

A Resolution Recognizing International Migratory Bird Day and Bird Nesting Protections

Whereas, migratory birds are some of the most beautiful and easily observed wildlife that share our communities, and people everywhere recognize and welcome migratory songbirds as symbolic harbingers of spring; and

Whereas, 2018 has been designated the “Year of the Bird” by the National Audubon Society and National Geographic and other conservation and research organizations; and

Whereas, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), passed by Congress in 1918 to protect migratory bird species, celebrates its centennial in 2018; and

Whereas, although migratory birds have merited our protection for 100 years, the need for vigilance continues, especially in light of introduced federal legislation and re-interpretations of the MBTA by federal agencies, which alter the previously accepted interpretation of the MBTA and may no longer hold companies accountable for “accidental or incidental” harming of birds, placing migratory birds in jeopardy; and

Whereas, in addition to their beauty and key role in the cycle of life, migratory species play an important economic role in our community, controlling insect pests, and generating millions in recreational dollars in California from bird watching and other outdoor adventuring; and

Whereas, migratory birds are declining throughout the Americas, facing a growing number of threats, including habitat loss and climate change, on their migration routes, in their nesting locations, and at their summer and winter homes; and

Whereas, public awareness and concern are crucial components of migratory bird conservation. Citizens enthusiastic about birds, informed about the threats they face, and empowered to help address those threats directly contribute to maintaining healthy bird populations; and

Whereas, since 1993, International Migratory Bird Day, held annually on the second Saturday in May, has become a primary vehicle for focusing public attention on the nearly 350 species that travel between nesting habitats in our communities and throughout North America, and their wintering grounds in South and Central America, Mexico, the Caribbean, and the southern U.S.; and

Whereas, over one third of Marin County is protected by public lands that are biodiverse, ecologically valuable, support special status species, and sensitive natural communities; and

Whereas, the County of Marin understands that birds provide essential ecosystem services to help maintain sustainable populations of prey and predator species, provide food for scavengers and decomposers, and are important in plant reproduction through their services as pollinators and seed dispersers; and

Whereas, the County of Marin values the protection of sensitive species and vegetation communities in Marin, works to protect habitat for resident and migratory birds and other wildlife, and provides opportunities to preserve a variety of habitats that have great biological value; and

Whereas, the County of Marin promotes coordination of migratory bird conservation, incorporates conservation principles into planning, and ensures that we successfully implement our migratory bird conservation responsibilities, as described in our guiding plans and policies; and

Whereas, migratory birds depend on a variety of substrates that provide valuable habitat for nesting throughout Marin County, including shrubs, vegetated groundcover, open ground, cliffs, reeds, and other permanent or seasonal marsh vegetation; and

Whereas, the County of Marin adheres to all laws and regulations that protect the nation’s native birds including, but not limited to, the MBTA, the California Fish and Game Code (and regulations), the Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act;

Whereas, the County of Marin supports the goals and objectives of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, a coalition of state and federal government agencies, private organizations, and bird initiatives in the U.S. working to advance biological, social, and scientific priorities needed to ensure the long-term health of North America’s native bird populations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Supervisors of Marin County does hereby proclaim May 12, 2018 as **International Migratory Bird Day** and urges all citizens to celebrate this day by supporting efforts to protect and conserve migratory birds, their nests and their habitats in our community and the world at large.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Supervisors encourages all agencies and entities to assure that their adopted policies, regulations and operating procedures avoid negative impacts to, and help assure the health of, nesting birds and their habitats.