

For Immediate Release
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**Lights Out Columbus Monitoring Program
Links Building Lighting and Bird Collisions**

COLUMBUS, OH – Volunteers with the Lights Out Columbus Monitoring Program found 147 dead or injured birds of at least 39 different species that collided with buildings in Columbus during 2012 peak migration periods, according to the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative (OBCI). More dead or injured birds were found at buildings that were taller and more brightly lit than at shorter, darker buildings.

Since March 2012, volunteers for the Lights Out Columbus Monitoring Program have spent over 50 hours collecting data on nighttime lighting and bird collisions during peak bird migration periods (March-June and August-October). The results from the surveys show programs that aim to reduce nighttime lighting on buildings, such as Lights Out Columbus, could reduce the number of migratory birds killed by building collisions.

Many birds migrate at night, and for reasons not fully understood, lights on tall buildings or aimed at the sky can attract them, causing them to strike windows or circle buildings until they fall from exhaustion. Building collisions are a leading cause of bird fatality during migration in North America. It is estimated that 550 million birds die each year from building collisions.

Lights Out Columbus is a campaign to educate building owners, managers and residents about the risks to migrating birds from nighttime lighting and window strikes. Lights Out Columbus participants learn how to safely reduce nighttime lighting to lower risks to migrating birds while also decreasing energy expenditures. Eight buildings are currently enrolled in the campaign and have pledged to seasonally reduce nighttime lighting.

Lights Out Columbus started in August 2012 through a partnership between OBCI and the Grange Insurance Audubon Center. Funding for Lights Out Columbus is provided by the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Fund and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Wildlife. A full list of project partners and participating buildings is available at obcinet.org.

A full report from the 2012 Monitoring Program is available at obcinet.org. To volunteer for the 2013 Lights Out Columbus Monitoring Program, contact LightsOutColumbus@gmail.com.

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