BIRD FRIENDLY

APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION

Scoring and Evaluation Rubric Version 2.0 • June, 2025 • For Small Municipality

BIRD FRIENDLY CITY

CERTIFIED BY NATURE CANADA

TOWN/MUNICIPALITY REPRESENTED: Squamish, BC

DATE OF SUBMISSION: September 2026

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please take a few moments to review the below preamble and Bird Friendly Town criteria.
2. Either copy and paste the information below into your preferred collaborative word-processing document or download the Word document version.
3. Provide relevant information needed for each criteria where indicated.
4. Upon completion, please send your completed document to Autumn Jordan, Senior Organizer - Bird Friendly City by email at: ajordan@naturecanada.ca

PREAMBLE

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.

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
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.



MANDATORY CRITERIA

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M1 -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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Please find the Bird-Friendly Squamish Team (hereafter referred to as the Bird Team) members, affiliations, and roles within the team below:

Name – Affiliations/background – Bird Team Role

- Claudia Cridge – Nature Squamish Director, Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council – Coordinator, Chair, Nature Canada liaison, co-secretary, communications lead.
- Tiffany Brunke – Nature Squamish volunteer, birder – Volunteer recruitment.
- Griffin Duckworth – Nature Squamish volunteer, birder, student.
- Becca Gray – Squamish River Watershed Society.
- Diane Mitchell – Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society, Squamish CAN, Interpretive product development – Support, proof reading.
- Tara Johnson – Nature Squamish volunteer, social media & events.
- Claude-Anne Godbout-Gauthier – Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council – Support, proof reading.
- Harriet Jarvis – SquamishCAN.
- Kate Inman – Nature Squamish volunteer, educator.
- Emily Coule – Environmental Specialist, District of Squamish – Municipal liaison, co-secretary.
- Christopher DiCorrado – Nature Squamish volunteer, birder, guide.
- Emile Bryan – Nature Squamish volunteer, birder – Social media.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The District of Squamish (DoS) is located within the traditional territory of the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation). Utilizing their official referral system, a request for input was sent to the Nation on July 8, 2025, requesting representation on the Bird Team.

The Bird Team has since remained in contact with Squamish Nation. We have provided updates and asked for their perspective on the issues they face relating to the criteria of Bird Friendly Town designation. The most recent referral was July 29, 2026. In their most recent response to this referral (August 2026), the Nation expressed interest in electing a member to join the Bird Team. This is excellent news, and something that we are exploring further.

The Nation's historic knowledge of the bird species that called Squamish home and their deep connection to the land and sea provide a unique perspective in which to view and help conserve our Squamish birds.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The Bird Team (represented by Tara Johnson) appeared before Squamish Council on July 7, 2026. The DoS Council unanimously voted to support the application for Bird Friendly Town, and go one step further by requesting that Mayor Armand Hurford write a formal letter of support for the program in Squamish. Both the letter of support and the minutes of the Council meeting can be found in the evidence folder.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The resources required to prepare an annual report card for Nature Canada have been committed by Nature Squamish, through their Bird Friendly Squamish Program. Nature Squamish is a well established registered charity with the expertise and experience required to prepare such reports. Combined with the experience and contacts of the Bird Team, we perceive no

barriers to undertaking this work. The annual report has been added to the Bird Team calendar for September 2027, with a 3-month lead time.

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.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION:

The Bird Team of Nature Squamish's Bird Friendly Squamish Program commits to reapplying for Bird Friendly Town or City status every three years. This has been added to the Bird Team calendar for September 2029.

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

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The second annual Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Squamish Bird Festival was held between May 8 - 30, 2026. We registered our event on the World Migratory Bird Day Canada webpage.

As part of the 2026 edition of the festival, guided bird walks, talks, a film screening, and a games night engaged and inspired over 260 people of all ages and levels of birding experience and interest. Outdoor events focused on the publicly accessible trails in the Squamish River Estuary, a key hotspot in Squamish for migratory birds. Our intention was to attract those new to birding as well as to improve the skills of novice and intermediate birders, and in turn support community participation in data gathering (promoting effective and responsible citizen science is already being undertaken by Nature Squamish and other local NGOs). Demonstrating responsible birdwatching practices, as well as recording every bird seen or heard on the guided bird walks, helped to illustrate both the opportunities and responsibilities of birdwatching in Squamish.

