

# MEADOWLARK

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## Letter from the editor

*Call your Congressman now!*

Bob Montgomery, our hard-working President, has been talking to you about the Conservation and Restoration Act of 1999 in recent issues of the Meadowlark. He has stressed how important it is for you to voice your opinions to your Congressman.

If you have never contacted Congress via phone call or letter, please make it your New Year's resolution to do it right now. Put down those binoculars, just for a few minutes. Pick up the phone, or a piece of paper, or turn on your computer and just do it. Tell your representative how important it is to support this legislation, not only for the birds, but for saving the habitat that is so crucial to their survival. As John Fitzpatrick said at the Second Annual Bird Conservation Network at Prairie State College in November: "Birds present an accessible heartbeat of natural systems."

Birds teach us about the environment, and indeed about our own health. The declining population of Peregrine Falcons, for example, taught us about the dangers of the chemical DDT.

"Although we bird for great passion and science, birds are not the story," said Fitzpatrick, director of Cornell Lab in New York. "They are the message about the story."

Send your Congressmen the message that we need to protect habitat and our environment. If we do so, we will also be protecting the birds.

*Sheryl DeVore*

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Yellow-billed Loon drawing by Brian K. Willis.

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