

A letter from over 95 organizations and teams urging federal support and continued investment in protecting urban biodiversity through the Bird Friendly City Certification Program.

February 10, 2026

The Honourable Julie Dabrusin
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
1028 Queen street East,
Toronto, Ontario

The Honourable Nathalie Provost
Secretary of State (Nature)
104-245 Boulevard Saint Jean Baptiste,
Châteauguay, Quebec

Dear Ministers Dabrusin and Secretary of State Provost,

Re: With your help we can Save Bird Lives

We, the undersigned Bird Teams from across Canada, are writing to thank you for your past support of the Bird Friendly Cities Certification Program led by Nature Canada and to urge you to ensure the program's continued funding.

Bird Teams are local coalitions of community members, nature clubs, schools, businesses, and municipal leaders who work together to make our communities safer and healthier for both birds and people. With a vital investment from Environment and Climate Change Canada, we have been able to turn concern for declining bird populations into concrete local action that helps save bird lives.

Across Canada, this program is thriving. It empowers communities to collaborate with other civil society groups and municipal leaders to protect, defend, and restore bird populations. In just five years, **37 municipalities have been certified as Bird Friendly Cities or Towns**, with more than **70 Bird Teams** actively working on actions to make their municipalities more bird friendly. These Certified Bird Friendly municipalities are home to 9.9 million Canadians, representing nearly one third of Canada's national metropolitan population. In the past year alone, new communities such as Camrose, Gatineau, Sarnia, Cornwall, Kitchener, Uxbridge, Dorval, and Saint-Laurent have joined the roster, while many others renewed at higher certification levels such as Calgary, Burlington and Halifax.



The impacts are tangible:

- 466 organizations have collaborated on Bird Friendly Cities Certifications.
- Hundreds of thousands of Canadians including youth and marginalized individuals engaged through 297 World Migratory Bird Day celebrations each Spring and Fall.
- 79 volunteer-led Bird Teams helped inspire policy changes that directly reduce preventable bird deaths from window collisions, habitat loss, pesticide use, and free-roaming cats.
- 51 local conservation and habitat projects were launched, from retrofitting public libraries to prevent collisions, to restoring wetlands, to educating cat owners about safe practices.
- 40+ official “City Bird” designations to represent their community with more than 200,500 combined votes cast across Canada.
- 26 municipalities passed motions or new by-laws in support of bird-friendly design, dark-sky lighting, biodiversity protection, or no-roam cat policies.

We see firsthand how this program builds pride, momentum, and a sense of shared purpose. As one of our colleagues in Bird Friendly Sarnia put it:

“Being designated as a Bird Friendly City is a badge of honour that boosts our local pride and opens new doors for our community and economy.”

This is conservation that works. Our Bird Friendly City criteria is based on best scientific practices to protect birds. The program engages a variety of community members and explicitly seeks input from local Indigenous communities, all while measuring progress and robust implementation through time. The Bird Friendly City Program is volunteer-powered, and it directly supports Canada’s domestic laws including the Migratory Bird Convention Act and the Species at Risk Act, while addressing Canada’s commitments in the Convention on Biological Diversity to “halt and reverse biodiversity loss through meaningful actions that reduce human impacts and recover bird populations”. With nearly one quarter fewer birds in North America today than 50 years ago, there is no time to lose.

But progress depends on sustained federal partnership. Without continued funding, many of our local teams will lose the backbone of support that allows us to succeed: from expert guidance to small grants, from national coordination to municipal recognition.

The Canadian Government has already helped build something remarkable: a continually growing national movement of diverse communities working together to make their towns and cities places where both people and birds can thrive.

We urge you to continue this investment so that the Bird Friendly Cities Certification Program can expand its reach, deepen its impact, and help Canada meet its biodiversity goals.

We thank you for your leadership and look forward to continuing this partnership.

Respectfully,



SIGNATORIES

A Bird Friendly London

Edmonton River Valley Conservation

Coalition (ERVCC)

Ecology Ottawa

Lennox & Addington Stewardship Council

Friends of Ojibway Prairie

Nature Alberta

Nature Nova Scotia

Get Concerned Stratford

Climate Action for Lifelong Learners (CALL)

Nature-Action Québec

Nature Vancouver (also known as

Vancouver Natural History Society)

Bird Friendly Windsor Team

Nature Guelph

Toronto Field Naturalists

Bird Friendly Regina

Jijuktu'kwejk Watershed Alliance

Devon Nature Club

AVIA Coffee and Totem Roasters Inc.

Blomidon Naturalists Society

Nature Calgary

Saskatoon Nature Society

Devon Ecological Collective

Lambton Wildlife Inc.

Friends of the Pugwash Estuary

Burrowing Owl Conservation Society of BC

Nature Barrie

Perth County Sustainability Hub

Bird Friendly Edmonton

Bird Safe Guelph

Bird Friendly Calgary

BLUEWATER CENTRE FOR RAPTOR

REHABILITATION (BCRR)

Fondation SÉTHY

Green Venture

Bird Friendly Hamilton Burlington

OURS-Winnipeg

Nature PEI

The Coalition to Save Lemay Forest

Bird Friendly Halton Hills

Nova Scotia Bird Society

Stewardship Centre for BC

Le Nichoir Wild Bird Conservation Centre

Prince Edward County Field Naturalists

Citizens for Marshland Conservation

SIGNATORIES

South Osborne Residents Group Inc.