The full program of events can be viewed on the Nature Squamish website: https://naturesquamish.ca/updates/the-s%e1%b8%b5wx%cc%b1wu7mesh-squamish-bird-festival-2026/

Here is one testimonial from the film screening of The Big Year at the Squamish Adventure Centre:

"The film was great and we really enjoyed it. I didn't know bird watching was so popular and learned a lot about bird watching clubs, really liked the movie. The squamish adventure center is a nice building to have coffee." - Anonymous

The highlights of the event can be viewed on the Nature Squamish website: https://naturesquamish.ca/updates/s%e1%b8%b5wx%cc%b1wu7mesh-squamish-bird-festival-highlights/

Additional evidence can be found in the evidence folder.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Our DoS liaison, Emily Coule, is working with the District to prepare a webpage on the municipal website. This will be finalised and published once Bird Friendly Town certification has been received.

The Nature Squamish website hosts all the Bird Friendly Squamish program information. This can be viewed here: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/bird-friendly-squamish/



SECTION 1:
THREAT REDUCTION

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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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

While the DoS does not have a No Roam Bylaw for cats, there is regulation of cats through the Animal Control Bylaw No. 2124, 2009. The bylaw prohibits ownership of more than 4 cats at any one time, and it prohibits owners of female cats in heat from allowing them to roam.

Bylaw: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/19302/?preview=103402

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The Bird Team worked with a local grade 7 class on a bird conservation project, where the class designed, built, and outfitted a catio. They used the catio for outreach at the Squamish Farmers' Market in October 2023, educating the community on the risks roaming cats pose to wildlife and giving attendees the opportunity to win the catio (photos are available in the evidence folder). A Nature Squamish volunteer also wrote an article for the local paper (Squamish Chief) about 3 main threats to birds where she addressed roaming cats along with collisions, and habitat loss.

Instagram post promoting the catio at the Farmer's Market: https://www.instagram.com/p/Cyz33kZOLvd/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsi=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==
Article written in The Chief: https://www.squamishchief.com/opinion/opinion-creating-a-bird-friendly-squamish-6842721

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Squamish limits its risk of a feral cat population through four volunteer organisations working to locate and return missing cats or rehome stray or unwanted cats. In addition, four veterinary clinics in Squamish provide low cost spay and neuter procedures.

Squamish BCSPCA

The Sea to Sky Branch of the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals advocates for indoor-only cats. They provide advice on their website to help owners transition their cats to indoor-only lives (e.g. through stimulation, harness training, and catios) and also advocate for this with those adopting cats at the branch.

While the Squamish BCSPCA reports an increase in cats being released, a feral cat population has yet to become established in Squamish. This is likely because other wild predators such as coyotes, raccoons, eagles, and wolves live within and/or around the municipality.

BC SPCA: https://spca.bc.ca/i-need-help-with/pet-care-behaviour/

Squamish Neighbourhood Animal Partnership & Protection Society

The Squamish Neighbourhood Animal Partnership & Protection Society (SNAPP) is a Squamish Nation-led charitable organisation to rescue and rehome cats: https://snappsociety.com/.

Cat Search and Rescue Squamish

Cat Search and Rescue (CatSAR) is a volunteer organisation to provide search and rescue services for cats in Squamish, and provide education for safe and enriched indoor-only cats. According to CatSAR's 2025 report, they successfully found and returned 27 lost cats. Examples of CatSAR's educational resources to deter free roaming include sharing statistics, breaking down the numbers from their work.

CatSAR: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1Ep6W2JhhZ/

Sea to Sky Neighbourhood Animals Needing Assistance

Sea to Sky Neighbourhood Animals Needing Assistance (Sea to Sky NANA) is a community-driven, responsive, social media focused network with over 7,600 followers and frequent ‘shares’ on other local groups. The group formed in 2012 and has posted over 11,000 times. Missing cats (and dogs) or sightings of animals who appear to be lost are shared widely in an attempt to reach owners. The group frequently succeeds in reuniting owners with their missing cats, further reducing the number of unowned cats in Squamish, and the risk of a feral cat population becoming established.

Sea To Sky NANA: https://www.facebook.com/SeaToSkyNana?utm_source=squamish%20chief&utm_campaign=squamish%20chief%3A%20outbound&utm_medium=referral

Squamish’s Eagleview Veterinary Hospital

Squamish’s Eagleview Veterinary Hospital works with the local BCSPCA to offer low cost spay and neuter procedures as part of its community involvement program: https://www.eagleviewvet.ca/community-involvement

Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council

The Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council (SSISC) perform outreach with the local pet supply stores and veterinary clinics to encourage rehoming of unwanted pets, including cats, to prevent establishment of invasive species populations in Squamish. https://ssisc.ca/take-action/campaigns/dont-let-it-loose/

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION:

The Bird Team liaises with some of the above-mentioned organizations for the tracking of outdoor cats:

- The DoS contracts the BCSPCA Sea to Sky Branch to accept stray cats. The BCSPCA tracks the number of cats received over time, recorded by how they were received (e.gas a stray or surrendered). In 2026 so far, they have taken in 16 stray cats.
- Cat Search and Rescue (CatSAR) also tracks cats successfully found and returned 27 in 2025.
- Sea to Sky NANA also records and publicizes the cats able to be returned to owners.

