

EASTERN MEADOWLARK

STURNELLA MAGNA

Your natural insecticide

Main benefits for agriculture

The eastern meadowlark **feeds mainly on insects that are crop pests**, such as beetles (scarab beetles, June bugs, and flea beetles), crickets, grasshoppers, caterpillars (e.g. European corn borers), larvae, and soil insect pests (white grubs).

According to various studies and observations, a single meadowlark can make a significant contribution to the **regulation of insect pest populations**. For example, some research indicates that they can consume up to 200 insect larvae in a single day.

As eastern meadowlarks forage for food in vegetation and in the soil, they naturally contribute to soil aeration and the decomposition of organic matter, which can **enhance the fertility of farmland**.



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Habitats

- Fallow fields, grasslands, and pastureland
- Nests on the ground and is faithful to its nesting site

Did you know?

Studies have shown **yield increases of up to 10%** in crops where insectivorous birds (such as the meadowlark) are present and active.

What you can do to help the eastern meadowlark

Preserving habitat

Maintain grasslands for at least four to five years before cultivating again to ensure high-quality breeding sites over long periods.

Rotate lands so that grasslands put back into cropland sit next to new or old grasslands.

Install a **flushing bar** on the front of the machinery to scare away any birds nesting on the ground, and **reduce farm machinery speed to 10 km/h**.

The eastern meadowlark nests on the ground! To reduce nest trampling, maintain pastures with **limited livestock density** to ensure a protective cover of at least 30 cm, or **create ungrazed reserves** between May 15 and July 15.

Reduce pesticide use by using integrated pest management methods and promoting soil health, to ensure a source of food.

Reducing mortality

If you spot a nest or meadowlark:

- **Maintain a protective buffer around it** (100 m or so) and avoid approaching the nest before July 15.
- **Delay the first haying** until July 15 to avoid destroying nests (this date may vary from region to region).
- **When cutting hay**, work from the inside of the field outward so that birds can fly away and avoid getting trapped.

References :

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