



The last open space bond funding that was approved for Middletown was in 2007, when voters approved \$3 million. That bonding allowed Middletown to preserve 400 acres of open space. As voters head to the polls in November, it is important to remember that a state study found that property values for properties adjacent to parks and open space see a 20 percent increase in property value.

In addition, preserved municipal land reduces overall municipal costs, is beneficial to both physical and mental health, and leads to an overall healthier environment with habitat for native animals and plants, and mitigation of pollution and the effects of climate change.

For our members who are residents of Middletown, the Middlesex Land Trust encourages you to vote yes for the open space bond funding this November.

And for our members from all of the towns in our service area, please check out [our new webpages](#) with news, links, and calls to action for each of the individual towns.

Wild Bird Populations Have Declined Nearly 30% Since 1970 in the Continental United States and Canada



North America's birds are disappearing at an alarming rate. Bird populations in both the continental United States and Canada have dropped nearly 30% since the 1970's. A loss in habitat is one of the primary reasons for the decline that was noted in this research. Other causes mentioned include: exposure to common pesticides, climate change, shifts in food webs, and even outdoor cat populations.

Surprisingly, both rare and common species of birds were affected at similar rates. The loss of common species can have much more significant effects on the food webs and ecosystems than rare species, which paints a clearer picture of the magnitude of the problem.

The populations of forest, grassland, and coastal species showed the greatest decline in our region. However, the increase in wetland species' populations shows that there is hope for turning the tide in the loss of bird species overall. In addition, increases in the overall populations of waterfowl, raptors, and turkeys indicate that wetland and breeding/nesting habitat restoration and preservation have had a positive effect on these particular species.

The results of this research signal both a sense of urgency and a sign of hope for organizations like the Middlesex Land Trust. Our land and water conservation efforts are needed now more than ever before for our native bird species.

[Click here for the full research article published by the journal Science.](#)

The Middlesex Land Trust, Inc. is a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve open space in northern Middlesex County (Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Cromwell, Portland, & East Hampton).

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