The data collected by BCSPCA and CatSAR provides the crucial background data required to understand the progress made by the Bird Team and/or the municipality in efforts to reduce the number of outdoor cats. The Bird Team will work to develop and distribute educational resources to pet owners, for example by making them available at veterinary clinics and pet supply stores.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

As part of the 2026 Green and Accessibility Retrofit Project at the Brennan Park Recreation Centre (a municipal building), bird safe glass was installed along the south and west facing windows in the new office space. Photos are available in the evidence folder. In addition, since the bird-safe glass was installed in a high-traffic area of a popular municipal building, it is an opportunity to highlight the benefits of bird safe glass for the public.

At the Municipal Hall, staff are experimenting with ‘homemade’ bird decals. Though the effectiveness is hard to prove, it does demonstrate municipal staff's willingness to explore collaborative options to reduce bird window collisions.

This is an area that we aim to improve over time.

1.2 (B) WINDOW COLLISIONS

DESCRIPTION

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

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

In Spring 2026, Nature Squamish and the Bird Friendly Squamish program piloted a project to increase bird knowledge and stewardship in urban areas and improve mitigation of bird-glass collisions. The team carried out outreach in the Squamish middle school and at a kids camp (reaching approximately 41 students) to get the word out to children about the importance and ease of creating bird friendly windows in their homes.

Volunteers met with a group of young children during a spring break camp at Brennan Park Recreational Centre. Here, they engaged the children (5-9 years old) on the threats caused to birds by window collisions, followed by an activity where the children drew their own designs on plexiglass, encouraging them to think about keeping the design simple, but ensuring there was no more than 2 inches of space between the designs. They took home an information sheet about what they learned to help encourage their parents to consider treating their windows to eliminate bird strikes. The conversations at the camp were centred around fostering excitement about the local bird life and what they can do at home to help. Some children spoke about instances of bird-glass collisions at their homes, times where their family have already made efforts to mitigate against threats to birds including drawing patterns on their windows, and sharing positive stories about interactions with birds.

In April, the project volunteers visited two Grade 8/9 classes to discuss window collisions and birds. We explored the problem with the classes and applied Feather Friendly stickers to the large windows on their school library. They were also encouraged to talk with their families and consider treating their windows at home.

Bird Friendly Squamish Instagram post: https://www.instagram.com/p/DbbLQUmgRmV/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

The project team also aims to increase the number of residents with bird-safe windows by making materials and installation accessible to residents. After outreach on social media and newsletters, volunteers from Nature Squamish spent two days outfitting a large, high-risk home in Squamish with Feather Friendly decals at no cost to the resident. Prior to decal installation, this residence experienced frequent bird strikes (sometimes multiple in a day) due to their highly reflective windows, location, and open gardens. Nature Squamish and the Bird Friendly Squamish program intend to continue with this program and evolve it to further increase the number of bird-safe homes within the municipality by lowering the financial and practical barriers to home owners.

The Nature Squamish website informs readers on ways to help protect birds, including information on the Window Collision Monitoring Project that was re-launched in Spring of 2026. Originally, this project was designed as a group of volunteers who walked throughout the main town of Squamish daily, logging evidence of bird-glass collisions to identify high-risk buildings (2022 Window Collision Monitoring Report is within the evidence folder). The evolution of this project in 2026 has expanded to a passive citizen-science project, encouraging the public to report sightings of bird-glass collisions throughout the Squamish municipality. This will help identify high-risk areas so that they can focus efforts to protect the birds in these areas.

The District of Squamish has no current policy or planning regulations requiring bird-safe window design in new developments. However, opportunities exist to promote bird-friendly design through educational and outreach initiatives, including guidance distributed during the development review process, informational materials provided with pre-application packages, and resources made available on the District's website. These materials are something that we are looking to develop as a longer term project.

Blog post: https://naturesquamish.ca/updates/window-collision-monitoring-we-need-your-help/

Photos of the projects are present in the evidence folder.

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).

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The DoS has policies, regulations, and infrastructure standards to reduce light pollution, also minimizing the impacts on wildlife, ecological values, and the nighttime environment.

Through Development Permit Area (DPA) 3 of the Official Community Plan (OCP), the District provides guidance for exterior lighting in new development areas. Section 36.15 of the OCP includes provisions intended to reduce unnecessary light spill and glare, while supporting public safety and functionality. In addition, the Zoning Bylaw (Section 4.28) regulates outdoor lighting through requirements related to fixture direction, illumination levels, colour temperature, mounting height, and the protection of sensitive riparian areas from light spill. These measures also help ensure that lighting associated with new development is designed to minimize impacts on wildlife and adjacent natural areas.

