



NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON

Press Release



City of New York
Parks & Recreation



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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www.nycaudubon.org



COALITION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INTERESTS ANNOUNCES *LIGHTS OUT NY* – this spring, from April to May

After a successful first season, the following participants – Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe, Buildings Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster, FAIA, Executive Director of NYC Audubon E.J. McAdams, Real Estate Board of New York President Steven Spinola, Executive Director of Building Owners' and Managers' Association Roberta McGowan, and Executive Director of Associated Builders and Owners of Greater New York, Inc. Nicholas La Porte, Jr. – announced today the spring season of *Lights Out NY*, which runs from April to May. The program, initiated in fall 2005, encourages owners of tall buildings to help migrating birds travel safely through our city while reducing energy costs.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of birds pass through our city at night during migration season. In spring, migratory birds traverse thousands of miles to reach their breeding grounds. During their night journeys, bright city lights can distract birds from their migration, attracting them like a moth to a flame. The problem is particularly bad on rainy or foggy nights, when building lights have been known to cause massive bird kills.

This spring, *Lights Out NY* is asking the owners of tall buildings—40 stories or more—to turn off the decorative lighting on the upper stories of their buildings from midnight until sunrise from now until May 31st. *Lights Out NY* requests that tenants in these buildings turn off lights in unused offices or pull the shades down in active offices to eliminate light hazards for night migrating birds. Owners of smaller buildings, especially those along the Hudson and East Rivers with extensive glass exteriors, are also encouraged to participate. Every New Yorker can get involved by turning off the lights at night or pulling down the shades in offices and apartments. Last fall several large buildings signed-on to this initiative to help birds complete their migration safely, including the Chrysler Building, Citigroup Center, and World Wide Plaza. To be recognized as a participant in this initiative, register on the NYC Audubon website at www.nycaudubon.org.

Lights Out NY provides a win- win solution for building owners, New Yorkers, and for the birds that pass through New York City. There are three clear benefits to this initiative: First, it allows thousands of birds to reach their breeding grounds safely. Second, turning off the lights results in valuable energy savings. Third, reducing energy consumption in general is beneficial to birds because habitat loss associated with fossil fuel extraction is responsible for population declines in many bird species.

The Arsenal Central Park New York, New York 10021

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"Although conservation efforts to save migrant birds often focus on their native, tropical habitats, their migratory stopovers, such as those here in our City parks, are often overlooked," said Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe. "Thanks to initiatives like Lights Out NY, songbirds such as warblers, vireos, and thrushes will have a greater chance of reaching their migration destinations."

"The natural environment and the built environment need to be able to co-exist," said Buildings Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster. "Building owners who turn off their non-essential lights by midnight can save the lives of migrating birds, and at the same time, save money and energy."

"Migrating songbirds are singing their praises to New York City for turning off the lights and making the city safer for birds," said McAdams. "Because of this innovative partnership with city government and the city's real estate community, New York City Audubon has an incredible opportunity to conserve bird populations for future generations. I want to thank the building owners who have officially signed on to Lights Out NY and encourage all buildings to participate in the program."

"It is even more critical this year to save energy, and so BOMA/NY is more committed than ever to be part of the dual benefit of the "Lights Out NY" program--saving energy and precious wildlife," said BOMA/NY Executive Director Robert McGowan, CAE. "It is essential that our industry work towards solutions to solve the problem of dwindling resources on every front possible."

"We expect the second year of this worthwhile effort to be every bit as successful as the first," said Steven Spinola, President of REBNY, the city's leading real estate association.

"The members of ABO are proud to participate in this program and are happy that these innocuous efforts serve to benefit a portion of the wildlife that are part of what makes this city great!" said La Porte.

The most commonly affected birds include the White-throated Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat, Ovenbird, Dark-eyed Junco, Black-and-white Warbler, Northern Parula, Red-tailed Hawk, and American Kestrel.

For more information and to register for the *Lights Out NY* program, visit www.nycaudubon.org.

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