BIRD FRIENDLY APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION

Scoring and Evaluation Rubric Version 2.1 July, 2025 for Small Municipality



CITY REPRESENTED:

DATE OF SUBMISSION:

BIRD FRIENDLY CITY

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT EXERCISE OF POWERS IN RELATION TO THE STANDARD

To apply for Bird Friendly status for small municipalities, the municipality must have a small population (roughly less than 15,000 residents) or a very dispersed population that contains multiple villages or small towns. Municipalities with populations up to 30,000 may apply for certification under this standard, or may apply for the Bird Friendly City Canada Standard. The standard for small municipalities is different from the "Bird Friendly City Canada Standard" mainly to reflect the reality that small municipalities have less capacity, and often, different circumstances than larger and more densely populated cities.

The applicant municipality must have its own elected Council with typical municipal powers that it can exercise alone or in tandem with an upper tier municipality (e.g. a County or a Region). If a lower level municipality applies but does not have powers to implement some of the criteria, those criteria could be addressed by the upper level municipal government through its own policies. For the criteria where you believe this is the case, it is the responsibility of the applying bird team to explain what level of government is responsible for the policy and how the local municipality is implementing it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mandatory Criteria	1
Optional Criteria	
Section 1: Threat Reduction	10
Section 2: Habitat Protection, Restoration, and Climate Resiliency_	26
Section 3: Community Outreach/Education	37

M-1 – ESTABLISHMENT OF BIRD TEAM

DESCRIPTION

Establish a Bird Team to drive the project forward. Ensure that your team is as diverse as possible and has a liaison with the municipality (municipal staff or a councillor).

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide a list of the Bird Team members, affiliations and contact information

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?

M-2: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, LAND AND INCLUSION

DESCRIPTION

We recognize that all of Canada is still within the traditional territory or unceded territory of Indigenous Peoples. Through respect of this fact, and the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples, an Indigenous perspective should be included in this program if possible. We encourage prospective applicant bird teams to seek this perspective. Bird teams must identify the Indigenous traditional territory/territories of the municipality and invite someone from these communities to participate in the initiative.

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide evidence you have determined in which Indigenous traditional territory/territories your municipality occurs and that you are encouraging the participation and perspective of the local Indigenous community in the initiative.

Provide the name of the relevant Indigenous Nation(s) and report on the outcome of an invitation to participate in the initiative. In some cases, this may require the support of Nature Canada to coordinate contacting Indigenous communities.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?	
Confirmed by Scoring Committee as having met Standard?	

M-3: FORMAL MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

DESCRIPTION

Pass a Council resolution nominating or supporting your municipality's efforts to be a Bird Friendly Municipality. A resolution from Council ensures that the project is known and has been discussed at Council level and has Council's support.

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide a copy of the resolution.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?

M-4: ANNUAL REPORT

DESCRIPTION

Once your municipality has been accorded Bird Friendly status, the Bird Team must provide an Annual Report card on activities related to your Bird Friendly status. Download Report cards from the Bird Friendly City website or request from Nature Canada staff

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide an Annual Report card by your municipality's one-year certification anniversary.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?

M-5: RENEWAL OF STATUS

DESCRIPTION

Bird Friendly Town Certification status will last three years, after which you must reapply. Each application can use and build-on past applications, but must show some evidence of progress over time. No evidence of progress will result in rejecting the application or dropping a certification level.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

SCORING INDICATORS

Applications for renewal are due by the September or February application window that follows the three year anniversary of their most recent application's acceptance and their recognition as a Bird Friendly Town.

Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?

M-6: WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

DESCRIPTION

Hold an event celebrating World Migratory Bird Day in your community. An event can be as simple or elaborate as you wish. For ideas and options, visit Nature Canada's World Migratory Bird webpage https://www.birdday. ca/

SCORING INDICATORS

Register your event on the World Migratory Bird Day Canada webpage https://www.birdday. ca/host

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?

M-7: PROGRAM VISIBILITY

DESCRIPTION

Include information about Bird Friendly City
Program on the municipal website once
certification has been accorded

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide a link and proof of posting.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?

