BirdNote®

Annual Report 2016





BirdNote in 2016: So Much to Sing About!

Thanks to your support, BirdNote:

- Created nearly 75 new daily stories that aired online and in 350+ broadcast markets across the country, reaching an estimated audience of 1.7 million listeners. (Featured stories may be found throughout this report.)
- Celebrated our anniversary with a new video Behind the Scenes with BirdNote designed to attract new listeners. p.4
- Commissioned D.J. Ecotone to create a "mash-up" of BirdNote's theme song as an intro for new podcasts, targeting younger audiences. p.4
- Partnered with Northwest Public Radio to create a series of features about the birds of North Central Washington. The project took advantage of targeted social media engagement, helping BirdNote connect more deeply with specific communities. <u>p.5</u>
- Launched new web resources for kids, parents, and educators aligned with Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, titled "Tune Kids In to Nature." p.5
- Planned a three-year national grant initiative, BirdNote: Next Generation, to promote adoption of BirdNote by environmental education programs and youth media producers — to launch October 2017.
- Explored the wonderful world of birds with once-in-a-lifetime adventures.
 In 2016, BirdNote friends and supporters traveled to Panama and Big
 Bend National Park in Texas. pgs. 6–7
- Began a partnership with Sasquatch Books to create a BirdNote book: BirdNote: 100 Chirps, Quirks, and Stories from the Popular Public Radio Show, to be released Spring 2018.
- Continued to soar toward our capacity-building campaign goal of \$1,150,000. For the full campaign update and operations overview, see <u>pgs. 8-10.</u>

Thank you — BirdNote donors, partners, and team members — for making this progress possible!







BirdNote Launches New Media

In 2016, BirdNote produced new kinds of stories with a videographer and a remix composer to help us reach a larger and more diverse audience.



Going Behind the Scenes with BirdNote

A lot has changed since 2005 when BirdNote began broadcasting on KPLU, now KNKX/Seattle-Tacoma. Fast forward to 2016: BirdNote shows reached 359 public radio markets, thanks to our station broadcast partners. And with almost two million listeners, social media fans, and supporters, BirdNote is now offering new kinds of content including video to keep pace with listeners' evolving tastes.

We invited fans to come "back stage" with the production team in a video called *Behind the Scenes with BirdNote*. The short film offers a virtual trip to the BirdNote studio. Viewers catch a peek of the team in action, including producer John Kessler and narrators Michael Stein and Mary McCann. The video also features fans, including two budding birders, ages three and five, and Joey Manson, Center Director at Seward Park Audubon in Seattle. And the story has a surprise twist: Laura Cruz and Zac Bragg tell how listening to BirdNote sparked a friendship that blossomed into something much more!

What does it take to produce a three-minute video?

- Close to 50 ideas for the script, gathered from the BirdNote team
- A creative and talented videographer, Rick Barnes, who helped focus and guide the story, coaching the cast throughout
- 24 hours of shooting video at three locations with nine subjects
- 28+ hours of editing

Sound artist Ben Mirin travels the world collecting the sounds of nature.

New Beats for Bird Sounds

What do you get when you mix the sounds of 10 birds, BirdNote theme music, narrators, and the rhythm of a beat box? A new "remix theme" composed by Ben Mirin to herald our new digital content.

Since 2005, the familiar tune composed by Nancy Rumbel and John Kessler has marked the beginning of more than 1,400 shows. In 2016, a new idea was hatched with the help of natural sounds recordist and musician, Ben Mirin, a.k.a. D.J. Ecotone, the creator and host of National Geographic Kids® *Wild Beats*. Ben told BirdNote, "I've been a fan of the BirdNote show all my life!" His idea? Create a remix of the familiar BirdNote theme, adding bird sounds from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The result is a captivating three-minute piece that blends the sounds of 10 species with Ben's original beat. BirdNote plans to introduce the remix with new podcasts and social media while retaining the beloved original for our daily show.

Stay tuned — many new story ideas are in development!

Special Series: Birds of North Central Washington



Debra Olson, known around Chelan as the Bird Lady, shows off the resident Barn Owl, Gus.

In the fall of 2016, BirdNote and Northwest Public Radio (NWPR) took a closer look at conservation issues for birds in North Central Washington (NCW) and what local residents are doing to help. NWPR's Courtney Flatt reported on how leaving burned trees in place helps create bird habitat, the ways owls are helping with pest control in vineyards, and gardening choices North Central Washington residents

are making that turn their backyards into bird havens. The series was supported by geo-targeted social media that created online engagement with audiences before and after the shows aired. An estimated 170,000 North Central Washington listeners heard the shows on NWPR, and BirdNote reached an additional 9,800 North Central Washington residents with social media content directly relating to the shows.

