



Reducing Bird Collisions with Glass

The Issue

Birds face innumerable threats in our human built environment and our glass surfaces are one of the biggest. During daylight hours, birds collide with reflective surfaces when they stop to feed or rest, when avoiding a predator or flying from tree to tree. Shiny glass exteriors, internal plants near windows, glass corners, and greenery close to buildings can all be deadly as birds are unable to distinguish reflection from open flyway. For every collision victim found, three more typically go unseen, flying out of sight before falling or being carried away by predators.

The Impact

Window collisions are one of the leading direct human causes of bird mortality. A 2014 study by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Smithsonian Institution estimated that between 365 million to one billion birds are killed annually by building collisions in the U.S.

Solutions

People 'see' glass because we understand buildings. Birds need strong clues on or around glass to warn them that it's there.

Reducing reflective surface collisions

- Place dense patterns, such as stripes and dots, on the outer glass surface using commercial products designed for this purpose, or create your own design using craft paper, tape, stickers, paint, and markers designed to be used on glass.
- Install external screens on windows
- Close blinds or curtains
- Move interior plants away from windows
- Place bird feeders directly on windows

Timing

Bird-building collisions can happen at any time of the day and year but tend to increase during migration and when young birds start flying. Therefore, the most crucial times for these measures are during spring and fall migration and in the breeding season in your area.