

A photograph of three Barn Swallows in flight against a blurred green background. The birds are shown from a side profile, with their wings spread and their bright yellow-orange beaks wide open as if they are calling or singing. The birds have dark blue-black heads and backs, with lighter brownish-tan underparts. The top bird is slightly out of focus, while the middle and bottom birds are sharper.

# Protection and Recovery of Ontario's Species at Risk

**2020 Review of  
Progress Summary**




## Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Barn Swallow	4
Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark	7
Showy Goldenrod - Boreal Population	12



**Cover Photo** - Mark Peck

**Eastern Meadowlark** - Mark Peck



# Introduction to the 2020 Review of Progress towards the Protection and Recovery of Ontario's Species at Risk

## Overview

To fulfill a legislative requirement of the Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA), the Government of Ontario publishes a Review of Progress Towards the Protection and Recovery of Ontario's Species at Risk. The Review shows how the Government of Ontario and its partners are helping to protect and recover species at risk in Ontario. In 2020, the Review included the following four species at risk:

- Barn Swallow
- Bobolink
- Eastern Meadowlark
- Showy Goldenrod – Boreal population

This document is a summary of the progress made from 2007 to 2019 for the four species listed above. Full-length chapters on each species are found in the 2020 Review of Progress Towards the Protection and Recovery of Ontario's Species at Risk, which is available on the Government of Ontario website at [www.ontario.ca/page/review-progress-towards-protection-and-recovery-ontarios-species-risk](http://www.ontario.ca/page/review-progress-towards-protection-and-recovery-ontarios-species-risk)



# Review of Progress toward the protection and recovery of

## Barn Swallow

### Progress towards meeting the recovery goal:

The recovery goal in the Government Response Statement (GRS) for Barn Swallow in Ontario includes both a short- and long-term goal for the species. The short-term goal is to “reduce the rate of decline by minimizing threats and improving habitat conditions”. The long-term goal is to “maintain a stable, self-sustaining population throughout the species’ range by 2035 (within 20 years)”.

Progress has been made towards implementing all of the government-led actions, all of the government-supported recovery objectives and all of the associated actions. Examples of progress include:

- Best management practices have been developed and distributed that provide direction on creating Barn Swallow nesting habitat, and working in habitat areas without causing harm to the species;
- The government has worked closely with key stakeholder groups and the agricultural community to implement integrated pest management approaches where suitable and decrease overall use of pesticide in Barn Swallow foraging habitat;
- Significant research has been completed to better understand the nesting and foraging behaviours of Barn Swallow and how changes on the landscape may influence these life processes; and
- Extensive outreach has been carried out to promote a better understanding of this species and how individuals can create or improve habitat areas.

In alignment with the GRS, it is recommended that additional efforts be made to promote communication and cooperation with partners in other jurisdictions to promote management of threats for this species across borders and between over-wintering and summer habitat.



Barn Swallow - Mark Peck



Barn Swallows - Mark Peck

## Occurrences and distribution:

Barn Swallow is widely distributed across southern and eastern Ontario, with an estimated range of approximately 66,900 square kilometres based on recent observations of Barn Swallow.

The [Natural Heritage Information Centre](#) (NHIC) has received over 129,000 records of the species based on observations made between 1926 and 2019, and 1,900 of these records contain evidence of nesting activity.

Since 2012, the species has been observed in locations where they were not previously known to occur and at locations previously thought to be historical. Based on up-to-date information, the species' extant distribution is estimated to encompass an area 40,200 square kilometres larger than was known since the species was listed and protected

## Government-supported stewardship projects:

Through the [Species at Risk Stewardship Program](#), the Government of Ontario has enabled its stewardship partners to conduct 47 projects (\$4,670,550) since the species was listed in 2012 that have supported the protection and recovery of Barn Swallow. One project focused exclusively on Barn Swallow, while the other 46 projects focused on multiple species at risk, including Barn Swallow.

