

Bird Friendly City

Bird Friendly City Standard for small municipalities

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). The standard for small municipalities is different from the “Bird Friendly City Standard” mainly to reflect the reality that small municipalities have less capacity, and often different circumstances than larger and more densely populated cities. Generally, municipalities that can apply for the “small municipality” status can be classified as villages, towns and counties, but can also include small cities with small populations.

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 if required to attain Bird Friendly status. In many cases, while the upper tier municipality may determine policies, the lower tier municipality has the ability to apply them. So while the upper level municipality maintains the power, the lower tier influences and implements. In 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.

Also, note that the point system is different from the Bird Friendly City Standard and that the wording for most of the criteria is also different.

Criteria	Description	Indicators/evidence	Scoring and comments
Mandatory	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.	Provide a list of the Bird Team members, affiliations and contact information. (Liaison could be municipal staff or a councillor).	
Mandatory	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 as is possible. Bird teams must identify the Indigenous traditional territory(ies) of the municipality and invite it/them to participate in the initiative.	Provide evidence you have determined in which Indigenous traditional territory (ies) 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 or, in Quebec, Quebec Oiseaux to coordinate contacting Indigenous communities.	
Mandatory	Pass a Council resolution nominating or supporting your municipality's efforts to be a Bird Friendly Municipality.	This is a requirement. A resolution from Council ensures that the project is known and has been discussed at Council level and has Council's support.	
Mandatory	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.	For municipalities certified during the February or May period, provide an Annual Report card by February 1 the calendar year after your municipality was certified. Download report card from Bird Friendly city website. For municipalities certified in November, report on February 1, 15 months after your municipality was certified.	
Mandatory	Include information about Bird Friendly City Program on the municipal website once certification has been accorded	Provide a link and proof of posting. Note that this is not required before certification is awarded	
Mandatory	Hold an event celebrating World Migratory Bird Day (also in Category 3 of Standard)	See Category 3:1. A World Migratory Bird Day event can be as simple or as elaborate as you want. Visit Nature Canada's bird Day website to learn about options. https://www.birdday.ca/host	
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	Generally, points are awarded contingent on evidence in support of the action. However, points can be awarded even if the action has not been completed, as long as there is strong evidence that a	Maximum points

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	is equivalent to the lowest level achieved in each of the three categories of criteria below.	<p>process to implement or complete the action is underway.</p> <p>Many of the criteria include evidence of a policy (usually that of some level of government), 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.</p> <p>Another important consideration is that in many cases, actions to meet a criteria 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.</p>	
1.1 Threat Reduction	Regulatory and educational measures taken to help control and reduce populations of cats roaming at large: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. No roam bylaw b. Coordinated non-regulatory efforts directed at cat owners to keep their cats from roaming at large such as educational campaigns c. Within the applicant municipality (or county/region) there is an active strategy to reduce populations of unowned (feral) cats such as spay/neuter and rehome programs d. 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. (1-4) points) 	One point for evidence of supporting each subcategory. Subcriteria d. can be fulfilled by a survey of residents.	4 points One point for each category of action.
1.2 Threat Reduction	Demonstrate that your municipality is taking measures to reduce window collisions by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Treating windows of municipal buildings to mitigate collisions of birds b. Promoting and encouraging mitigation of windows in private buildings (including houses). (1-2 points) 	<p>A. One point is awarded if the municipality provides proof that it is mitigating window collision danger in their own buildings.</p> <p>B. 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.</p>	2 points
1.3 Threat Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 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 b. Outreach/ educational campaign to reduce light pollution during periods of migration. (1 point) 	One point for proof of policy that includes the municipality (can be higher level like county or region-wide such as dark sky zone) or evidence of an educational and outreach campaigns aimed at the local residents.	1 point
1.4 Threat Reduction	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-leaved plant control in yards), pesticides to control insect	<p>Proof of the policies and implementation is provided.</p> <p>1 point for ban on cosmetic pesticide/ herbicide, 1 point for ban on Bti and/or neonics, and 1 point for evidence of strong organic/ ecological farm presence near the municipality.</p>	3 points

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	populations that are important food sources for birds (neonics and Bti) and presence of strong organic/ ecological habitat management practices in the community (1-3 points).		
1.5 Threat Reduction	There are actions to remove plastic pollution within the local ecosystems led within the community. (1 point)	Evidence of community actions to reduce and remove plastic pollution from the local ecosystems such as shoreline cleanups.	1 point
1.6 Threat Reduction	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). (1 point)	Provide proof of measures to protect birds and other wildlife from vehicle collisions, and related damage or disturbance such as posted lower speed limits, signage to encourage vehicles to slow down, and educational campaigns.	1 point
1.7	Municipality recognizes and encourages practices that mitigate disturbance to birds 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.	To receive a point for this criterion, an applicant must provide evidence of successful efforts to protect birds and bird habitat from the types of disturbances explained.	1 point
Scoring		Entry – 7 points from at least 3 categories Intermediate – 9 points from at least 4 categories including at least 1 category worth 2 or more. High – 11 points or more from at least 5 categories. Must include at least 2 points in categories 1.1 and 1.4.	13 points
2.1 Habitat Protection, Restoration, and Climate Resiliency	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. (1-3 points)	1 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.	3 points
2.2 Habitat Protection, Restoration, and Climate Resiliency	Regional or local habitat management strategies exist based on ecological and climate considerations. One point for each that is applied in your municipality. These include: a. Proof of strategic expansion or maintenance of canopy cover in community that incorporate bird habitat needs; b. protecting trees on private through tree bylaw; c. prohibiting active vegetation management during breeding season; d. protecting and enhancing naturalized buffers for watercourses, such as streams, rivers, canals and	Note that these policies could occur at the Regional level but often require implementation at local level. Provide proof of implementation of each action. One point per action. Evidence for a. proof of canopy cover and evidence of policy to expand or maintain cover through use of native, regionally-appropriate trees. For b. proof of a tree bylaw that protects trees as a public value from private land owners cutting them down without permits. For c. demonstrate that municipal employees take measures to avoid breeding birds during habitat maintenance or management during the breeding season.	4 points

