


Conditions that are harmful for birds

[Science](#)



Of the vertebrates, birds of the class Aves are the most noticeable, the most melodious and the most beautiful. Birds with more than nine thousand species far outnumber other vertebrate groups except fishes” . (Hickman P. C Jr , et. al pg 582). Birds are the only vertebrates that have feathers and forelimbs modified for flight although many species do not use their wing for flight. Birds can be found all over the world including Guyana. There are many factors affecting birds in Guyana.

Deforestation is one of the factors affecting birds on Guyana. “ Deforestation is the clearance of forest by logging and or burning”. (<https://wikipedia.org/wiki/Deforestation>) . In Guyana There are many causes of deforestation and all these causes such as logging, mining and slash and burn for agricultural purposes which can cause forest fires and the building of homes, have affected birds one way or another that live in or around these areas that once had pristine forest, by destroying their habitats. Deforestation affects the birds’ ability to find nesting sites, materials needed to build these nest, its ability to find mates to produce the next generation, food to feed themselves and their young. One of the birds affected is the Harpy eagle  and there are many others such as wood peckers.

Another factor affecting birds are pesticides. Although many pesticides that have harmful effects on birds have been banned in other countries, these pesticides are still use in Guyana because they are inexpensive. These pesticides include insecticides, rodenticides and herbicides. These pesticides that are harmful to birds are fat soluble and long lasting (stay in the environment for long periods of time) and have the ability to biomagnify that is the pesticide is stored in the fat tissues of an organism, when this

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organism is eaten by another organism the pesticide from the fat tissue is transferred to this organism fat tissues and the higher up on the food chain the bird is the more pesticide is store in its fat tissues, which cause pesticide poisoning during times of limited food when the bird uses its fats stores, pesticides do not only cause pesticide poisoning, many herbicides when used destroy the bird's habitat and further exposure to pesticides cause “ loss of appetite , lower egg production, feminization of embryos, lack of parental care , changes inactivity levels, and increased susceptibility to predation.” (Drisdelle R, Birds and Pesticides, 2007) Many of the birds susceptible to pesticide poisoning are the birds if pray for example Plumbeous Kite, Grey-headed Kite , White Hawk , Black-faced Hawk , Crested Eagle, Osprey , Snail Kite, Ornate, Hawk-Eagle, Black Hawk-Eagle, Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle , Orange-breasted Falcon, Aplomado Falcon , Peregrine Falcon, Bat Falcon , Laughing Falcon, Lined Forest-Falcon, Slaty-backed Forest-Falcon , Barred Forest-Falcon, Collared Forest-Falcon and many water birds.

Water pollution is another factor that affects birds in Guyana. “ Water pollution- simple means that one or more substances have built up in water to such an extent that these substances cause problems for plants and animals, whose lives depend on the trenches, ponds, rivers, and other inland waters.” (Woodford 2006), some causes of water pollution are agricultural runoff, plastics and other house items, mining slurry and sewerage. All these cause introduce many chemicals that are harmful to birds, especially the water fowls such as Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Fulvous Whistling-Duck , White-faced Whistling-Duck , Muscovy Duck , Orinoco Goose 🦢, Masked Duck, Comb Duck and other birds that depend on the water ways for their

survival such as the many wading birds and fishing birds such as American Pygmy Kingfisher , Amazon Kingfisher, Green Kingfisher, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Belted Kingfisher, Ringed Kingfisher , Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Capped Heron, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Zigzag Heron, Greater Flamingo, Roseate Spoonbill, Sharp-tailed Ibis, White Ibis , Scarlet Ibis, Green Ibis, Whispering Ibis Buff-necked Ibis, Brown Pelican and many others.

Next is illegal trade. Since Guyana does not have regulations to uphold legal bird trading the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) “ has slapped a trade ban on wildlife of Guyanan origin, stating that Guyana has no regulations to regulate the animal trade. The decision was taken on 28 September at the committee’s meeting held in Lisbon, Portugal.” Because of this many species that are considered exotic and are said to make good pets such as many parrots and macaws and many song birds are exported illegal and sold on the black market under conditions that cause the death of many individuals, since they are packed in small cages and crates so as to be shipped overseas. They die of heat strokes and lack of proper food. Many of these birds are fed cocaine pellets that are exported illegal and can kill the birds.

There is also climate change affecting birds in Guyana. As the climate changes and the wet and dry seasons are irregular many water ways and other bird habitat become dry and as the trees die the birds are unable to find food and shelter for themselves and their offspring since many birds plan their nesting in times when there are lots of food available and because of irregularities they can no longer plan then time when it is suitable to lay

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their eggs and raise their chicks and many birds and their offspring die. Since egg production and raising of the chicks takes a lot of energy they need plenty of seed, fruits nuts, insects and or large or small vertebrates such as fishes , rats , sloths and other birds. As the temperature continues to rise there would be an increase in birds inability to find food for their chicks as they further misjudge the periods when food are abundant .

Although many birds are faced with conditions that are harmful to them many species thrive but sadly many are becoming extinct or are on the verge of extinction and many other their status is not known. Deforestation, illegal trade, water pollution, pesticides and climate change are all factors affecting birds in Guyana.

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