Audubon’s science team focused on one of the most powerful tools in the climate mitigation toolkit: the natural ability of ecosystems to store carbon. By keeping more carbon in the ground and capturing it in plants, we can reduce carbon dioxide in our atmosphere.

Researchers looked at forest, grassland, aridland, coastal and freshwater wetland, tundra, and urban and suburban ecosystems. In each, they found significant overlap between important bird habitat and areas of high carbon value.

The bottom line: what’s good for birds is also good for climate change mitigation.

**About Audubon’s Natural Climate Solutions Report**

Urban and suburban green spaces have a role to play in helping birds in the face of climate change. These areas provide resources for migratory and resident bird species and can promote even greater diversity of habitats than unmodified landscapes. While urban and suburban areas can emit more carbon than they sequester, they also have important carbon storage potential. Tree density is lower in urban environments, allowing trees to grow bigger and faster, thus sequestering more carbon per tree as compared to non-urban areas.

- Urban/suburban priority areas overlap with those in other ecosystems, including forests and wetlands, and thus conservation action in these areas has the potential to benefit bird species that depend on a variety of habitat types.
- The majority (> 90%) of priority areas in these environments are on private or unprotected land, highlighting the importance of working with landowners and enacting community-supported programs, like planting native gardens, to support birds and carbon storage.
- Urban/suburban environments provide habitat for several climate vulnerable bird species, including American Goldfinch and Song Sparrow.
- Revitalization of urban green spaces and deployment of natural infrastructure, such as green roofs, will help ensure that urbanized areas serve as valuable habitat for birds while also contributing to climate change mitigation potential, and providing health benefits for people.