BirdNote offers links to the stories and additional resources — from a library of BirdNote stories about birds and people in NCW to the many partner organizations where listeners can learn more, volunteer, and give birds a helping hand — at http://www.birdnote.org/birds-north-central-washington.

This series was made possible by a grant from the Icicle Fund and gifts from generous individual donors.

Thank you!



Ken Bevis has left about 140 dead ponderosa pines standing on his 15-acre lot. To Bevis, these dead trees are beautiful. To the birds in his back yard, they are now home.



BirdNote has definitely made a difference in my life. I always look forward to listening to the daily podcasts to escape my busy life, keep me company while I do mindless tasks (like clean the house), and I love to listen to BirdNote with my children who get to learn about new bird species and the importance of protecting the earth's wildlife; we usually get in a geography lesson when we look up where the bird is indigenous and may migrate. BirdNote is one of my favorite podcasts!

- Heidi C.

Adventures with BirdNote — Travel, Far and Wide

In 2016, BirdNote offered more exciting travel adventures to national and international destinations, making new friends, deepening connections, and learning about the amazing lives of birds all around the world. The year started with a journey to Big Bend, Texas, in April 2016, followed by a trip to the lush rainforests of Panama in September. We hope you enjoy these journal notes from the field.



Big Bend National Park — by Sallie Bodie, BirdNote Executive Director and Trip Host, with Photos by Tom Luhman

I'd heard a lot about Big Bend National Park over the years, but nothing prepared me for my first experience. Board member Adam Sedgley and I hosted a BirdNote trip for 15 intrepid travelers in April 2016. Here's what I learned: It's a long way from anywhere. You have to drive almost 300 miles from El Paso to get to the park. Big Bend is huge, even by Texas standards. It covers more than 800,000 acres. Elevation ranges from a low of 1,800 feet at the Rio Grande River, to 8,000 feet in the Chisos Mountains.

We hiked early in the day to beat the heat, finding a range of birds from Cactus Wrens in the desert to Zone-tailed Hawks spiraling in a downward draft. One elusive bird, the Colima Warbler, was a goal for many in the group. To find it, we hiked three miles up into the Chisos. Fortunately, we found the warbler, thanks to the expert spotting skills of our lead bird guide (and BirdNote writer) Bob Sundstrom.

Our days were full, but we still didn't want to miss the nightlife! With the help of guide Kitty Coley, we set out after dark to search the desert floor for spiders and reptiles using the "eye shine" technique. Other nights, we listened for

Common Poorwills and owls. Even when we didn't find birds in the dark, we were always rewarded by the sky, filled with more stars than I've ever seen.

And then there are those unexpected species. Take black bears for example. There were none in the park until the 1980s. Now, it's estimated that 8 to 12 bears live in Big Bend. That's not many, and they're rarely seen. But our group was lucky: while enjoying lunch, we were "joined" by several bears outside the dining room window, looking for their next meal!

My favorite memory was of a surprise encounter. Heading down a mountain trail, I stopped upon seeing a small animal on a rock in the shadows, just 20

© Tom Luhman

Jerry Tone and Martha Wyckoff in Big

feet away. It was hard to identify at first, but suddenly I realized: "It's a cat — ummm..., it's a mountain lion cub!" I lingered for just a moment — it was so beautiful. Then reality sank in, and I sped off before its parents showed up.

Bend National Park

It was the capstone to an extraordinary Big Bend adventure. Whether your interest is birds, mammals, reptiles, plants, geology, early settlers, current residents, or astronomy, Big Bend promises to take your breath away.

We can't wait to return. Won't you join us?