Nature Saskatchewan

Devon Bird Team

Walk the Talks Sustainability Society

Nature Regina

Pesticide Free Edmonton

Verticité

Manitoba Eco-Network

Calgary Urban Species Response Team

Council of Canadians: Kitchissippi-Ottawa

Valley Chapter

Georgia Strait Alliance

Feather Friendly Technologies Inc

Bird Friendly Toronto

QuébecOiseaux

RED DEER RIVER NATURALISTS

Rodenticide Free Ontario

Common Nighthawk is currently listed as
Special Concern under the Species at Risk Act
Source: Birds Canada



Testimonials:

Mayor, Ann Lawlor, Town of Halton Hills:

“Halton Hills is proud to renew its commitment to being a bird-friendly municipality. Initiatives to date include hosting educational bird-focused lectures, posting window stickers to minimize glass collisions and increasing bird habitat through tree planting and landscape management. Recently, Council voted on a motion to ban family-style, backyard fireworks which will mitigate associated impacts to wildlife and the environment”

Mayor Jeff Craddock, Town of Devon:

“It is with pride that the Devon Town Council adds the protection of birds, and their habitat to the list of Devon environmental commitments such as our Green Strategy, Integrated Pest Management Plan, Urban Forest Management Plan, and Tree City of the World Status. As a Certified Bird Friendly Town, Devon celebrates the years of work by community members, organizations, stakeholders, and public servants that will be acknowledged with this certification. Thank you to all the volunteers in the Devon Bird Friendly team, whose hard work and determination have helped Devon achieve Nature Canada’s Bird Friendly City status.”

Mayor Ken Sim, City of Vancouver:

“The City of Vancouver is proud to have been re-certified as a Bird Friendly City in 2024, having been one of the first Canadian municipalities to achieve this distinction in 2021. Birds in our city demonstrate that we are achieving broader goals around biodiversity, ecological health and access to nature. We are proud of our work so far and will continue to protect and enhance bird habitat and promote outreach and bird tourism opportunities.”

Ann-Marie Kungle, Ward 3 Councillor, City of Barrie:

“Barrie’s Bird Friendly Team has much to celebrate! Thanks to their ongoing community-based efforts in threat reduction, habitat protection, restoration and climate resilience, and community outreach and education, we achieved recertification as a Bird Friendly City! We are fortunate to have this team of passionate and skilled community members working hand in hand with our City of Barrie staff on continuous improvements in protecting key habitats and engaging residents in supporting our bird habitat to thrive.”

Christopher von Roretz, District 5 Councillor, City of Dorval:

“The City of Dorval is thrilled to have the ongoing efforts of its citizens, partners and employees recognized by Nature Canada with certification as a Bird Friendly City. The various actions taken in recent years, and the many others in development emphasize our commitment to supporting birds and biodiversity more broadly in Dorval. We hope that this certification inspires individuals and our broader community to continue reducing threats, protecting habitats, and becoming further engaged in supporting birds.”

Testimonials:

Kathryn McLellan, Environmental Stewardship & Outreach Coordinator, Township of King:

“King Township is proud to announce the renewal of being designated a Bird Friendly City through Nature Canada. This achievement is a testament to our municipality’s dedication and active involvement in preserving bird habitats, participating in conservation efforts, and fostering a love for birdwatching. Together, we embrace the beauty and diversity of bird life, ensuring a brighter, more sustainable future for all our feathered friends!”

Kim Petrin, Deputy City Manager, Urban Planning & Economy, City of Edmonton:

“Edmonton is proud to be among the ranks of 30 municipalities across the nation that have received this important certification for having met or exceeded standards for reducing threats to birds. The City of Edmonton has several initiatives ranging from strategy to operations that ensure bird habitats are protected, improve climate resilience, and support community engagement and awareness.”

Carly Davenport, Bird Friendly Selwyn Founder:

“On behalf of the Selwyn Bird Team, we are so proud of the certification and all the hard work that went into it. Programs like these empower community members to protect the biodiversity around us. The goal of maintaining or improving certification status year after year allows Bird Teams to advocate with their municipal governments to ensure meaningful conservation initiatives are implemented. We hope that in Selwyn, we can be a part of lasting policy change to protect birds.”

Kathleen Johnson, Calgary Urban Species Response Team Founder & Bird Friendly Calgary Member:

“From the start, the Members of Bird Friendly Calgary have remained committed to using this certification as a means for continual improvements in Calgary. We are pleased with the Intermediate designation that has been achieved and the improvements in policy and awareness that have come over the last two years. There are still many improvements to be made and our team will continue to work with the community and City to make Calgary a city that is truly friendly to birds. We call upon each Calgarian, at their home and their workplace, to support our efforts and mark their glass, keep cats inside, plant native plants and reduce light pollution.”



BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
LONDON, ON

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
TORONTO



BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
BARRIE

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
HALIFAX, NS



BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
EDMONTON, AB



BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
SARNIA, ONTARIO

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
LIONS BAY, BC

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
CALGARY, AB

BIRD FRIENDLY
REGINA

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
HAMILTON BURLINGTON

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
HUDSON

VILLE AMIE
DES OISEAUX
BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
OTTAWA

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
WINDSOR

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CITY
RICHMOND HILL

BIRD FRIENDLY
CITY
HALTON HILLS, ON



CORNWALL AND AREA
Birding Club





TOTEM

Artisan Coffee Roasters
Torréfacteur artisanal



OURS-WINNIPEG







NATURE
ACTION
QUÉBEC



Bert Miller Nature Club



Wild Birds Unlimited
Edmonton, AB



Nature Vancouver



Nature
Squamish
KNOW • SHARE • ACT





Black-capped Chickadee TOP 10 BIRD SPECIES
Victims of Bird-Building Collisions (GTA)
Source: FLAP Canada