The government's support helped its stewardship partners to involve 4,000 individuals who volunteered 50,260 hours of their time toward



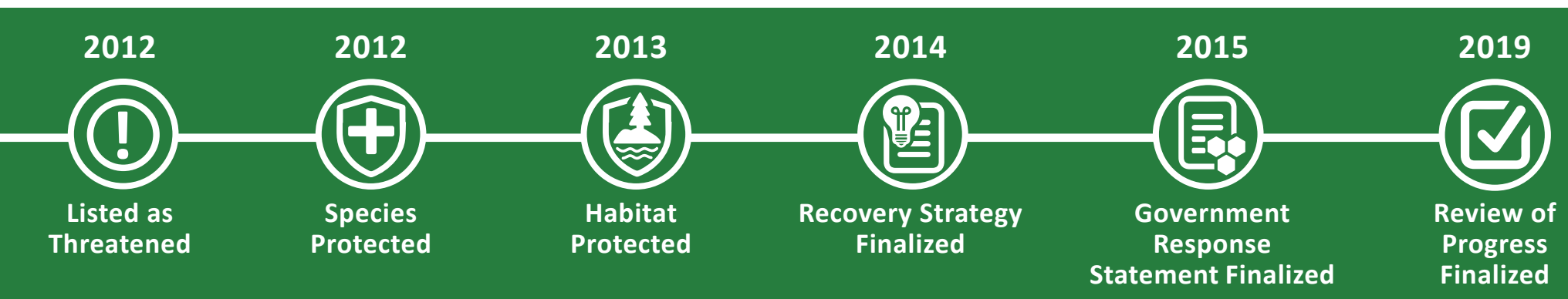
**observations of  
Barn Swallow were  
submitted to the  
NHIC since 2012**

protection and recovery activities for species at risk, including Barn Swallow. The estimated value of these voluntary contributions, as well as additional funding and in-kind support, is \$9,532,700.

Stewardship partners reported that through their actions 2,963 hectares of habitat were enhanced for Barn Swallow and other species at risk that inhabit the same ecosystem.

Stewardship partners reported providing outreach on multiple species at risk, including Barn Swallow, to 1,362,680 individuals.

Through the Species at Risk Research Fund for Ontario, the Government of Ontario supported five research partners to improve understanding of nesting and foraging behaviour, collect information on species' distribution and population trends, and assess the effectiveness of artificial nest structures.



## Species at Risk Stewardship Program By The Numbers



**47**

projects included  
Barn Swallow



**1**

project for Barn  
Swallow exclusively



**\$4,670,550**

for multi-species  
projects that included  
Barn Swallow



**\$9,532,700**

in additional funding  
and in-kind support



**4,000**

volunteers



**50,260**

volunteer hours



**1,362,680**

people received  
outreach



**2,963**

hectares of habitat  
enhanced

## Supporting human activities while ensuring appropriate support for species recovery:

The Government of Ontario has issued 17 permits for this species: one 'human health or safety' permit was issued under clause 17(2)(a), 14 'protection or recovery' permits were issued under clause 17(2)(b), and two 'overall benefit' permits were issued under clause 17(2)(c) of the ESA.

One thousand three hundred forty-four activities have been authorized for the species under the conditional exemptions requiring registration under Ontario Regulation 242/08 of the ESA. The activities were registered under 'Barn swallow' (section 23.5), 'Notice of drainage works' (section 23.9), 'Early exploration mining' (section 23.10), 'Ecosystem protection' (section 23.11), 'Hydro-electric generating stations' (section 23.12), 'Newly listed and transition species' (section 23.13), 'Pits and quarries' (section 23.14), 'Species protection or recovery activities' (section 23.17), 'Threats to health and safety, not imminent' (section 23.18), and 'Wind facilities' (section 23.20).



Health or  
Safety Permit



Protection  
or Recovery  
Permits



Overall Benefit  
Permits



Registrations

**Species-specific documents and guidance published  
by the government:**

[Recovery Strategy for Barn Swallow \(2014\)](#)

[Barn Swallow Government Response Statement \(2015\)](#)



# Review of Progress toward the protection and recovery of

## Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark

### Progress towards meeting the recovery goal:

The recovery goal in the Government Response Statement (GRS) for Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark in Ontario includes a short and long-term goal for the species. The short-term goal is to slow the population decline by maintaining and enhancing grassland habitat. The long-term goal is to maintain a stable and self-sustaining population for Bobolink at 65% of its current [as of 2016] population size, and for Eastern Meadowlark at 72% of its current [as of 2016] population size, throughout the species' current range in Ontario by 2036 (within 20 years).

Progress has been made towards implementing all of the government recovery objectives and the majority of the government-led and government-supported actions. Examples of progress include:

- The establishment of the Grassland Stewardship Initiative to provide financial incentives to landowners to create, maintain and enhance grassland habitats.
- Finalizing the Safe Harbour Habitat under the Endangered Species Act policy to provide guidance on the design, implementation and evaluation of effectiveness of safe harbour instruments for species at risk, including Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark.
- Government-led and supported research to improve knowledge on Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark breeding behaviour and the influence of agricultural management strategies on reproductive success.
- Government-supported projects that created, enhanced, and maintained Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark habitat across the species' ranges.



