

Findings from the Field

Volume 4

Article 13

2021

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Jackson G

Barnard School, ccestrone@sau21.org

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Recommended Citation

G, Jackson (2021) "Why Has the North American Blue Jay population been in decline?," *Findings from the Field*: Vol. 4 , Article 13.

Available at: <https://findings.gmri.org/journal/vol4/iss1/13>

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Why Has the North American Blue Jay population been in decline? By Jackson

On Friday May 7th our eighth grade class walked down the road to a small unnamed pond that was connected to Grassy Brook. It was around 8:30 in the morning when we went. We spent around twenty minutes observing the water and woods. It wasn't until we were walking back up the path to go back to the school that I saw a Blue Jay fly down onto the path and fly back into a tree. The blue jay had not been near the water or on the elephant grass like the countless Red-winged blackbirds and tree swallows we saw there. The second day that I saw a Blue Jay in a tree closer to the water. It flew away over the water to the other side of the pond. It was odd to me that I only saw one blue jay each day because usually every year there are many of them all grouped together. When we got back to the school I decided to research the population of Blue Jays. During my research I found out that the Blue Jay population has gone down by nearly 30% since 1970. This surprised me because I had no idea that their population had been dwindling. Although there is no concern about the conservation of blue jays, 30% of the population is a very large amount of birds. I found that the main cause of decline in numbers is because of habitat loss.

Millions of birds lose their lives and homes to deforestation or climate change every year. Forests in Northern America and South-East Canada are cut down for lumber and to make more space to build and increase cities, towns, etc. Millions of birds also die every year from flying into buildings and glass. Some starve to death after their habitat is destroyed. Blue jays especially suffer from this because they mostly eat berries and other things that would fall from trees and their habitat. Neonicotinoids are a type of pesticides sprayed on seeds to kill bugs. These are extremely deadly to birds as well. It only takes one seed with this on it to kill a bird.

Many blue jays also face the threats of predators. Hawks, eagles, and owls will prey on the bird itself while other types of jays and squirrels will steal eggs and babies from the nest. Outdoor dogs and cats claim the lives of thousands of birds every year.

So the final answer to the question of Why the Blue Jay population is decreasing is because of habitat loss caused mostly by humans. I think that it is very important to preserve and help not just birds but all animals of the world. There should be a study where people track and watch Blue Jays babies and see how long they survive and how they die. This would help scientists see how they need to help Blue Jays and other birds.

<https://birdsoftheworld.org/bow/species/blujay/cur/demography>