District of Squamish, Official Community Plan: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/157445/?preview=203927
District of Squamish, Zoning Bylaw: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/68132/?preview=207028

In 2021, the District of Squamish adopted Street Lighting Design Criteria that guide the design and installation of municipal lighting infrastructure. These standards promote the use of efficient, appropriately shielded lighting that directs illumination where it is needed while reducing light trespass and skyglow.

District of Squamish, Street lighting design criteria: https://squamish.ca/assets/Planning/Street-Lighting-Design-Criteria.pdf

The multi-use trail which traverses the town is lit with LED fixtures. The District installed dimming lights in some environmentally sensitive sections, including amber colour 2200k light near water/fish habitat.

The District is also replacing outdated streetlights along the town’s main thoroughfare (Cleveland Avenue). The previous fixtures have been upgraded with dark sky-compliant lighting designed to reduce glare, light trespass, and upward light spill.

So far, approximately 40 lights have been upgraded, with a few more still to complete. This project demonstrates the ongoing retrofit of municipal infrastructure to align with best practices for light pollution reduction.

District of Squamish, Instagram post: https://www.instagram.com/p/DJ7v3AMB4Jo/

Together, the OCP policies, Zoning Bylaw regulations, Street Lighting Design Criteria, and municipal lighting retrofit projects provide evidence that the District not only has measures in place to reduce light pollution but is actively implementing them through development review processes and upgrades to public infrastructure.

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).

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Although no specific outreach campaigns have been launched – yet – by Nature Squamish, as they prioritize other bird-friendly initiatives, Nature Squamish shares information on their website on the importance of limiting light pollution, with a link to the Dark Sky website.

Nature Squamish, blog posts:

- https://naturesquamish.ca/nature-notes/how-does-light-pollution-affect-birds/
- https://naturesquamish.ca/stories/protecting-birds-on-the-move-how-you-can-help-this-migration-season/

Information has also been shared on the Bird Friendly Squamish social media platforms:

- https://www.instagram.com/p/DdZaqPGGO4l/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&stkn=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==
- https://www.instagram.com/p/DcWE68sgaQm/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsi=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

The Squamish OCP has guidelines for outdoor lighting at residential buildings. For example:

- Exterior lights should emit only the absolute minimum amount of light required for safety and utility.
- Outdoor light fixtures must be directed, aimed or fully shielded downward to illuminate the ground.
- Lighting must prevent glare and light spillover from encroaching onto adjacent private properties, residential neighbourhoods, and sensitive ecosystems.

District of Squamish, Official Community Plan: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/document/203927/BYLAW%202500%20SCHEDULE%20A%20-%20NOVEMBER%202025.pdf

We aim to continue improving communications on the benefits of limiting light pollution and options to do so as the Bird Team advances with their plans.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

In February 2021, the District of Squamish adopted a bylaw to regulate the use of pesticides for garden and lawn beautification or maintenance on residential and municipal properties: BYLAW NO. 2787, 2020: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/19302/?preview=197715

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The DoS has a webpage describing pesticides excluded from the bylaw described in 1.4(A) (NO. 2787, 2020): https://squamish.ca/environment-and-sustainability/environment-and-sustainability/pesticides-and-herbicides/

The 'allowed pesticides' on this website are taken from the Schedule 2 "Excluded Pesticides" of the BC Integrated Pest Management Regulation: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/604_2004#Schedule2

Neonicotinoids (neonics) are not present within the list of exemptions at all, i.e. their use is banned. *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (bti) is not permitted for commercial use without a license.

Furthermore, there is a BC-wide restriction on second-generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGAR) for essential services only, reducing the risk of poisoning non-target avian and other animals.

Government of BC, Second-generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGAR) use in British Columbia: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/pesticides-pest-management/legislation-consultation/rodenticide-ban

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

There are several small- to medium-scale agri-food producers, or organizations supporting home growers, in and around Squamish. A common thread across all is the use of natural, regenerative systems to support biodiversity and produce healthy, organically grown food, free from pesticides. They include the following:

CAN Grow Community Gardens (Downtown Junior Gardens at Cleveland Ave. & Main St., Bailey Street Community Gardens at Bailey Street, and Garibaldi Community Garden on Mamquam and HWY 99):
The Squamish Climate Action Network (Squamish CAN), operating since 2009, manages three organic community gardens in Squamish. Established on previously underutilized land, all sites are managed organically and include pollinator-friendly and native plantings to support biodiversity. Non-organic fertilizers or pesticides are banned in the gardens. Community volunteers remove invasive species, maintain shared spaces, and educate plot holders on organic gardening practices.

