made them possible.

1988

**Bird banding at Barr Lake started.**



**Colorado Bird Observatory (CBO)** founded by Michael Carter through a challenge grant from the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Bald Eagle Watch at Barr Lake began.

1990

**HawkWatch site established** on Dinosaur Ridge west of Morrison, Colorado.



**First visit made to western Mexico** to study wintering birds and establish partnerships.

**Initial conservation priorities set for** neotropical migratory birds in 11 western states. Partners In Flight Species Assessment Database created.

1995

**On The Wing summer camp** founded to teach field ornithology to teens.



**Monitoring Colorado's Birds** launched as first statewide bird monitoring program in Colorado.

**Prairie Partners started** to engage landowners in shortgrass prairie bird conservation.



**CBO moved to** the Old Stone home located

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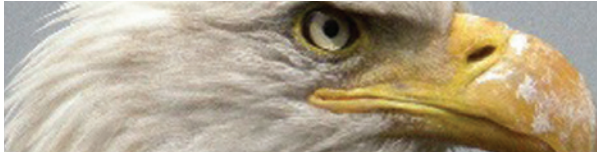
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# Our Impacts

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's mission has always been to conserve birds. What we do for birds matters to all of us. These birds represent just a few of the many species RMBO has impacted over the last 25 years in cooperation with partners, volunteers and supporters.



## Bald Eagle

The once-endangered Bald Eagle has recovered along the Front Range of Colorado, thanks in part to citizen scientists participating in the Bald Eagle Watch program.



## Lark Bunting

Colorado's state bird, the Lark Bunting is one of the species addressed in the first-ever conservation plan for grassland birds that winter in the Chihuahuan Desert. Released in 2012, the plan is available at [RMBO.org](http://RMBO.org).



## Piping Plover & Least Tern

In the late 1980s, the presence of nesting Piping Plovers (pictured) and Least Terns in Colorado was re-confirmed. This finding has led to conservation efforts to protect these threatened and endangered species.



## Black Swift

The winter destination for this mysterious species was revealed in 2012. Researchers tracked the Black Swift to Brazil, opening the door to full life-cycle conservation of this species at risk to the effects of climate change.



## Mountain Plover

Over the last decade, more than a thousand Mountain Plover nests have been located, marked and saved from accidental tilling by farmers through a pioneering nest conservation program. Marked nests have shown higher hatching success for this priority species.

## For the Benefit of Birds ... And People


At RMBO, we make people a part of the solution for conservation and believe a healthy home for birds is a healthy home for all of us.

For 25 years, we have provided educational activities in ornithology, natural history and other areas related to birds and nature.

Today, our educators and biologists connect with more than 25,000 people every year through school programs, summer camps, workshops, landowner visits and more.

2000
2005
2010


**Project ColonyWatch initiated to monitor colonial waterbirds in Colorado.**



**Old Stone House** moved into its permanent headquarters, a renovated 1880s house near the shores of Barr Lake.

**Time changed to Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory** reflect expanding reach.


**International team formalized to conserve migratory and resident birds in Mexico.** Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Bird Conservation program founded the following year.




**Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions program launched,** becoming one of the largest coordinated breeding bird monitoring programs in the U.S.

**Private Lands Wildlife Biologist program established** with four biologists in communities across Colorado.

**Volunteer Naturalist program started to involve citizens in environmental education.**

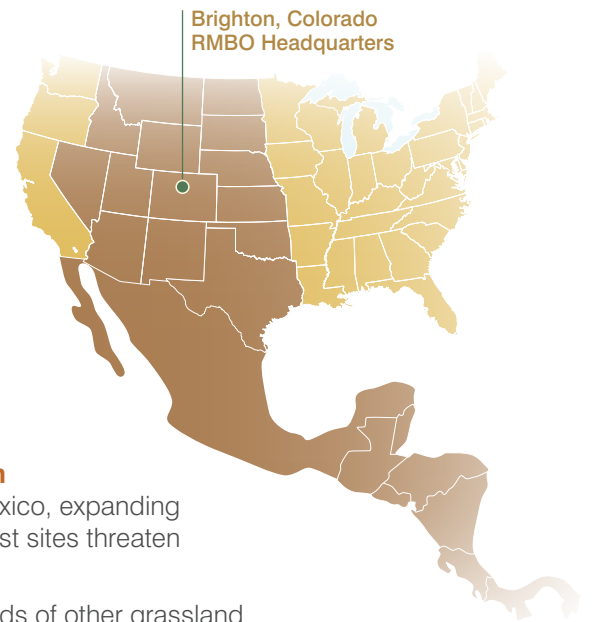


**Students welcomed to new Environmental Learning Center at the Old Stone House** for outdoor education programs. The center was dedicated the previous year by Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper.



## Our Reach

Birds don't recognize state or international borders, so we pursue our mission of bird and habitat conservation from field offices across the Intermountain West, from North Dakota to Mexico. Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory biologists work with partners locally and internationally to conserve birds throughout their migratory range, promoting full life-cycle conservation. RMBO is currently the only non-governmental, U.S.-based organization with a long-term, on-the-ground program dedicated to conserving grassland birds in the Chihuahuan Desert.



### A Species on the Brink — Aplomado Falcon

In the Valles Centrales region of Chihuahua, Mexico, expanding agriculture, drought, overgrazing and loss of nest sites threaten the native population of Aplomado Falcons.

To combat the problem — and address the needs of other grassland species — RMBO and international partners initiated a private lands outreach, management and habitat improvement program targeting ranches where Aplomado Falcons have historically nested.

Our goal is to create a network of protected and well-managed grassland sites in the Valles Centrales by 2020, encompassing at least 300,000 acres and supporting at least 12 nesting pairs of Aplomado Falcons.

Join RMBO in Conserving Birds and their Habitats  
**Donate or Volunteer Today! Visit [www.rmbo.org](http://www.rmbo.org) and click Chip in!**

Private support is critical to RMBO's research programs, educational activities and stewardship efforts. Your financial contribution, or volunteer time, will help us address the great conservation challenges facing our birds. Together, we can give a legacy of conservation to future generations!



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