

HELPING BIRDS BY: PAYING BILLS ONLINE

Habitat loss is the biggest cause for the decline of bird populations world-wide. Many of the birds that we enjoy during fall and spring migration are on their way to the Canadian boreal forests. Unfortunately this area is being impacted by large-scale habitat destruction, with much of the impact caused by widespread logging to provide us with paper for such everyday activities as paying our bills.

On average each household in America receives 19 bills and statements in the mail every month. This might not sound like a lot until you consider it for the entire country and then it adds up to about 26 **billion** bills and statements each year. To produce and transport all of these bills requires 9,000,000 trees, 755,000,000 pounds of paper and 512,000,000 gallons of gasoline. A lot of this paper-based bill paying has a tremendous negative effect on the birds we love as forests are cleared to provide the necessary paper.

Instead of getting and paying your bills by mail, if you switched to doing it online you could make a difference to our birds. The PayItGreen Alliance, a nonprofit group has been promoting the environmental benefits of online billing and payments

They completed a study that demonstrates the environmental impact that one household could have by switching from paper to online.

- Save 6.6 pounds of paper
- Save 0.08 trees
- Not release 63 gallons of wastewater into the environment
- Save 4.5 gallons of gasoline to mail bills, statements, and payments
- Not produce 171 pounds of greenhouse gases.

Saving this amount of greenhouse gas is the equivalent of:

- The emissions avoided by not driving 169 miles
- The emissions avoided by not consuming 8.8 gallons of gasoline
- Planting 2 tree seedlings and allowing them to grow for 10 years
- Preserving 24 square feet of forest from deforestation

If just two percent of households switched to electronic bills, statements, and payments, it would save more than 15 million pounds of paper and would be like taking 32,572 cars off the road.

If that total rose to 20 percent of U.S. households, it would save 150 million pounds of paper and avoid producing 3.9 billion pounds of greenhouse gas.

Original article can be found at - <http://www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2008/04/payitgreen.html>

The PayItGreen Alliance can be found at <http://www.payitgreen.org/>