Together, the gardens provide 189 plots, giving residents the opportunity to grow their own food, connect with nature, and help create vibrant community biodiversity hotspots. Birds are a common sighting in the gardens.

https://www.squamishcan.net/community-gardens

Edible School Yards:
Squamish CAN also operates organic edible gardens at six schools in Squamish: Garibaldi Highlands Elementary, Squamish Elementary, Mamquam Elementary, Valleycliffe Elementary, Sky Ridge Montessori, and Howe Sound Secondary. All school gardens are managed organically, with no herbicides or pesticides used. Each class participates in weekly 30-minute garden lessons, where students gain hands-on experience growing food while learning about biodiversity, soil health, composting, plant anatomy, seed saving, and sustainable gardening practices. These outdoor learning spaces foster a lifelong respect for nature while building practical skills and environmental stewardship from an early age.

https://www.squamishcan.net/edible-school-gardens

Downtown School Farm (Buckley Avenue, Squamish):
This 1⁄2 acre urban farm on the high school grounds is a result of years of visioning, policy development, and community efforts. This collaborative farm embodies the Farm to School (F2S) model: supported by the district, led by community partners, fueled by teacher enthusiasm, and backed by community support. Students have the chance to participate in the Farm Studies course, utilize the produce in the Culinary Arts program, and engage in various collaborations. Farm Students actively work on the farm for 5 hours per week learning practical organic farming methods, regenerative agriculture, soil ecology, pollinators, soil and plant ecosystems. There are a wide variety of plants on the site including an indigenous plant garden.

The School farm was the recipient of the Farm to School BC Pollinator Award for the Vancouver Area Regional Hub for 2023. This award celebrates K-12 schools in BC that display exceptional leadership in farm-to-school initiatives.

https://www.squamishcan.net/about-2
https://www.squamishcan.net/indigenousplantgarden

Community Farm - Local Roots Farm Market (41015 Government Rd Squamish):

Local Roots Farm Market in Squamish is a community-focused plant nursery, farm market, and educational hub established by two local siblings. Through the B.C. Land Matching Program, they secured 0.5 acres of land in 2022 and quickly developed a collaborative farming space that includes a demonstration garden, nursery, and shared infrastructure with other local growers. The site supports direct sales, CSA distribution, and partnerships with multiple regional farms, helping strengthen local food networks. They focus on local, native, and perennial plants, and their highly coveted heirloom tomato and pepper seedlings. They are an official supplier of untreated organic gardening supplies, carrying tools, West Coast Seeds, and Sea Soil.

Beyond food production, Local Roots plays a key role in food education and community food security. Through hands-on workshops and a demonstration garden, they teach practical gardening skills tailored to the local climate while promoting sustainable, regionally appropriate food growing.

https://localrootsbc.ca/pages/about-us
https://youngagrarians.org/land-access-stories-local-roots-farm-market-squamish-bc/

Ravens Drive:
Squamish CAN is underway to build their second community farm in Squamish. This project directly supports the vision for sustainable food systems outlined in the DoS (OCP) and the Squamish Valley Agriculture Plan.

The Lot 39 Agrihood aligns with the OCP goal of increasing agricultural activity by transforming underutilized land into productive food-growing space. It strengthens local food security, supports biodiversity, expands access to agriculture, and contributes to the local agri-food economy.

https://www.squamishcan.net/about-1

Brackyard Farm (41559 Government Road, Brackendale, Squamish):
Brackyard Farm is a one-acre, local community-focused intensive urban farm, offering hyper-local, sustainably grown seasonal produce via an on-site farm stand and local restaurant partnerships. Practices include working with hand tools, no-dig, regenerative, and organic growing methods.

https://www.brackyard.com/

Lavendel Farm (40820 Government Road, Brackendale, Squamish):
Lavendel Farm is a beautiful, 7-acre local family-run agriculture property. The farm features 975 linear feet of lavender plants, and is home to a friendly variety of farm animals, including goats, chickens, sheep, cows, llamas, and a miniature horse. The farm sells farm-to-bottle natural products, including pure distilled lavender essential oils, handmade soaps, and local honey.

The owners intentionally design the farm to serve as a low-impact, multi-generational rural oasis that relies on traditional, hand-managed agricultural methods rather than industrial chemical farming.

https://www.lavendelfarm.com/

Hop Creek Farm (41060 Government Road, Brackendale, Squamish):
This is a 33-acre working regenerative family farm, craft brewery, and pasture-to-plate eatery. They have a farm market, an on-site craft brewery and food trailers.They utilize strict regenerative and ethical agricultural practices. Their farm animals are moved systematically across pastures to naturally fertilize the soil, and are fed organic feed. Hop Creek don't use any chemicals in their land management, and their farming methods prioritize carbon sequestration and soil health.

