



**Testimony regarding Senate Bill 914, An Act Concerning the Application of Pesticides at Municipal Parks.  
Delivered by Tom Andersen, director of communications and community outreach**

Connecticut Audubon Society strongly supports passage of Senate Bill 914, An Act Concerning the Application of Pesticides at Municipal Parks.

As conservationists, we tend to view bugs not as pests but as food for birds and as essential parts of our ecosystem. While we realize there are some legitimate uses for the poisons that kill these bugs, we support a general reduction in their use.

Pesticides limit the amount of food available for birds and poison them indirectly when they eat bugs that have recently ingested pesticides. And as we know from the example of Ospreys and Peregrine Falcons, which came close to extinction because DDT made their shells too brittle to be incubated, pesticides can have drastic indirect affects too.

But this is a timely issue for us in a more specific way. On February 22, we released our 8<sup>th</sup> annual Connecticut State of the

Birds report, *The Seventh Habitat and the Decline of Our Aerial Insectivores*.

In articles by the Connecticut State Ornithologist, wildlife biologists for the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Cornell University, and the conservation staff of Connecticut Audubon, the report details the dramatic population decline of 17 species of birds that nest in Connecticut and eat only insects that they catch on the wing – so-called aerial insectivores.

The population decline has been so drastic that the report states that “unless rates of decline are halted or reversed in a timely way, total population collapse eventually becomes something of a mathematical certainty.”

Much more research needs to be done but the consensus is that pesticide use has played an important role in the decline of these birds. Senate Bill 914 is a small step. But it’s a step in the right direction and we urge its passage.