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Abstracts

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

EFFECTS OF HURRICANE KATRINA ON THE URBAN RESIDENT LANDBIRDS OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

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Abstract. Hurricane landfalls pose a potential threat to coastal landbird populations. The effects of Hurricane Katrina's landfall in August 2005 on the suburban and urban resident landbird community of Greater New Orleans, Louisiana was assessed beginning five weeks after landfall. Compared to numbers tallied during surveys from 1994 to 2000 on 2.2 km of transects, the 10 most numerous bird species all showed strong declines, as did tree squirrels (*Sciurus* spp.). Additional transect surveys at 100 random locations citywide showed the overall bird numbers on the initial 2.2 km to be similar to those in the city overall. Additional surveys conducted in the Lower Ninth Ward, Arabi, and the site of the Murphy Oil spill showed numbers of birds to be extremely low in these especially heavily affected areas. The impact of the oil contamination was difficult to assess, with bird numbers low, but not obviously lower than in uncontaminated areas.

Key words: environmental pollution, hurricane, Hurricane Katrina, *Sciurus* spp., urban ecology, urban bird populations, weather.