Bobolink - © Tyne Bone Bakker CC-BY-NC



Eastern Meadowlark - Mark Peck

In alignment with the GRS, more work is required to:

- Analyze land use in Ontario in relation to Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark occurrences and habitat, and evaluate the socioeconomic, ecological and resource implications of different grassland stewardship implementation options over time.
- Track the supply of different types of agricultural grassland habitat through the agricultural census and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's remote sensing crop mapping.
- Assess the relative degree to which the species' populations are affected by threats that occur within Ontario versus threats that occur outside the breeding season and on wintering grounds by working in partnership and sharing information with federal and other jurisdictions.



Bobolink - © Andrea Kingsley CC-BY-NC

## Bobolink

2010



Listed as  
Threatened

2010



Species  
Protected

2010



Habitat  
Protected

2013



Recovery Strategy  
Finalized

2015



Government  
Response  
Statement Finalized

2020



Review of  
Progress  
Finalized

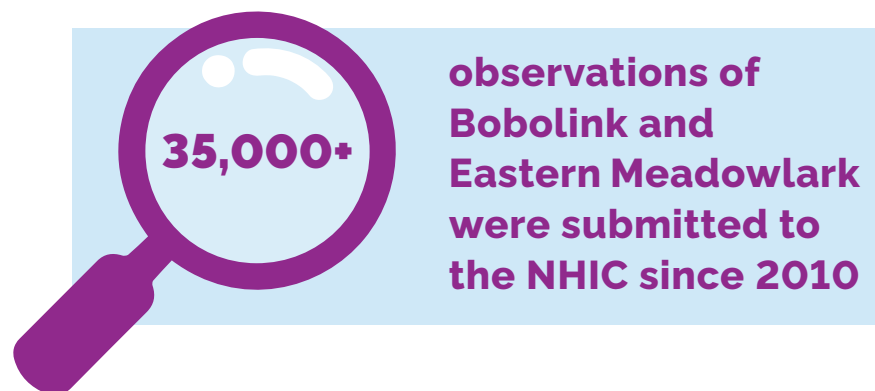


## Occurrences and distribution:

Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark are widely distributed across southern and eastern Ontario, with an estimated range of approximately 200,000 square kilometres based on recent observations of Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark.

The [Natural Heritage Information Centre](#) (NHIC) has received over 35,000 records of each species based on observations made between 1898 and 2019.

Since 2010, the species have been observed in locations where it was not previously known to occur and at locations previously thought to be historical. Based on up to date information, the species' extant distributions are estimated to encompass 11,300 additional square kilometres for Bobolink, and 23,800 additional square kilometres for Eastern Meadowlark than was known in 2010.



### Eastern Meadowlark

2012



Listed as  
Threatened

2012



Species  
Protected

2012



Habitat  
Protected

2013



Recovery Strategy  
Finalized

2015



Government  
Response  
Statement Finalized

2020



Review of  
Progress  
Finalized

## Government-supported stewardship projects:

Through the [Species at Risk Stewardship Program](#), the Government of Ontario has enabled its partners to conduct 48 stewardship projects that have supported the protection and recovery of Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark since these species were listed under the Endangered Species Act. Thirteen projects (\$537,847) focused exclusively on Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark, while the other 35 projects (\$1,639,211) focused on multiple species at risk, including Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark.

The government's support helped its stewardship partners to involve 2,688 individuals who volunteered 56,675 hours of their time toward protection and recovery activities for species at risk, including Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark. The estimated value of these voluntary contributions, as well as additional funding and in-kind support, is \$10,008,080.

Stewardship partners reported that through their actions 3,899 hectares of habitat were enhanced for Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark and other species at risk that inhabit the same ecosystem.

Stewardship partners reported providing outreach on multiple species at risk, including Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark, to 1,783,242 individuals.

Also through the [Species at Risk Stewardship Program](#), the Government of Ontario supported partners conducting six research projects (\$151,000) to fill knowledge gaps about the species' habitat needs across several spatial scales and breeding success in agricultural fields under different management strategies.