https://hopcreekfarms.com/?srsltid=AfmBOoqw0y9MuiT-94ZIKH-Bt46D_VRrHaBj57-TGoLoSZ3_lsbGGwYr

Nutrient Dense Farm (Upper Squamish Valley):
This is a certified organic and biodynamic farm located in the Squamish region. The farm focuses on regenerative agriculture, improving soil health, and creating environmental stewardship through community-supported agriculture. Using biodynamic methods, they follow natural growing rhythms, focusing on soil vitality and microbial health to maximize the nutrient density of their food. They use no synthetic chemicals and every product is non-GMO. They never use synthetic fertilizers or pesticides.

https://www.nutrientdensefarms.net/about-us

Herbs Organics:
This business is actively regenerating a peripheral zone within one of the Squamish CAN community gardens. This organic farm is getting started with exceptional principles. They are committed to organic farming practices that nourish the community, support the local ecosystem, and help build a resilient, self-sustaining food system in Squamish.

https://herbsorganics.ca/about-us

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION
Through both DoS and community organizations, Squamish has taken action to reduce plastic pollution through reduction of plastic usage, diversion of plastic waste, and litter clean-ups.

The DOS instituted a Single-Use Items Reduction Bylaw in 2024 ("District of Squamish Single-Use Items Reduction Bylaw No. 3128, 2024"), which restricts the use of single-use plastic bags, utensils, straws, and containers.

Bylaw: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/document/178620/Single%20Use%20Items%20Reduction%20Bylaw%20(Bylaw%20No.%202881,%202022).pdf

Further, DOS has created a Zero Waste Action Plan to reach 90% less waste by 2040, including infrastructure improvements, programs and initiatives, education, advocacy, and bylaws/regulations. Current programs include the Zero Waste Workshop Series, an annual series of workshops and events that promote reduction of new plastic through repair workshops, DIY cleaning, re-use it events, clothing swaps, etc.

District of Squamish, Zero Waste Action Plan: https://squamish.ca/assets/Master-Plans/Squamish-Zero-Waste-Action-Plan_2022-2027.pdf

In addition to biweekly residential plastic container recycling, DoS offers soft plastic and foam recycling at two recycling depots in town, and a summer recycling pop-up depot at the farmers market. This pop-up helps educate residents on recycling and adds another waste diversion location.

The following are examples of non-governmental organizations or community-led initiatives to remove plastic pollution within local ecosystems.

Squamish Climate Action Network Zero Waste Action Team
Squamish Climate Action Network has a Zero Waste Action Team that collaborates with the DOS on an annual Reuse It Fair, two annual Repair Cafes (to keep useful items in circulation for longer and reduce buying new items), and several clothing, toy and book swaps through the year. The team also conducts residential recycle bin waste audits to alert individual residents to contamination issues in their recycling. They are also in the planning process of a commercial waste audit service, likely to be launched in 2026/7.

SquamishCAN: https://www.squamishcan.net/zero-waste

Tourism Squamish Destination Stewards and Don't Love it to Death campaign
Tourism Squamish's Destination Stewards help visitors in common outdoor recreation areas learn to recreate responsibly, manage their waste, and leave no trace. They also remove litter from the parks (560lbs in 2025), and facilitate the Red Bag program, in which red bags are handed out to visitors to Squamish; The Red Bag program participants can hand in a full bag of litter in exchange for small food items at several local cafes, breweries, and an ice cream shop. Tourism Squamish was also instrumental in the regional Don't Love it to Death awareness campaign; a successful program to encourage responsible recreation by visitors and locals alike.

Tourism Squamish, Destination Stewards Program Report 2025: https://www.exploresquamish.com/site/assets/files/41260/destination_stewards_exec_summary_2025-1.pdf
Tourism Squamish, Red Bag Program: https://www.exploresquamish.com/redbagprogram/
Don't Love It To Death: https://dontloveittodeath.com/

District of Squamish Pitch-In Week
During the annual Pitch-In Week, the DoS provides clean-up supplies and a tipping fee waiver to any Squamish residents interested in cleaning up litter in the community, and the Squamish Rotary Club organizes volunteer cleaning groups.

District of Squamish, Pitch-in-Week: https://squamish.ca/home-and-property/recycling-and-waste-management/pitch-in-week/
Rotary Club Squamish, Spring Cleaning our Community: https://www.squamishrotary.com/Stories/spring-cleaning-our-community

Howe Sound Marine Steward Initiative World Oceans Day
As an annual World Oceans Day initiative, the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Marine Stewardship Initiative hosts an annual shoreline cleanup, and has organized several clean-up events in the Squamish estuary as well.

