

For reading at Dead Duck Day Friday 5 June 2009

My dear friends in The Netherlands,

In celebration of Dead Duck Day I have been asked to offer a brief message about the problem of bird strikes at windows. For over 35 years I have studied avian mortality at windows, and my investigations reveal that birds behave as if clear and reflective panes are invisible to them. Fatal strikes can occur wherever birds and windows co-exist, and based on extensive evidence I claim that this source of human-associated avian mortality is greater than any other, with the exception of habitat destruction; destroy a bird's habitat and you destroy its ability to survive. Certainly, more birds are killed the world over flying into windows than are killed at power lines, wind turbines, pesticides, oil spills and pollution in general, and even from domestic cats. To prevent these unintended and unwanted tragedies, we humans must transform windows into obstacles that birds will see and avoid. The use of ultraviolet (UV) signals to alert birds to the window hazard has recently been shown to be a potentially elegant solution because birds see UV and we humans do not. The June issue of *The Wilson Ornithological Journal* will publish the results of my research over the past four years describing the prevention of bird-window collisions, to include the effectiveness of UV signals and other techniques.

To all who have gathered here at this special celebration to honor the original Dead Duck at the Natural History Museum Rotterdam, I thank you for your interest in this very important conservation issue for birds and people. Please join me not only this day but also hereafter in doing whatever you can to save more bird lives from windows.

All my best always; I am sincerely and respectfully yours,

Dan

(Daniel Klem, Jr., Sarkis Acopian Professor of Ornithology and Conservation Biology, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.)

I would also request that you [...] encourage others to share their bird-window collision records with us. We have for some time been collecting collision records worldwide, and we would greatly appreciate any species records you are able to share from your museum and inform all others of our record keeping and request to document their observations. The link to our website is <http://ACO.muhlenberg.edu>.