



New York City

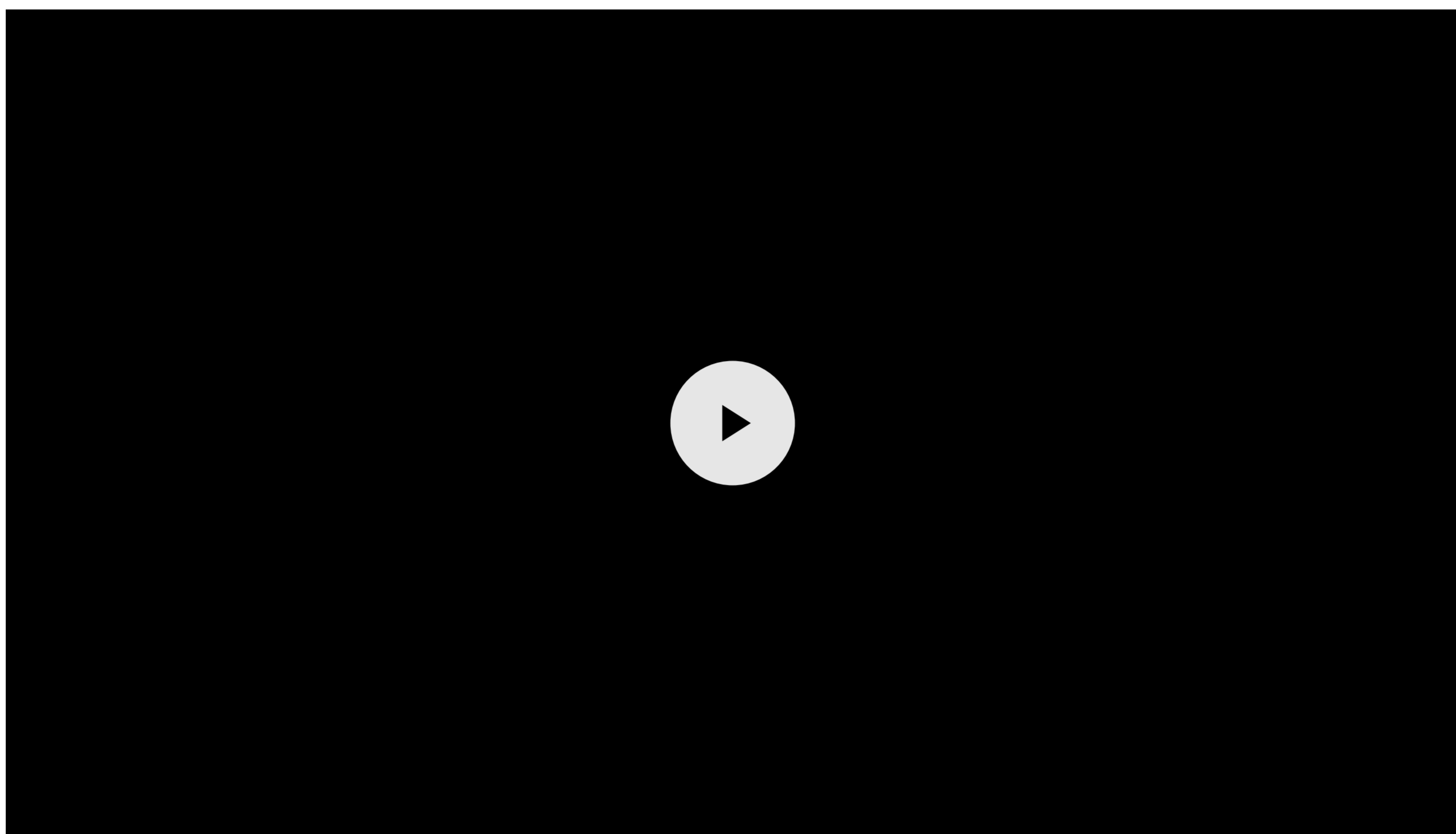
- ✓ News and information that matter to your community.
- ✓ Local Weather forecasts.

