

The effects of environmental change on birds

Mercury (Hg)

- Highly toxic
- Released into the atmosphere from coal
- In water it may be consumed by fish
- It has also recently been found to affect birds which feed on 1

Research on effects of mercury on birds

- Claire Varian-Ramos is investigating
 - the effects on birds' 2 or mental processes, e.g. memory
 - the effects on bird song (usually learned from a bird's 3)
- Findings:
 - songs learned by birds exposed to mercury are less 4
 - this may have a negative effect on birds' 5
- Lab-based studies:
 - allow more 6 for the experimenter

Implications for humans

- Migrating birds such as 7 containing mercury may be eaten by humans
- Mercury also causes problems in learning 8
- Mercury in a mother's body from 9 may affect the unborn child
- New regulations for mercury emissions will affect everyone's energy 10