# **Letters to the Editors**

# **Guidelines and Template**

Dear Nature Canada Members:

Letters to Editors are an excellent way to encourage and promote discussion of nature topics you are passionate about. A Letter to the Editor can help create awareness about an important issue and help to influence public opinion.

Publishing a Letter to the Editor is not a simple process. Most editors of publications receive up to 300- 500 letter submissions daily.

You can significantly improve your chances of having your letter published by following these guidelines.

**Letters to the Editor Guidelines**

* A timely letter will be more likely to be chosen for publication. It is best to respond within seven days to a particular article or news event that was published by the newspaper.
* Try to make the letter concrete if you are commenting on a national issue, highlight the national significance and try to link it to a recent event or article that discusses the issue.
* If you are responding to a community event or issue, your local (community) newspaper is the best publication to submit your letter to.
* Be concise, try to keep letters to fewer than 150 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.
* Send letters by e-mail and include the contents of the letter in the body of the e-mail message as plain text only. Do not use Microsoft Word format or rich text format (RTF).
* Do not send letters as an attachment.
* Ensure you include your name, address and daytime phone number.

***State of Canada’s Birds* Letter to the Editor**

**Template:**

*Insert the Name of Media Outlet or Publication*

*Attention: Editor*

*Address*

*City, Postal Code*

Dear Editor:

Re: [*State your reason for writing your letter right at the beginning*. *If you are responding to articles or editorials by the media, use the first sentence to reference the title of the article, name of the author or source (e.g., Globe and Mail), and the date it was published*. *Example response to articles or editorial introduction.]*

* In your Aug. 14 article [insert article title], columnist [insert name of reporter/columnist] states [insert main point of article].

[*If you responding to a current issue, state that you are responding to the issue and where the issue is being addressed*. *Example issue introduction.]*

* The *State of North America’s Birds Report 2016*, released by Environment Canada (<http://www.stateofthebirds.org/2016/>) on May 18 reveals that a staggering third of our bird species need urgent conservation action.

*[State your points here. Include facts, references, or research here to establish credibility. Keep length in mind.]*

* Our birds in Canada face a number of threats and pressures such as pollution, pesticides, illegal hunting, collisions with human-built structures and vehicles, climate change, and domestic and feral cats.
* These factors, together with threats in wintering grounds and along migration routes, have a cumulative impact on migratory bird populations.
* This is why we need to work together to conserve our bird populations.

[*Include a call to action, asking readers to follow up with some activity, such as joining in calling on policymakers to address the issue.]*

* Be a Citizen Scientist: Many projects need support gathering data on birds and their habitat.
* You can contribute just by watching your bird feeder and enter your observations on eBird.
* Visit an Important Bird Area and get to understand the many different habitats that support birds.
* Contact your local naturalist group, Nature Canada, or support groups that protect birds by volunteering your time for a project that suits you – or make a donation.
* Why not participate in a Birdathon or join birders in a bird count that supports birds and our understanding of bird populations?

[*End with a strong, positive statement in support of your case*]

* We need to work together to ensure our birds do not suffer steeper declines.
* Help keep common birds common and endangered birds protected!
* Please visit Nature Canada’s website to find out how you can help!

Sincerely,

Signature

Name of Writer