[Confirm](#) [Change News Market](#) You can change your news market at any time.

CHARLOTTE > | MARCH 15, 2024 | 7:52PM CT

62° Charlotte, NC [EDIT](#)

WATCH LIVE



BIRD MIGRATION

‘Protect the birds’: How turning off lights can save billions of migrating birds

- f
- t
- e
- s
- g
- +

BY [KYLEIGH PANETTA](#) | RALEIGH
PUBLISHED 9:52 AM ET MAR. 17, 2022

RALEIGH, N.C. – Cities across the country, including right here in North Carolina, are going “lights out.”

Organizations are encouraging people to turn off excess lighting at night starting March 15 in order to help keep migrating birds safe.

What You Need To Know

- The majority of migrating birds fly at night between March 15 and May 31, and September 10 through November 30
- Birds can become disoriented by bright artificial lights and fly into windows or buildings
- Window collisions kill up to one billion birds each year
- The Wake Audubon Society is encouraging people to turn off excess lighting, specifically outdoors, during migration. If you can't turn off your indoor lights, closing blinds or curtains will also help

After four decades of bird watching, Lena Gallitano has learned a thing or two. Gallitano is a volunteer with the [Wake Audubon Society](#) and she’s worried birds will become even harder to find as their homes disappear and are replaced with buildings.

Gallitano says migrating birds face one specific threat, especially at night.

“They see a light, they might see the reflection of a tree and they think they can fly through a window. We know that several billion birds hit built infrastructure and don't survive,” Gallitano said.

In order to protect birds, [Audubon Societies](#) asks people and cities to go “lights out.”

All you have to do is turn off your lights, specifically outdoor lighting, from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. starting March 15. If you can’t turn off your indoor lights, closing your blinds or curtains will also help protect birds during migration.

“Birds migrate based on magnetic direction and all the electronics that we have and all the electricity in cities now is really disrupting those patterns so it's creating a lot of problems for them. The one way that we can help and save money, I might mention, is to turn off lights,” Gallitano said.

Gallitano says there are other little things we can all do in the meantime to protect birds, like picking up litter.

“Lots of birds can get it wrapped around their foot or wing or eat it. I pick up anything I find,” Gallitano said.

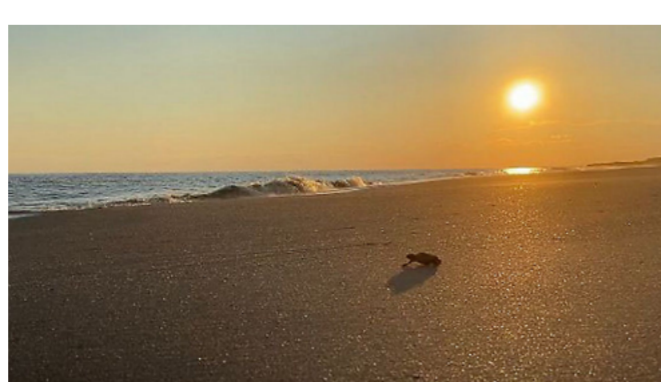
Whether you clean up trash or go lights out, chances are your efforts will multiply exponentially.

“If I can do something to make the world a safer place for birds - air, food, water, habitat for a home. Then if it's good for a bird then it's also good for you and it's also good for me. So let's protect the birds and let's protect the plants and let's protect the environment and it all works together,” Gallitano said.

The lights out initiative during the spring goes through May 31 and Gallitano says the Wake Audubon Society is looking to expand the initiative beyond Raleigh.

Gallitano says [Raleigh](#) was the first city in the state to join the Lights Out initiative. The Audubon Society also promotes a lights out initiative during fall migration from September 10 to November 30.

YOU MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED IN



ENVIRONMENT
Sea turtle with 'rare' appearance among new Cape Hatteras hatchlings

OUTER BANKS | 1 YEAR AGO



WILDLIFE
N.C. beachgoers urged to give seabirds their space during nesting season

COASTAL | 1 YEAR AGO