## Species at Risk Stewardship Program By The Numbers



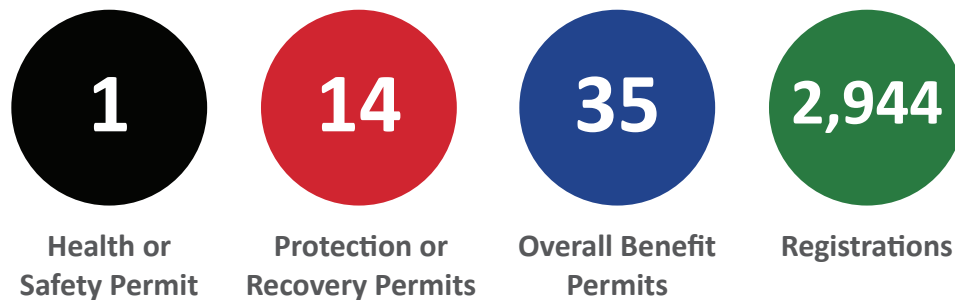


## Supporting human activities while ensuring appropriate support for species recovery

The Government of Ontario has issued 50 permits for this species: one was issued as a 'human health or safety' (17(2)(a)) permit, 14 'protection or recovery' (17(2)(b)) permits and 35 'overall benefit' (17(2)(c)) permits.

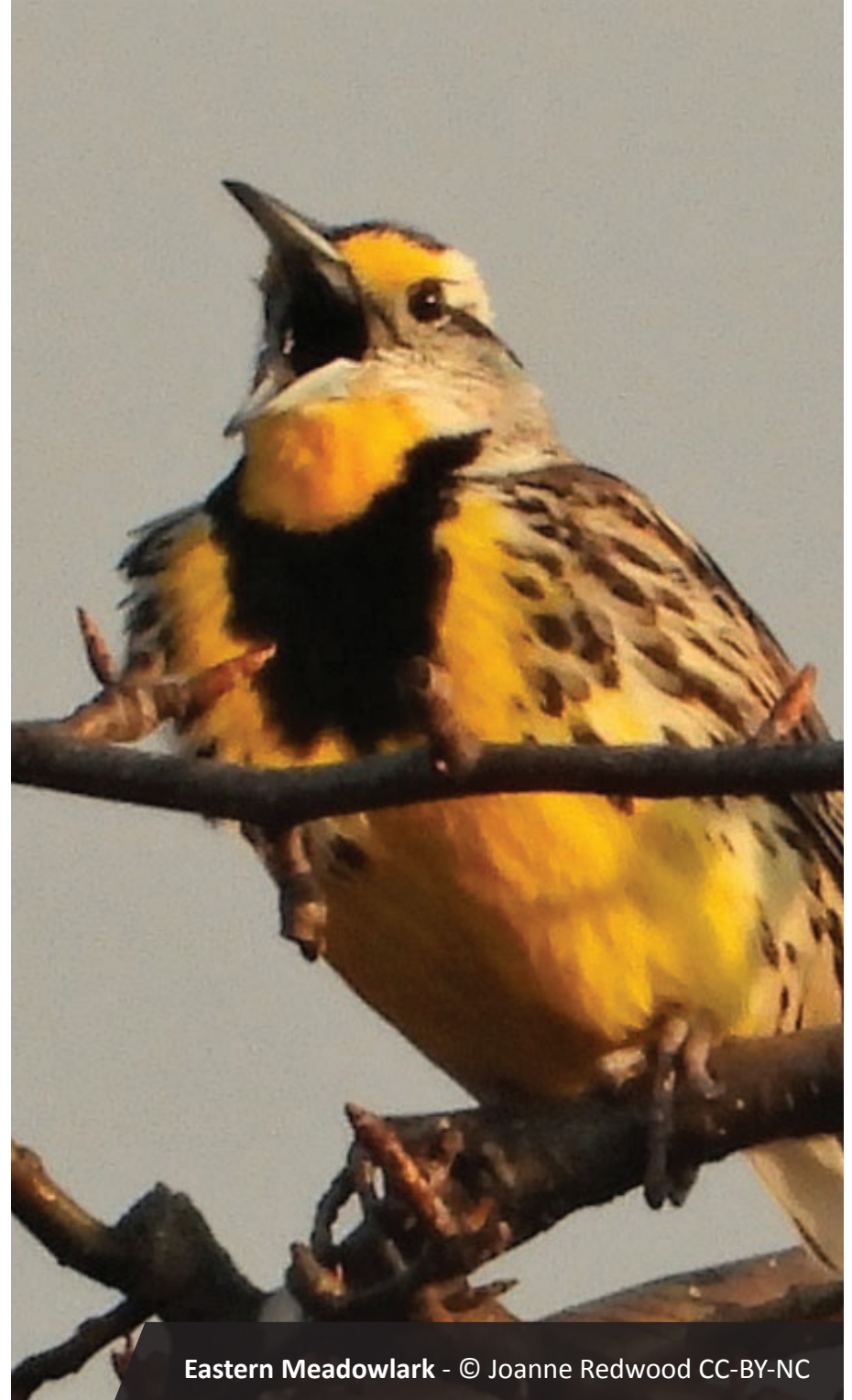
One thousand five hundred twenty nine activities have been authorized for Bobolink under the conditional exemptions requiring registration under Ontario Regulation 242/08 of the ESA under 'Bobolink and eastern meadowlark' (section 23.6), 'Early exploration mining' (section 23.10), 'Ecosystem protection' (section 23.11), 'Hydro-electric generating stations – operations' (23.12), 'Notice of drainage works' (section 23.9), 'Pits and quarries' (section 23.14), 'Species protection or recovery activities' (section 23.17), 'Threats to human health or safety – non imminent' (section 23.18), 'Wind facilities – operations' (section 23.20).