OPTIONAL CRITERIA

While the criteria below are optional, to achieve Bird Friendly status, a certain number of points must be obtained in each category of criteria. The level that an applicant is awarded is equivalent to the lowest level achieved in each of the three categories of criteria below.

SECTION 1: THREAT REDUCTION

SECTION 2: HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

Generally all of the points are awarded contingent on evidence in support of the action. However, points can be rewarded even if the action has not been completed, as long as there is strong evidence that a process to implement or complete the action is underway.

To obtain Bird Friendly status, a certain number of points must be obtained in each category of criteria. The level that an applicant is awarded is equivalent to the lowest level achieved in each of the three categories of criteria (threat reduction, habitat protection, restoration and climate resilience, and community outreach/education). Many of the criteria include evidence of a policy and evidence of implementation of the policy. Remember that the policy requirement can be met by a higher level of government than the municipality or village, but often implementation is the responsibility of the municipality.

Another important consideration is that in many cases, actions to meet a criterion are community-based (not government). It is a good exercise for Bird Teams during the application process to identify those actions that can be implemented by community members and those that require implementation by the municipality or some other level of government.

SECTION 1: THREAT REDUCTION

1.1 (A) CAT PREDATION OF BIRDS

DESCRIPTION

Regulatory and educational measures taken to help control and reduce populations of cats roaming at large:

a. No roam bylaw

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for evidence supporting each subcategory. Subcriteria d. can be fulfilled by a survey of residents.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.1 (B) CAT PREDATION OF BIRDS

DESCRIPTION

Coordinated non-regulatory efforts directed at cat owners to keep their cats from roaming at large such as educational campaigns

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for evidence supporting each subcategory. Subcriteria d. can be fulfilled by a survey of residents.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.1 (C) CAT PREDATION OF BIRDS

DESCRIPTION

An active strategy to reduce populations of unowned (feral) cats such as spay/neuter/re-home programs, or initiatives to deter pet abandonment

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for evidence supporting each subcategory. Subcriteria d. can be fulfilled by a survey of residents.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.1 (D) CAT PREDATION OF BIRDS

DESCRIPTION

The Bird Team and/or municipality is able to track numbers of outdoor cats in their community so that progress on reducing the populations of outdoor cats can be tracked over time.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for evidence supporting each subcategory. Subcriteria d. can be fulfilled by a survey of residents.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.2 (A) WINDOW COLLISIONS

DESCRIPTION

Demonstrate that your municipality is taking measures to reduce window collisions by:

A) Treating windows of municipal buildings to mitigate collisions of birds

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for proof that it is mitigating window collision danger in their own buildings.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.2 (B) WINDOW COLLISIONS

DESCRIPTION

Promoting and encouraging mitigation of threat from windows to birds in private buildings (including houses).

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for evidence that private residents are mitigating window collisions (treating their windows) and that there are efforts to increase the number of households treating their windows.

1.3 (A) LIGHT POLLUTION

DESCRIPTION

Within the municipality, there is a policy/ bylaw, or active plans to reduce light pollution and there is evidence within the municipality or village of compliance, such as an active retrofit program for street lamps or sporting facilities (e.g. ball diamonds or tennis courts), or reducing light pollution from private sources through regulation;

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for proof of policy and implementation that includes the municipality (can be higher level, i.e. county or region-wide such as dark sky zone) and one point for evidence of educational and outreach campaigns aimed at the local residents (e.g. Dark Sky initiative).

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.3 (B) LIGHT POLLUTION

DESCRIPTION

Outreach/ educational campaign to reduce light pollution during periods of migration.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for proof of policy and implementation that includes the municipality (can be higher level, i.e. county or region-wide such as dark sky zone) and one point for evidence of educational and outreach campaigns aimed at the local residents (e.g. Dark Sky initiative).