Panama by Traveler Karen Powers, with Photos by David Wilbur



Waking up in the morning at the Canopy Tower in Panama is wonderful. I set my alarm for sunrise just in case I sleep too long. After quickly throwing on clothes, I grab my binoculars and head to what we've started calling the "stairway to heaven." This is the stairway that takes us to the platform surrounding the top of what used to be a radar tower. Coffee awaits me, and I grab a cup. My guide Tony is already up there. Birds are everywhere. The sun is just rising, and the forest is a cacophony of sound. Keel-billed Toucans fill a tree. Nearby, a three-

toed sloth is climbing slowly up a trunk. Tony starts pointing out even more birds that I hadn't noticed. He tells us the difference between the male and female Green Honeycreeper. You've got to be kidding! They look like different species. More birds fly in. Palm Tanagers love the cecropia fruit, and the tree is near the edge of the railing. No binoculars needed. David doesn't have binoculars, but instead has his camera focused on birds, and I hear him clicking away. Okay, now we are told breakfast has been served. We tear ourselves away from the upper deck and go down one level to the

dining area surrounded by windows looking out into the trees. Fresh fruit, baked goods, eggs, and more.

Howler monkeys serenade us while we eat. We then learn what will happen that morning. We are getting into an open-seating truck and slipping back down the road through the forest to see still more wildlife. A family of coati (a raccoon relative) cross the road in front of us. A two-toed sloth sleeps on a branch overhead. More birds! After our adventure down the road, we head back to the Canopy Tower for lunch and a rest. And this is only day one!



BirdNote travel is offered in partnership with outfitter Victor Emanuel Nature Tours. Income from the travel program helps support BirdNote programming. A big thank you to our travelers for their support and participation.

UPCOMING ADVENTURES

Costa Rica: *March 2018*Galapagos Islands: *July 2018*

For more information, call Director of Development Kate Godman 206-779-3024 or email <u>kateg@birdnote.org</u>

birds for their exemplary and joyful resilience, and to all of you, BirdNote Team, to be their messengers and advocates.

From the bottom of my heart."

- Mireille C.

THANKS TO OUR CAMPAIGN DONORS TO DATE:

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BirdNote Soars — Campaign Update

In the fall of 2015, BirdNote launched the BirdNote Soars campaign to raise \$1,150,000 to support the implementation of our strategic goals — to double and diversify our audience by 2019. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we have raised \$842,000 to date. These funds are helping us build staffing capacity to reach new markets and new audiences, develop programming in new formats, and distribute content on new platforms.

Some of the exciting work supported by BirdNote Soars so far includes:

- Next Generation Initiative A national grant program to help BirdNote engage younger audiences will launch in October 2017
- Behind the Scenes with BirdNote A video designed to reach new audiences and deepen engagement with our existing supporters
- Birds of North Central Washington A social media engagement pilot using geo-targeting social media tools to engage a geographical community
- D.J. Ecotone remix of BirdNote theme music To use as the intro to content designed for younger audiences

And there's much more in the pipeline!

Independent environmental media that reaches the widest, most diverse audience possible is more important now than ever. To request a campaign prospectus or to make your own gift in support of BirdNote's growth, please contact Director of Development, Kate Godman, at kateg@birdnote.org. Thank you!

Tuning Kids in to Nature

In fall 2016, BirdNote launched a webpage full of resources for educators, homeschoolers, and lifelong learners. "Tune Kids In to Nature" has ready-to-use materials that share the joy of birds, birding, and conservation with curious students of any age. http://birdnote.org/tune-kids-nature-resources-teachers.

The webpage provides teachers with an easy way to use BirdNote stories in all types of educational settings.

The content includes:

 Links to more than 75 stories, organized by grade level, topic, and Next Generation
 Science Standards topics

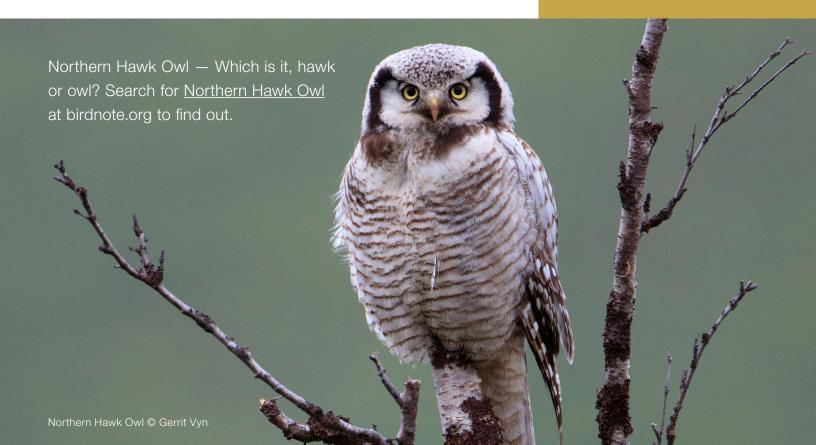
 Lesson plans — nine plans for age-specific groups in K-12 classrooms, which meet a variety of Next Generation

Science Standards and Common Core state standards

- Photos, videos, and nest- and feeder-cams to inspire students
- Access to BirdNote's archive of more than 1,400 stories suitable for science, language arts, social studies, geography, and other classes.

