

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Combating Wildlife Trafficking Program
Species Conservation Catalyst Fund on Songbird Trade
FY24 Funded Projects

In FY2024, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) funded seven projects totaling \$3,672,133 to reduce the illegal, unsustainable trade of 15 songbird species native to the Guiana Shield and Caribbean through the Combating Wildlife Trafficking (CWT) Program's Species Conservation Catalyst Fund (SCCF) on Songbird Trade. The funding leveraged an additional \$205,316 in matching funds to support critical conservation efforts for songbirds. Projects are in seven songbird range, transit or consumer countries, and some projects work across multiple countries. One award supports a coordinating organization, which will partner closely with USFWS to enhance the convening, communication and capacity building of the other award recipients.

COORDINATING ORGANIZATION

Award #F24AC01348

Safeguarding songbirds from wildlife trade extinction; building capacity networks to reduce songbird trade in the Americas. Cooperative agreement in partnership with Birdlife International. This project seeks to convene and develop the capacity of stakeholders addressing the illegal, unsustainable international trade of songbirds native to the Guiana Shield and Caribbean. Birdlife International will convene, coordinate and capacitate award recipients of the SCCF to build empirical evidence, understanding and public awareness of songbird trade and develop strategies to reduce threats to songbird species from trade. The objectives of the project are to support SCCF award recipients to: 1) share a common vision and strategy for reducing illegal, unsustainable songbird trade for singing competitions; 2) strengthen skills and capacity to advance effectiveness and enable long-term sustainability; and 3) strategize on how to inform and engage appropriate audiences to reduce illegal, unsustainable international songbird trade. By convening SCCF award recipients, this project will accelerate and amplify the impact of conservation interventions, enabling the SCCF cohort to deliver a sum greater than its parts.

Period of performance: 06/06/2024 - 06/05/2029

USFWS: \$383,702 **Leveraged funds:** \$0

BRAZIL

Award #F24AC02904

Understanding the trade and co-creating strategies to address the illegal and unsustainable trade of songbirds for singing competitions in Northern Brazil. Cooperative agreement in partnership with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The strong culture of keeping songbirds for singing competitions in Brazil increases demand for these species from the wild. The proposed project will contribute to the conservation of ten species of songbirds targeted for trade for singing competitions and listed as priority songbird species in SCCF in Northern Brazil. The project's long-term goal is to achieve stable populations of the target species and mid-term goal is to reduce the illegal and unsustainable collection of songbirds for singing competitions by 50% by 2030. To work toward these goals, the project includes 4 intermediate goals: 1) characterize the

supply chain; 2) examine the demand for songbirds; 3) evaluate the potential of captive breeding to contribute to songbird conservation; and 4) co-create recommendations and strategies with interested groups aimed reducing the demand for illegally obtained songbirds and reducing the dependence on the illegal trade by vulnerable human populations. The project will directly inform management priorities and actions for the National Action Plan for Amazonian Bird Conservation.

Period of performance: 08/01/2024 - 07/31/2027

USFWS: \$426,942 **Leveraged funds:** \$0

CANADA AND THE NETHERLANDS

Award #F24AP02878

Ensuring singing competitions in non-range countries do not threaten songbird species native to the Guiana Shield and the Caribbean. Grant in partnership with Monitor Conservation Research Society. This project aims to address issues connected to illegal and unsustainable songbird trade that can have devastating impacts on wild songbird populations. The goal of the project is to ensure that international trade in songbirds for use in singing competitions in Canada and the Netherlands is not a threat to wild songbirds in the Guiana Shield and the Caribbean. The project has four interconnected objectives: 1) Understand the relevant regulatory landscape and international trade chain for songbird species native to the Guiana Shield and Caribbean used in singing competitions in Canada; 2) Understand demand for songbird species native to the Guiana Shield and the Caribbean used in singing competitions in Canada; and 3) Understand the regulatory and demand for songbird species in the Netherlands by supporting research in collaboration with the International Fund for Animal Welfare. To accomplish these objectives, the project incorporates research on the human dimensions associated with communities that intersect with the songbird trade to better understand the drivers and mechanisms of international trade and place them within the appropriate cultural frameworks. The project takes an inclusive conservation approach that will work with communities to be conscious and respectful of diverse cultures languages and marginalized groups throughout the research process.