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.4 (A) PESTICIDE USE

DESCRIPTION

Municipality has policies/ bylaws to reduce or eliminate pesticide use that directly or indirectly harms birds on public and/or private lands. Points are awarded for:

Restrictions on herbicides for cosmetic purposes (e.g. broad-leafed plant control in yards);

SCORING INDICATORS

Proof of the policies and implementation is provided. One point for ban on cosmetic pesticide/ herbicide use, one point for ban on Bti and/or neonics, and one point for evidence of strong organic/ ecological farm presence near the municipality.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.4 (B) PESTICIDE USE

DESCRIPTION

Pesticides to control insect populations that are important food sources for birds (neonics and Bti):

SCORING INDICATORS

Proof of the policies and implementation is provided. One point for ban on cosmetic pesticide/ herbicide use, one point for ban on Bti and/or neonics, and one point for evidence of strong organic/ ecological farm presence near the municipality.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.4 (C) PESTICIDE USE

DESCRIPTION

Presence of strong organic/ ecological habitat management practices in the community.

SCORING INDICATORS

Proof of the policies and implementation is provided. One point for ban on cosmetic pesticide/ herbicide use, one point for ban on Bti and/or neonics, and one point for evidence of strong organic/ ecological farm presence near the municipality.

.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.5 PLASTICS

DESCRIPTION

There are actions to reduce and remove plastic pollution within the local ecosystems, led within the community.

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide evidence of community actions to reduce and remove plastic pollution from the local ecosystems such as shoreline cleanups.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.6 VEHICLES

DESCRIPTION

Measures in place to reduce bird collisions or disturbance associated with terrestrial and aquatic vehicles (including from the wake of boat traffic, agricultural machinery, and recreational vehicles on nesting beaches). For example, posted lower speed limits, signage to encourage vehicles to slow down, and educational campaigns.

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of measures to protect birds and other wildlife from vehicle collisions, and related damage or disturbance

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

1.7 HABITAT DISTURBANCE

DESCRIPTION

Municipality recognizes and encourages practices that mitigate disturbance from human activities in areas surrounding the municipality, for example, adjusting hay harvest timing to protect nesting grassland birds, keeping public off beaches during moments of shorebird migration, removing abandoned fishing gear from nearby fishing grounds, or limiting the running of dogs off leash in natural areas.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for evidence of successful efforts to protect birds and bird habitat from the types of disturbances explained.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

SCORING



7 points from at least 3 categories.

INTERMEDIATE

9 points from at least 4 categories including at least 1 categories worth 2 or more.

HIGH

11 points or more from at least 5 categories. Must include points in each of first four categories

SECTION 2: HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

2.1 PROTECTING NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY AND ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

DESCRIPTION

There are government policies and/ or plans to protect nature and/ or biodiversity and also to address climate change within the territory (either local or regional level). In the policy to protect nature, the expansion of natural areas, or protection, maintenance and restoration of regional biodiversity must be explicitly stated as a goal. An example of such a policy at the county level is Environmentally Sensitive Areas. The climate change policy must include specific measures for mitigation or adaptation including nature-based climate solutions. An example for climate mitigation and adaptation is riparian restoration and wetland expansion.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for protected areas and biodiversity policy or plan and one point for climate change policy or plan. 1 point for evidence of implementation at the local level. Note that these policies may be at a higher level of government than your municipality. However, to score points, you must provide proof policy with the higher-level municipality, and proof of implementation within your own community.

One point is deducted upon evidence for large scale current or very recent (within one year) activities that damage biodiversity such as loss or degradation of important habitat for wildlife, contamination of wildlife habitat by toxic chemicals, or building of energy or communications infrastructure on or near (within 1 km) important areas and habitats for birds

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

2.2 (A) HABITAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

DESCRIPTION

Municipality has a habitat management strategy based on ecological and climate considerations.

These include:

a. increasing the number of trees and area of the urban forest canopy;

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of implementation of each action. One point per action. Note that these policies could occur at the Regional level but often require implementation at local level.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

2.2 (B) MUNICIPAL LANDS

DESCRIPTION

Protecting trees on public and private lands through tree bylaw that protects trees as a public value from private land owners cutting them down without permits

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of implementation of each action. One point per action. Note that these policies could occur at the Regional level but often require implementation at local level.