"We're excited to offer these free resources to educators. Because BirdNote stories are fun and fascinating, they inspire listeners of all ages to care about the natural world. We hope educators will use two minutes of BirdNote as a springboard for a wide variety of subjects. Then we invite them to report back to us and share their ideas. We're eager to make the Tune Kids In to Nature project an ever-increasing resource for teachers"

Sallie Bodie, BirdNote
 Executive Director



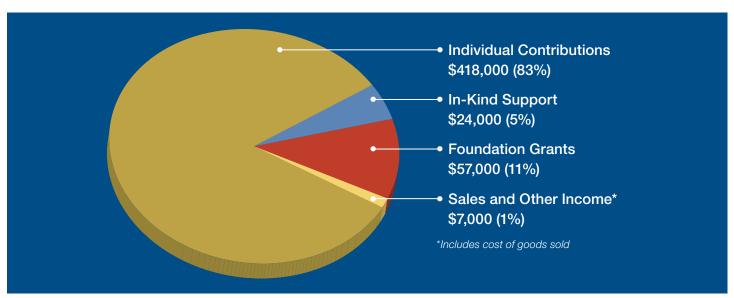
Financial Report 2016

Thank you for partnering with BirdNote to bring the wonder and joy of birds to listeners around the world.

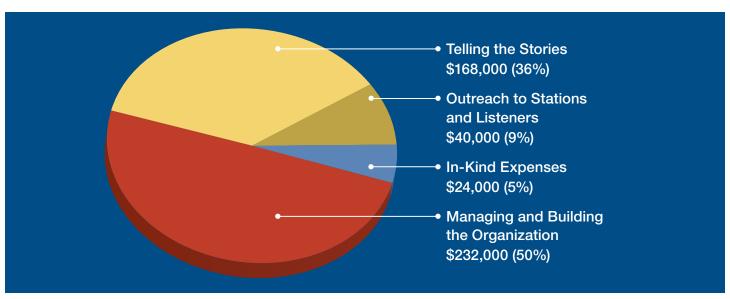
Your gifts help BirdNote produce inspiring stories and distribute them through radio stations and an increasing number of digital distribution channels.

The 2016 operating budget included funds released from the BirdNote Soars campaign to support capacity-building initiatives, including the addition of administrative staff and freelance producers. We also expect growth in programming over the next three years as our new staff builds the income streams necessary to sustain expanded production.

Operating Revenue \$506,000



Operating Expenses \$464,000





BirdNote Board of Directors



Kim Wells (President) – Kim is Senior Director, Human Resources, at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. In this capacity, she oversees the recruitment, employment, diversity, and internal consulting services for the 4000-person organization, which includes both research at Fred Hutch and patient services at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. Her career has focused primarily on organizational development, helping departments, managers, and large institutions improve operational efficiencies, team effectiveness, and leadership acumen. A Northwest native, Kim spends spring and summer hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, where she enjoys spotting the birds of the Pacific Flyway.

I believe the mission of bringing stories about birds to audiences across the country is a very effective way to help others find joy in nature and take steps to protect our environment.



Sarah Merner (Vice President) – With roots going back several generations in the Pacific Northwest, Sarah has been a Seattle resident for 40 years. She holds two master's degrees from the University of Washington in English literature and in library and information science. She has worked as a community college teacher, a manager in the travel industry, an ESL educator, and a librarian. Over the last 20 years, Sarah has been a passionate advocate for the environment, including youth outdoor education, climate change, and conservation of wild lands. She loves to read, cook, knit, and garden, and to be outdoors — hiking, skiing, botanizing, and birding.

I love BirdNote for the bright spot it brings to my day, and to the lives of many others.



Michelle McCormick (Treasurer) – A dedicated accounting manager with more than 20 years of experience in non-profit, retail, manufacturing, and public accounting, Michelle holds a BA in accounting from the University of St. Thomas and is a licensed CPA. Michelle recently joined PATH as their assistant controller; previously she worked at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Michelle has served on multiple boards and has fund-raised and volunteered with a number of organizations, including those focused on conservation and the environment. Michelle enjoys listening to the birds while hiking, biking, reading in her backyard, and walking her dog.