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	municipal drains, and shorelines, to prevent water contamination, reduce erosion and provide and protect habitat, including corridors linking natural areas, natural beaches, etc. (1-4 points)	D. refers to peripheral lands, such as rural areas associated with the municipality, or coastline, where there is evidence of efforts to protect watercourses and coastal zones, and restore their quality and function.	
2.3 Habitat Protection, Restoration, and Climate Resiliency	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. (1 point)	A point is awarded if there is a nearby IBA 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.	1 point
2.4 Habitat Protection, Restoration, and Climate Resiliency	Municipality has a demonstration garden/ habitat to attract birds and insects, which is an example for residents for their own properties. (1 point)	Evidence of a demonstration project is provided. A pollinator garden, or wildlife garden are example projects.	1 point
2.5 Habitat Protection, Restoration, and Climate Resiliency	Demonstrate widespread community participation (private property, schools, etc) in initiatives to encourage native plant habitat that support native birds on private property, such as sustainable, environmentally friendly farming, establishment of pollinator habitat, wetland restoration, etc. (1 point)	One point if you provide evidence supporting “widespread 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.	1 point
2.6 Habitat Protection, Restoration, and Climate Resiliency	Within the municipality, there are projects to increase or improve breeding or stopover habitat for bird conservation priority species 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. (1 point)	A point is awarded 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. 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	1 points
Scoring		Entry - 5 points from at least 3 categories Intermediate - 7 points from at least 4 categories High - 9 points from at least 5 categories including at least 2 points from both categories 2.1 and 2.2.	11 points
3.1 Community Outreach/ Education	Hold a World Migratory Bird Day event annually to celebrate birds in your municipality. (2 points)	This is a mandatory action for this program. Cities must hold a Bird Day event to apply. Must provide proof of the event and municipal support and promotion. See https://www.birdday.ca/ for ideas.	2 points
3.2 Community Outreach/ Education	Education programs to engage children and youth and help them learn about birds are present in the municipality. Adults in the community offer children and youth opportunities to learn about and enjoy birds. (1-2 points)	One point is awarded if the presence of programs is provided. A second point is provided if there is evidence of widespread involvement such as proof of membership / participation numbers for programs.	2 points

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3.3 Community Outreach/ Education	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. (1 point)	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).	1 point
3.4 Community Outreach/ Education	Municipality (and/or Bird Friendly City partners if appropriate) install displays (e.g. information panel) 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. (1 point)	One point based on proof of installations (e.g. photographic evidence, or news stories.)	1 point
3.5 Community Outreach/ Education	There is at least one birding location near your village or municipality, or within your county that has infrastructure to facilitate the observation and appreciation of birds (e.g. signs, panels, observation tower, and trails). Digital information on birding area, or birding trail and how to access it should be easily available digitally on partner websites (1 point)	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.	1 point
3.6 Community Outreach/ Education	There are resources within your municipality to help residents or visitors to appreciate, enjoy and observe birds in your community such as lists, expert bird guides, clubs, etc. These resources are easily accessible. (1 point)	One point based on proof provided about resources.	1 point
3.7 Community Outreach/ Education	For your municipality, there is one or more businesses that promote and adopt 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. (1 point)	To receive a point, you must provide 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.	1 point
3.8 Community Outreach/ Education	You have a "City Bird" species that was selected through a public engagement process. (1 point)	To receive a point for this criterion, you must provide the name of the "City Bird" species, proof of its status, and evidence of the process to select it.	1 point
3.9 Community Outreach/ Education	There are active community science programs to monitor birds in your municipality such as Christmas Bird Count, Project Feederwatch, Marsh Monitoring, Bird day or Global Bird Rescue. Public participation in these programs is promoted on local media or social media. (1-2 points)	To receive one point, provide a list of bird-related community science programs that operate in or near your area. These programs are promoted. Evidence of widespread engagement in multiple projects receives 2 points.	2 point
Scoring		All levels must do 3.1 Entry - 6 points from at least 3 categories Intermediate - 8 points from at least 5 categories. High – 10 points from at least 6 categories.	12 points
Grand total		Minimum scores to attain different levels Entry 18 (50%) Intermediate 24 (67%) High 30 (83%)	Total possible points = 36