2.2 (C) HABITAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

DESCRIPTION

Prohibiting active vegetation management on municipal lands during breeding season

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of implementation of each action.
One point per action. Note that these policies
could occur at the Regional level but often require
implementation at local level.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

2.2 (D) HABITAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

DESCRIPTION

Protecting and enhancing naturalized buffers for watercourses, such as streams, rivers, canals and municipal drains, and shorelines, to prevent water contamination, reduce erosion and provide and protect habitat, including corridors linking natural areas, natural beaches, etc

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of implementation of each action. One point per action. Note that these policies could occur at the Regional level but often require implementation at local level.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

2.3 IMPORTANT BIRD AREA NEARBY

DESCRIPTION

There is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) within or adjacent to the municipality. A local partnership promotes the protection and stewardship of this area. The local community is involved in stewardship or promotion of the IBA.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

SCORING INDICATORS

A point if there is a nearby IBA (the area must be a registered IBA on the IBA Canada database – IBACanada.com) and if the local community is involved in the stewardship or promotion of the area (e.g. ecotourism). Note that in the case of a village or small municipality, this criteria can be satisfied if there is an IBA within the county or region, within 20 km of the municipality, and if there is digital information on the IBA on the municipal website.

2.4 PROMOTING LOCAL NATIVE FLORA ON PUBLIC LANDS

DESCRIPTION

Municipality has a demonstration garden/ habitat on municipal lands, with local native plants to attract birds and insects, which offers residents a good example of beneficial practices for wildlife for their own properties

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide evidence of a demonstration project on municipal lands. A pollinator garden, or wildlife garden are example demonstrations

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

2.5 PROMOTING LOCAL NATIVE FLORA ON PRIVATE LANDS

DESCRIPTION

Demonstrate widespread community participation in initiatives to encourage native plant habitats that support native birds on private property, such as sustainable, environmentally friendly farming, establishment of pollinator habitat, wetland restoration, etc.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

SCORING INDICATORS

One point if you provide evidence supporting "wide-spread community participation" in at least one national or international initiative or local program that encourages increasing wildlife habitat on private land. For example, Bee City recognition, ALUS projects, and Monarch City certification would all qualify. Need to demonstrate that the initiatives show engagement by multiple households or businesses.

HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

2.6 STEWARDSHIP FOR SPECIES OF HIGH CONSERVATION CONCERN

DESCRIPTION

Within the municipality, there are projects to increase or improve breeding or stopover habitat for bird species that are of high conservation priority from your Bird Conservation Region Plan. Example species include Species at Risk (e.g. Chimney Swift and Barn Swallow) aerial insectivores, open-country and grassland birds such as Meadowlarks and Tree Swallows, and shorebirds. Example actions: providing housing (e.g., maintained Purple Martin condos or tree swallow nest boxes), or maintaining bird-friendly hay production and managing forests to promote old growth conditions.

SCORING INDICATORS

A point if there are active stewardship recovery projects (can be led by individuals or groups in the community) such as those suggested in the criterion description. Two points if there are more than two active projects for different species or groups of species. For information on Bird Conservation Regions and their priority species, visit: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-bird-conservation/regions-strategies.html

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

SCORING

ENTRY

Entry - 6 points from at least 3 categories

INTERMEDIATE

Intermediate - 8 points from at least 4 categories

HIGH

10 points from at least 5 categories including at least 2 points from both categories 2.1 and 2.2 and 2.6.