I'm constantly amazed by the beauty and diversity of birds and the role they play in the world. I serve on the BirdNote board to apply my financial experience to an organization that supports birds and the environment.



Lauri J. Adams (Deputy Board Chair) – Lauri is an environmental attorney with 30 years of legal and organizational management experience. She lives in Anchorage, Alaska, where the spectacular annual bird migrations along Alaska's coast have long captured her imagination.

I treasure BirdNote for its fascinating insights into the lives of birds and how they survive and thrive in the natural world. Ultimately, all birds depend upon us to continue to flourish. BirdNote stories are a unique and powerful means of educating and activating a diverse community of humans in support of birds.



Anna Fahey (Secretary) – Anna is Director of Strategic Communication for Sightline Institute whose mission is to make the Northwest a global model of sustainability. She grew up in Anacortes, Washington, beachcombing in the San Juans and working on her parents' commercial fishing boats. Her family goes back four generations in the Seattle area — and in fact, her grandfather, George Fahey, was president of Seattle Audubon from 1931 to 1933! Anna has a BA from Smith College and an MA in political communication from the University of Washington.

Birds remind us to slow down, listen, and look at our environment. They remind us we're all connected. A chickadee's song can instantly take me back to happy memories from my own childhood, and watching birds with my kids helps me impart a curiosity and wonder about the world around us.



Thomas Luhman, PhD – Tom is a retired senior manager from The Boeing Company who holds a PhD in materials science. Tom's career included research at Brookhaven National Laboratory in New York and teaching engineering at the University of Arizona. He is a Technical Fellow of the American Society of Materials International and recognized for his publications, including a Treatise on Materials Science and Technology published by Academic Press.

I believe birds are the jewels of our landscapes and an inspirational portal into the fragile beauty of the natural world. I joined the BirdNote board to help harness the power of storytelling to move people to protect birds and their habitat.



J. Drew Lanham, PhD – Drew is a Clemson University Master Teacher and Alumni Distinguished Professor in wildlife ecology. His research interests lie in songbird ecology and conservation, integration of game and nongame wildlife management, and the African American land ethic and its role in natural resources conservation.

I see birds as the ultimate embodiments of freedom with wings and wandering spirits that can inspire and inform our own lives. Conserving them and their habitats is a moral mission that needs the broadest and most diverse audience possible to be successful.



Laura Cruz – Laura is a program manager for HBO and is passionate about using technology as a vehicle to connect communities and make information accessible to all. She is the technology advisor to the board. Laura hails from Puerto Rico and grew up in the foothills of El Yunque, a tropical rainforest. After moving to the Pacific Northwest in 2009 and noticing the lovely plumage of Red-winged Blackbirds near Lake Sammamish, Laura grew interested in birdwatching. She shares her love for birds with her husband Zac. Aside from enjoying nature in its many forms, Laura enjoys genealogy research, reading, and drawing.

BirdNote stories matter because they open us up to a whole new world where we can become connected to birds and nature. With this new perspective, we can all become closer to our environment, learn how we affect it, and get more enjoyment out of our everyday interactions with birds!



Thomas R. Darden, PhD – Tom is a retired biologist who received his PhD from the University of California and then spent two years as a post-doc at the University of Washington. His research efforts during those years focused on the European Starling and the White-crowned Sparrow. Tom has worked as a teacher and as a research scientist and manager for locally based community public health programs, HIV/AIDS surveillance projects, and for a global clinical research program conducting clinical trials of HIV prevention strategies at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Tom is a board member emeritus of Audubon Washington and a member of the Woodland Park Zoo leadership team. His free time is spent hiking, fishing, birding, cooking, and traveling.

I affiliated with BirdNote because it strives to convert listeners from lukewarm to active conservationists. We reach close to 2 million people, many of whom, according to listener surveys, were not avid conservationists until they began listening! Now they better understand, now they get involved, now they recycle, now they strive to further shrink their carbon footprint, and now they support environmental causes. Those are reasons enough.



Marjorie Kim – Margie is Chief Philanthropy Officer and Senior Vice President of The Trust for Public Land, a national conservation organization that works to protect land for people, creating green spaces from neighborhood parks to national parks across the country. Her love of birds was ignited when she did her first Audubon Birdathon in southern Arizona – and further fueled when she volunteered for an Alaska Department of Fish and Game study monitoring Marbled Murrelets in the Tongass National Forest. Margie received her BA in Linguistics/Psychology and MSW in community planning from UCLA. A native Californian, she enjoys traveling, diving, hiking, birding, reading, and good wine.