Ocean Week Canada, Squamish Shoreline Cleanup: https://oceanweekcan.ca/events/world-oceans-day-squamish-shoreline-cleanup/
Marine Stewardship Initiative, Oceans Week 2025: https://howesoundguide.ca/oceans-week-2025/

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The access road leading through the Sḵwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area, known as the "Spit Road" is a critical migratory bird habitat. It has a posted speed limit of 30 km/h, specifically to suppress dust, noise, and bird/wildlife disruption/collisions in the intertidal and forest habitats (photo in the evidence folder). The removal of the 850m of the berm at the southern end of the Spit Road in the last few years has substantially reduced traffic in the area; the Squamish Windsports Society (SWS) no longer has access to their facilities from this road, which greatly reduces fast driving cars, visitations to the area, noise and dust. Instead, the SWS now has a boat shuttle to an artificial spit island via the Mamquam Blind Channel.

District of Squamish, Central Estuary Restoration Update: https://squamish.ca/government-and-administration/district-information/news/central-estuary-restoration-project-update-2/

Squamish River Watershed Society, Central Estuary Restoration: https://www.squamishwatershed.com/background.html#/

Restore the Shore, Central Estuary Restoration Project: https://www.restoretheshore.ca/

In 2026, the District instigated 30 km/h speeds in the downtown core and Oceanfront area. Though the decision was made to improve human safety, this will have an indirect benefit to birds owing to its proximity to bird-rich shoreline habitats.

District of Squamish, Slow Down Downtown: https://squamish.ca/transportation-parking-and-mobility/safer-streets/slowdown-downtown/

The Estuary restoration works (such as the modification of the Spit Road mentioned above) have also lessened the impacts of vehicle traffic penetrating vulnerable estuarine and tidal mudflat zones. Changes include the re-establishment of native forest and estuary plants along the road, a rock barrier 100m from the end of the road, and camping prohibition. This all protects habitat from vehicles, disturbance, pollution and fire threat. Transport Canada regulations enforced around Squamish require motorized watercraft to observe a 10 km/h speed limit within 30 metres of the shoreline. This minimizes disturbance to resting and foraging birds.

Transport Canada, Vessel Operation Regulations: https://myboatcard.com/study-guide/vessel-operation-restriction-regulations/
Government of Canada, TP 14350: https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/publications/tp-14350-local-authorities-guide-vessel-operation-restriction-regulations

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The District of Squamish has a range of policies, regulations, and management practices that recognize and mitigate the impacts of human activities on wildlife and sensitive habitats, including the Squamish Estuary Important Bird Area (photos are present in the evidence folder).

The District of Squamish Animal Control Bylaw No. 2124, 2009 requires dogs to be leashed and also prohibits dogs from being at large. This regulation is an important measure for reducing disturbance to birds and wildlife and limiting the risk of predation, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas such as the Squamish River Estuary. Educational signage advising dog owners of leash requirements is installed throughout natural areas, including the Estuary (photos are included within the evidence folder). Ongoing bylaw enforcement occurs to operationalize this measure. Between 2021 and 2025, the District issued 68 tickets for dogs being at large and 21 tickets for failure to contain dogs. These enforcement actions provide evidence that the bylaw is actively implemented to reduce wildlife disturbance and encourage responsible dog ownership in natural areas.

District of Squamish, Animal Control Bylaw: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/19302/?preview=103402

There are four District-approved dog parks in Squamish, most of which are fenced (photos and map within evidence folder). This is the easiest method for the District to provide areas specifically tailored to handling off-leash dogs. This is also a much safer alternative for dog owners, as risks of vehicles, wildlife, and other dogs are essentially mitigated by designated areas for off leash dogs being accessible. Off-leash dogs are a concern in sensitive areas, and are required to be on leash in all Provincial Parks and in the Skwelwil'em Squamish River Estuary.

The DoS has developed wildlife risk windows to mitigate potential impacts due to vegetation management, infrastructure maintenance, and development activities that may overlap with sensitive wildlife breeding, nesting, or migration periods. These timing guidelines are used by Public Works staff to schedule park and drainage maintenance activities outside sensitive periods wherever possible and are also applied through the development permitting process. By adjusting the timing of municipal operations and development activities, the District reduces the likelihood of disturbance to birds and other wildlife during critical life stages.

District of Squamish, Wildlife Risk Windows: https://squamish.ca/assets/ENVIRONMENT/220331-Squamish-Wildlife-Time-Tables-v1.0.pdf

The DoS completed Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Mapping in 2016, with an update scheduled for 2026-2027. ESA mapping is incorporated into the (OCP) and Development Permit Area (DPA) guidelines to identify and protect sensitive habitats from incompatible land use and development.