One thousand four hundred seventeen activities have been authorized for Eastern Meadowlark under the conditional exemptions requiring registration under Ontario Regulation 242/08 of the ESA under 'Bobolink and eastern meadowlark' (section 23.6), 'Ecosystem protection' (section 23.11), 'Notice of drainage works' (section 23.9), 'Pits and quarries' (section 23.14), 'Species protection or recovery activities' (section 23.17), 'Threats to human health or safety – non imminent' (section 23.18), 'Wind facilities – operations' (section 23.20).



Species-specific documents and guidance published by the government:

[Recovery Strategy for Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark \(2013\)](#)  
[Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark Government Response Statement \(2015\)](#)



Eastern Meadowlark - © Joanne Redwood CC-BY-NC

# Review of Progress toward the protection and recovery of

## Showy Goldenrod – Boreal population

### Progress towards meeting the recovery goal

The recovery goal in the Government Response Statement (GRS) for Showy Goldenrod – Boreal population in Ontario is to “maintain the existing abundance and distribution of Showy Goldenrod in Ontario”.

Progress has been made towards implementing all of the government-led actions. Progress has been made towards implementing all of the government-supported recovery objectives and all of the associated actions. Examples of progress include:

- Continued monitoring of the population to document its' persistence over time;
- Surveys of potential habitat areas to determine if there are additional unidentified populations; and
- Efforts to characterize habitats where this species is found and those where it was not located.

In alignment with the GRS, greater efforts may need to be implemented to develop a standardized monitoring approach for this species, and to improve outreach intended to educate the public about potential impacts to this population from all-terrain vehicles and trampling.

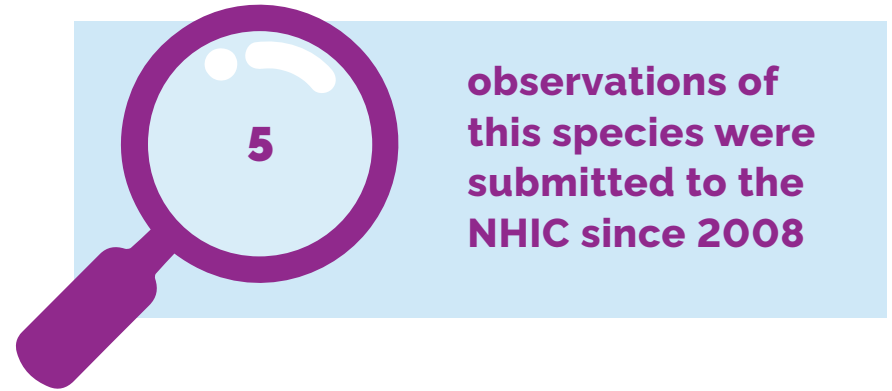


Showy Goldenrod (Boreal) - Jane M Bowles



## Occurrences and distribution:

One population of Showy Goldenrod – Boreal population has been documented in northern Ontario. This population continues to be considered extant, and ongoing survey efforts have confirmed its persistence in this area.



## Government-supported stewardship projects:

Through the [Species at Risk Stewardship Program](#), the Government of Ontario has enabled its stewardship partners to carry out one project that supported the protection and recovery of multiple species at risk, including Showy Goldenrod – Boreal population.

### Species at Risk Stewardship Program By The Numbers



1

project included Showy  
Goldenrod - Boreal  
population

## Species-specific documents and guidance published by the government:

[Recovery Strategy for Showy Goldenrod – Boreal population \(2014\)](#)

[Showy Goldenrod – Boreal population Government Response Statement \(2015\)](#)

