

# Man, His Birds, and the Vanishing Landscape of the American West

The American West is a land of vast open spaces, towering mountains, and iconic wildlife. It is also a land that is changing rapidly, as human development and resource extraction take their toll on the landscape. One of the most visible and heartbreaking consequences of this change has been the decline of bird populations.



## Falconer on the Edge: A Man, His Birds, and the Vanishing Landscape of the American West

by Rachel Dickinson

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

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Birds are an essential part of the Western ecosystem. They play a vital role in pollination, seed dispersal, and pest control. They are also a source of food and recreation for humans. However, as the West has changed, so too has the habitat for birds. Forests have been cleared, wetlands have been drained, and grasslands have been converted to agriculture. As a result, many bird species have seen their populations decline.

One of the most iconic birds of the American West is the greater sage-grouse. This large, ground-dwelling bird is found in sagebrush steppe habitats throughout the West. However, sagebrush steppe is also a valuable resource for livestock grazing and oil and gas development. As these activities have increased, the sage-grouse has seen its habitat decline by more than 50%. As a result, the greater sage-grouse is now listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

The greater sage-grouse is just one example of the many bird species that are facing challenges in the American West. Other species that have seen their populations decline include the ferruginous hawk, the burrowing owl, and the mountain plover. These birds are all adapted to the unique habitats of the West, and as these habitats disappear, so too do the birds.

The decline of bird populations in the American West is a serious problem. Birds are an important part of the ecosystem, and their loss has a ripple effect on other wildlife and on humans. It is important to take steps to protect the remaining bird habitat in the West and to restore degraded habitats. By doing so, we can help to ensure that future generations can enjoy the beauty and wonder of the American West.

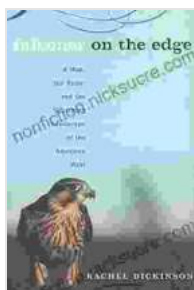
### **What can be done to help?**

There are a number of things that can be done to help protect birds in the American West. Here are a few examples:

- **Conserve habitat.** The most important thing that can be done to help birds is to protect their habitat. This means working to conserve existing bird habitats and to restore degraded habitats.

- **Reduce pesticide use.** Pesticides can be harmful to birds, so it is important to use them only when necessary and to follow the directions for use carefully.
- **Support bird-friendly businesses.** There are a number of businesses that are working to help birds. By supporting these businesses, you can help to make a difference.
- **Get involved in conservation.** There are many organizations that are working to protect birds in the American West. You can get involved by volunteering your time, donating money, or spreading the word about the importance of bird conservation.

By taking these steps, we can help to protect birds and the vanishing landscape of the American West.



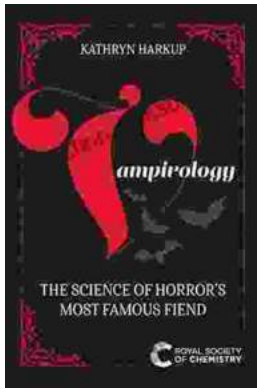
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