

Why birds hit windows and what you can do about it.

For birds, glass windows are worse than invisible. By reflecting foliage or sky, they look like inviting places to fly into. And because the sheer number of windows is so great, their toll on birds is huge. Up to about 1 billion birds die from window strikes in the U.S. each year.

What happens to birds that hit windows? Sadly, the bird often dies, even when it is only temporarily stunned and manages to fly away. Many times, these birds die later from internal bleeding or bruising, especially on the brain. Daniel Klem of Muhlenberg College has researched this issue since the 1970s. He writes, "Glass is an indiscriminate killer that takes the fit as well as the unfit of a species' population."

There are two main types of window collision: daytime and nighttime. In daylight, birds crash into windows **because they see reflections of vegetation** or see through the glass to potted plants or vegetation on the other side. At night, nocturnal migrants (including most songbirds) crash **because they fly into lighted windows**.

There's one additional reason: birds sometimes see their reflection in a window and attack it. This happens most frequently in the spring when territoriality is high. Although it can be annoying to the homeowner, it's seldom a threat to the bird's survival. Most of the remedies suggested below for window strikes will also help solve the problem of a bird attacking its reflection.

Easy and economical things you can do to prevent bird strikes include the following:

- www.birdsavers.com
- Pa.audubon.org/bird/windows
- ACO.muhlenburg.edu
- www.featherfriendly.com
- [Why Birds Hit Windows—and How You Can Help Prevent It | All About Birds](#) – includes homemade solutions you can create with your children

The Lehigh Gap Nature Center has installed Acopian birdsavers on their visitor center.

Solid Air – Invisible Killer: Saving Billions of Birds from Windows by Daniel Klem, Jr. is an excellent book to learn more about this issue.