Period of performance: 07/01/2024 - 06/30/2027

USFWS: \$509,595 **Leveraged funds:** \$0

GUYANA

Award #F24AC01343

From Roosting to Racing: Strengthening the Legal and Sustainable Songbird Trade in Guyana through a Collaborative and Informed Approach. Cooperative agreement in partnership with The Consultancy Group, Inc. This project addresses the pressing need to mitigate the ecological, economic and health risks associated with the unregulated songbird trade in Guyana. The project's overarching goal is to reduce the illegal and unsustainable songbird trade in Guyana as part of a broader regional strategy to combat wildlife trafficking. The project objectives are to: 1) Improve knowledge and understanding of the social, cultural, economic, political and situational factors that drive songbird trade and ecological research on bird population sizes, distributions and habitats; 2) Strengthen enforcement of the legal songbird trade in Guyana by researching the unintended social and ecological consequences, conducting a legal review and training government agencies

for improved effectiveness; and 3) Pilot a songbird captive breeding program to understand feasibility as a sustainable livelihood and trade.

Period of performance: 06/06/2024 - 06/06/2029

USFWS: \$772,829 **Leveraged funds:** \$172,790

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND SURINAME

Award #F24AP01700

Catalyzing Songbird Conservation and Management in the Southern Caribbean and the Guiana Shield. Grant in partnership with Sustainable Innovation Initiatives, Inc. The gravity of the threats posed by the trade in neotropical songbirds for competitive keeping in the Southern Caribbean and Guiana Shield and communities abroad demands innovative concerted and collaborative responses. To meet this demand, Sustainable Innovation Initiatives Inc., in partnership with Green Heritage Fund Suriname, Wildlife & People Suriname, and the University of the West Indies School of Veterinary Medicine, shall research and address the trade in songbirds for singing competitions in Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and their diasporas abroad. The project will conduct the following activities: 1) Songbird health and welfare assessment in Trinidad and Tobago; 2) Synthesis of existing data on the decline of wild songbirds in Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname; 3) Trade research for mapping and understanding in Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and the United States; 4) Legal review of existing laws in Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname; and 5) Coalition-building and strategic planning in Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname. Importantly, this project is designed to complement a parallel project led by the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

Period of performance: 06/05/2024 - 06/04/2027

USFWS: \$650,532 **Leveraged funds:** \$11,425

UNITED STATES

Award #F24AP02412

Understanding and improving sustainability of songbird keeping and trade in Guyanese diaspora communities in the U.S. Grant in partnership with the Center for International Forestry Research. International trade, including illegal trade, of wild-caught songbirds from the Guiana Shield and Caribbean occurs to supply demand from diaspora communities in the U.S., Canada and Europe, with several recent seizures of smuggled birds en route from Guyana to New York, suggesting an illegal trade exists to serve demand from Guyanese communities there. The project objectives are to: 1) Map key species, actors and trade characteristics supplying bird racing in New York; 2) Identify behavioral drivers of trade in wild and illegally traded songbirds, using segmentation to prioritize target audiences; and 3) Improve sustainability using co-designed interventions, implementing and evaluating an initial intervention, soliciting stakeholder feedback to refine approach and re-deploying the enhanced intervention to maximize impact. The goal is to reduce demand for, and trade in, illegally and unsustainably sourced songbirds from the Guiana Shield.

Period of performance: 06/06/2024 - 06/05/2028

USFWS: \$606,897 **Leveraged funds:** \$16,300

UNITED STATES, NETHERLANDS, SURINAME AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Award #F24AP01702

Understanding and Addressing the Trade in Neotropical Songbirds for Singing Competitions in the Southern Caribbean and Guiana Shield. Grant in partnership with the International Fund for Animal Welfare. The gravity of the threats posed by the trade in Neotropical songbirds for competitive keeping in the Southern Caribbean and Guiana Shield and communities abroad demands innovative, concerted and collaborated responses. To meet this demand, the project team will collaborate with local NGOs and others to research and address the trade in songbirds for singing competitions in the United States, Netherlands, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The project objectives are to: 1) Carry out participatory trade chain mapping to understand key characteristics associated with the songbird trade; and 2) Conduct a legal review of existing laws.

Period of performance: 06/06/2024 - 06/05/2027

USFWS: \$311,636 **Leveraged funds:** \$16,226