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY OUTREACH/EDUCATION

3.1 CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION

DESCRIPTION

A significant percentage of local schools and other educational organizations (e.g. Scouts Canada, Earth Rangers, 4-H) provide students with opportunities to connect with nature, enjoy birds and learn how to help them. Local school boards, conservation authority, or municipality, has facilities/staffing to support outdoor/environmental education, including opportunities to observe birds. At least one school does a specific bird-related program such as Christmas bird count for kids, School Yard Bird Blitz, Global Bird Rescue, or curriculum from Keep cats safe and save bird lives. Educational programs must include specific elements designed to engage children and youth who could be considered underprivileged, racialized or recent arrivals to Canada.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for proof of the programs. A second point if there is evidence of widespread involvement such as proof of membership / participation numbers for programs. A third point if there is evidence provided of efforts to engage with children or youth who are underprivileged, racialized or recent arrivals to Canada.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

3.2 COMMUNICATING BEST PRACTICES TO HELP BIRDS

DESCRIPTION

Municipality (and/or Bird Friendly City partners if appropriate) promotes and has information available to its residents and visitors linked with Bird Friendly City Program about ways to help birds. Examples: establishment of natural habitat on their property, feeder maintenance, and mitigation of threats to birds.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point if you can provide evidence of the digital or paper resources, as well as evidence of public interest and knowledge of them (e.g. social media activity).

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

3.3 DEMONSTRATIONS OF BIRD FRIENDLY ACTIONS.

DESCRIPTION

Municipality (and/or Bird Friendly City partners if appropriate) install displays (e.g. information panels) in public areas that include information on birds in the community and the benefits of bird friendly actions. This is done to encourage local residents to do things to help birds

SCORING INDICATORS

One point based on proof of installations (e.g. photographic evidence, or news stories)

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

3.4 NEARBY ACCESSIBLE BIRDING LOCATION

DESCRIPTION

There is at least one birding location near your village or municipality that has infrastructure to facilitate the observation and appreciation of birds (e.g. signs, panels, observation tower, and trails). Information on birding area, or birding trail and how to access it should be easily available digitally on partner websites and/or in printed materials.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point based on evidence of a local birding area that is publicly accessible, a brief description of the infrastructures (e.g. trails, observation tower), and how the area can be accessed. Note that links to general descriptions of a public park, that do not include information about birds, will not be given a point.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

3.5 BIRD FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

DESCRIPTION

For your municipality, one or more business promotes and adopts bird friendly practices (e.g. sell or offer bird friendly coffee, sell window treatment film, sell products that promote or support birding, demonstrate bird friendly practices, etc.). In the case of a village without a store, partner websites/ landing pages recognize or include links to bird-friendly products.

SCORING INDICATORS

One point for proof of businesses in your area with bird friendly practices or proof of information on your website for Bird Friendly products. This could be the Municipality's website or that of other partners on the Bird Team.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

3.6 TOWN BIRD

DESCRIPTION

You have a "Town Bird" species that was selected through a public engagement process and which is recognized by the municipal council.

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide the name of the "Town Bird" species, proof that it was officially adopted or recognized by Council and evidence of the process to select it.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

3.7 PARTICIPATORY SCIENCE TO MONITOR BIRDS

DESCRIPTION

There are active participatory science programs to monitor birds in your municipality such as Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, Project Feederwatch, Marsh Monitoring, Swiftwatch, or Global Bird Rescue. Public participation in these programs is promoted on local media or social media.

SCORING INDICATORS

Provide a list of bird-related participatory science programs that operate in your municipality, and evidence of efforts to engage community members in these programs. Evidence of widespread engagement in multiple projects receives 2 points.

HOW CRITERIA IS MET

SCORING

ALL	LEV	ELS	MUST	DO	3.1
------------	------------	------------	-------------	----	-----

ENTRY

5 points from at least 3 categories

INTERMEDIATE

Intermediate - 7 points from at least 5 categories.

HIGH

High – 9 points from at least 7 categories.

Points Awarded (for completion by Nature Canada)

GRAND TOTAL

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 36

STATUS ACHIEVED EQUALS THE LOWEST LEVEL OF ALL THREE SCORED CATEGORIES.

I.E. IF A MUNICIPALITY SCORES 8 IN CATEGORY 1, 12 IN CATEGORY 2 AND 10 IN CATEGORY 3, THEY WOULD ACHIEVE ENTRY-LEVEL CERTIFICATION BASED ON THE SCORE OF 8 IN CATEGORY 1.

BIRD FRIENDLY TEAM LIST OF MEMBERS, AFFILIATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION (M-1)

CURRENT AS OF:

