



Join Wildlife Preservation Canada and thousands of people who are helping to save Canada's most endangered animals.



NOT FOR REPRINT



Wildlife Preservation Canada saves critically endangered species whose numbers in the wild are so low that hands-on conservation is required to save them from extinction.

Animal conservation requires a multi-faceted approach that includes habitat protection, community engagement, public awareness and education. In addition to all those critical elements, we provide a unique role by **taking direct action to prevent at-risk species from being lost forever.**

Wildlife Preservation Canada specializes in science-based techniques like conservation breeding, headstarting, and translocation. Our work is a team effort with government, educational institutions, landowners, and concerned individuals.

Only when we work together will we see sustainable results.

Learn how you can help:
wildlifepreservation.ca



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Eastern Loggerhead Shrike

Saving species from extinction across Canada by providing direct, hands-on care.



Photo: Kevin Kerr

Flight cages like these in Napanee, Ontario are part of our soft release protocol that gives young shrikes the best chance of survival when released into the wild.



Photo: Vincent Luk/Evermaven, courtesy of the NCC

A DISAPPEARING SONGBIRD

Loggerhead shrikes were once a common sight in pastures and grasslands across southern Ontario, but their numbers have dropped steadily since the 1960s. Eastern loggerhead shrikes are now considered critically endangered in Canada.

Since 2003, Wildlife Preservation Canada has been coordinating the Eastern Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Program, which brings together numerous dedicated partners that are working to understand and reverse these declines.

Through conservation-breeding and release, wild population monitoring, and habitat stewardship, we hope to bring this unique songbird back from the brink of extinction.

EASTERN LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE RECOVERY PLAN



Hands-on action: Wildlife Preservation Canada coordinates a conservation breeding program for eastern loggerhead shrikes, which is the only program of its kind for a migratory songbird. Each summer, young captive-bred shrikes are released in areas where wild birds are still found, to bolster the existing population. Some of these birds will carry radio tags that will help us figure out where our birds go in the winter, which is still largely unknown for Ontario's population of shrikes.



How you can help: Each spring our field teams scour the landscape to find all the loggerhead shrikes breeding in Ontario. If you spot a shrike, don't forget to look for colour bands, and please let us know either way. Discover other ways that you can help at wildlifepreservation.ca



LIFE HISTORY

Eastern loggerhead shrike
(*Lanius ludovicianus alvarensis*)

Status: Endangered in Canada

Named for its disproportionately large – or “logger” - head, the loggerhead shrike is a medium-sized songbird, slightly smaller than a robin. They are distinctive during the summer, with their hooked beak, thick black mask over the eyes, and bright white wing-patches that can be seen in flight.

Loggerhead shrikes are grassland birds, and are usually found in pastures. Grazing cattle keep grasses and other vegetation nice and short, which is helpful to loggerhead shrikes, which hunt by sight.



Though the loggerhead shrike is a songbird, it is fully predatory. While it mainly eats large insects, it can easily tackle small snakes, mice, voles and even small birds. If it catches something that's too big to eat in one bite, it will impale its catch on large thorns to anchor the prey in place while it rips off bite-size pieces. This behaviour has earned it the nickname “butcher bird.”