The human experience is best understood through the sharing of stories. I believe that the beauty and the importance of birds can be shared in the same way. And that's what Bird Note does, producing wonderful stories that inform a broad audience about the wonder of birds, a critical indicator species for our planet.



Chris Rogers – Chris is CEO and a founding partner of Point32, a Seattle-based real estate development company that is working to transform Seattle's built environment through strong partnerships, quality design and construction, and a commitment to environmental performance. Recently completed projects include the award-winning Art Stable, the Bullitt Center, McGilvra Place Park, and the Bethaday Community Learning Space for the Technology Access Foundation. A Seattle native, Chris has an undergraduate degree in art history from Bowdoin College and a master's in forestry from Yale University.

Through provocative storytelling, BirdNote affirms the connection we have with the natural world and reinforces the need to protect our shared home.



Adam Sedgley – Adam worked on the BirdNote team for more than 10 years, managing listener engagement, outreach, and digital media. His interest in birding started when he was a child, when he first saw an Acorn Woodpecker in California. Thirty years and six continents later, he's still an avid birder. From 2005 to 2012, Adam managed the numerous projects of the science program at Seattle Audubon and served on the board of the Washington Ornithological Society. In May 2015, Adam moved to Washington, DC, to manage the web strategy of Conservation International. He is a Master Birder and nature enthusiast, an avid runner, periodic cyclist, and all-around technology geek.

Nature is vital to our livelihoods and emotional well-being, and birds are a ubiquitous and uplifting reminder of the moral imperative to protect it. Through compelling storytelling on-air and online, BirdNote is poised to deliver this message to millions of people, every day.



Jerry Tone – Jerry served as agent for Hellman Properties LLC in Seal Beach, California. He was former general partner and executive vice president of Montgomery Capital Corporation in San Francisco, served as a director of the Alamitos Land Company in Signal Hill, California, and was a chief financial officer with BRIDGE Housing Corporation. Jerry was a vice president in the real estate lending department at Wells Fargo Bank. He currently serves on The Trust for Public Land's national board of directors and on the board of the Seattle Parks Foundation. Jerry graduated from Williams College and received his MBA from the University of California-Berkeley.

Bird appreciation and bird watching has been a part of our lives for many many years and so it is a now a real pleasure to be part of the BirdNote team. The stories told in the shows add depth and color to our daily interactions with the birds around us and therefore add to our appreciation of the environment around us.

Thank You, Donors!

Your gifts inspire people of all ages to notice, to care about, and to protect birds and their habitats. Thank you! This list represents gifts and pledges made in 2016.

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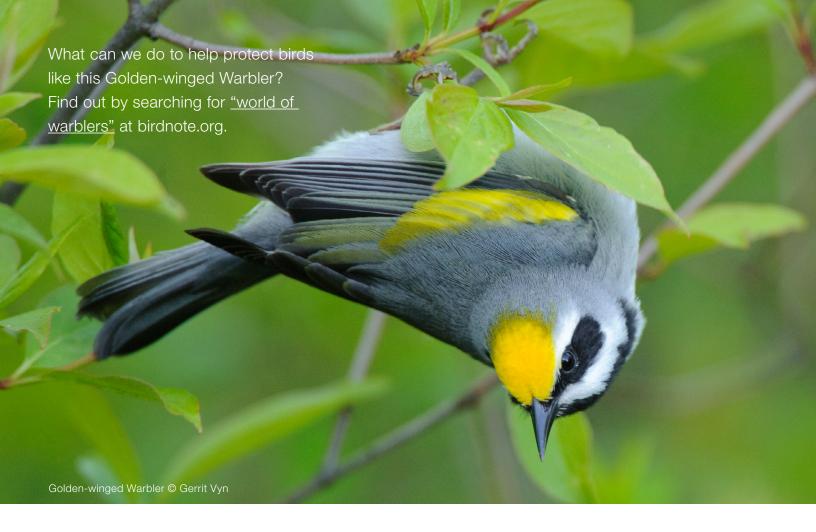
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Special Recognition

BirdNote is grateful to the following philanthropic leaders and partners in 2016:

The Bobolink Foundation for supporting ongoing production of our daily broadcast.

National Audubon Society for sharing BirdNote stories with its members online, through social media, and in *Audubon Magazine*.

The Macaulay Library of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology for providing most of the bird sounds featured in BirdNote shows.

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