District of Squamish, Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Mapping: https://squamish.ca/projects-plans-and-initiatives/completed-projects/2017-completed-projects/environmental-sensitive-area-mapping/
District of Squamish, Development Permit Area guidelines: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/157445/?preview=203927

Implementation of these protections occurs through the development permitting process, which requires applicants to assess and address potential impacts to the natural environment. Development within or adjacent to ESAs is subject to restrictions, environmental assessments, and mitigation requirements designed to avoid or minimize habitat disturbance. The District also responds to reports of unauthorized encroachment into ESAs, where options such as stop work orders, restoration of disturbed habitats, fines and surcharges may be used. These actions demonstrate the ongoing application of ESA protections and habitat conservation measures.

The OCP contains specific policies supporting the protection of the Squamish Estuary and its bird populations. Policy 10.9.a directs the District to "sustain the ecological health and productivity of the Squamish River Estuary, while balancing shared interests and activities to support the socio-economic base of the community." Policy 10.10.n further commits the District to "recognize and build awareness of the Estuary as an Important Bird Area and encourage measures to protect local bird populations".

District of Squamish, OCP: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/157445/?preview=203927

These policies are implemented through collaborative management initiatives, including the Squamish Estuary Management Committee and the Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Plan (2007).

Ministry of Environment, Environmental Stewardship Division, Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Plan: https://squamish.ca/assets/LDA/6471022cdf/Skwelwilem-WMA-Management-Plan-Final.pdf

Peregrine falcons are a species of concern in BC, with the coastal subspecies being blue-listed. This status, as well as the breeding habits of this species, have led to special protocol when a nest is discovered in Squamish. Peregrine falcons are known to nest on the cliffs of ‘the Chief’ in Stawamus Chief Provincial Park. The Chief is one of the most desired climbing areas in the world, and is heavily visited by recreational climbers throughout the falcons’ breeding season.

For the most part, human-avian disturbance and contact can be limited with a few signs and awareness spread seasonally. Posters and signage at outdoor climbing locations and indoor climbing gyms inform visitors on this topic to help spread community awareness (see posters in the evidence folder). Climbers are encouraged to report peregrine falcon nests when they discover them, and efforts are taken to make sure those areas are left undisturbed.

Squamish Access Society and BC Parks, poster: https://nrs.objectstore.gov.bc.ca/kuwyyf/Stawamus_Closure_Poster_May_28_2026_e6274f7347.pdf
BC Parks, advisory of active peregrine falcon and goshawk nest for climbers of the Chief: https://bcparks.ca/stawamus-chief-park/

THREAT REDUCTION SCORING: 12/14 POINTS - HIGH

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 points in each of first four categories.



SECTION 2:

HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

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 of 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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Protecting nature, biodiversity and adapting to climate change is a notable priority of the DoS. Elected officials and staff are active contributors to regional local government and NGO networks working toward habitat protection and biodiversity conservation in the terrestrial and marine realms. These include the Howe Sound Community Forum, the Howe Sound Biosphere Region Roundtable, the Oceanwatch Action Committee, and the Howe Sound Conservation Network. The District was also an early supporter of the nomination to see the wider region designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Region (the Átl'ka7tsem / Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region received its status in 2021). Collaborative efforts in these networks help elevate the District's habitat management through shared expertise, data sharing and advocacy among others. The following provides some specific details.

Howe Sound Community Forum: https://www.howesoundbri.org/howe-sound-community-forum
Howe Sound Biosphere Roundtable: https://www.howesoundbri.org/howe-sound-biosphere-roundtable
Ocean Watch Action Committee: https://www.howesoundbri.org/partners-and-tools/2021/3/9/ocean-watch-action-committee
Howe Sound Conservation Network: https://www.howesoundbri.org/howe-sound-conservation-network

1. Protection and restoration of biodiversity is embedded throughout the District's OCP. Section 10, Natural Environment, establishes a policy framework for protecting environmentally sensitive areas, maintaining ecological connectivity, restoring

habitat, protecting riparian corridors, and recognizing the ecological importance of the Squamish Estuary. The OCP specifically recognizes the Squamish Estuary as an Important Bird Area and encourages measures to protect local bird populations. Conservation and Ecological Reserve (P-4) land use designations and Development Permit Area 1 provide additional mechanisms to protect sensitive terrestrial, riparian, wetland, and marine habitats. The District's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan identifies Environmental Stewardship as a core governing principle and commits to protecting the natural environment and leaving it in better condition for future generations.

District of Squamish Official Community Plan: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/157445/?preview=203927
District of Squamish Strategic Plan 2023-2026: https://squamish.ca/assets/Strategic-Plan/2023-2026-Strategic-Plan-2024-update.pdf

2. The District has adopted a Community Climate Action Plan and continues to advance climate action through climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives. The Community Climate Action Plan includes measures that support nature-based climate solutions, carbon sequestration, low carbon infrastructure and transportation, and waste reduction. These objectives are reinforced through the OCP, which recognizes the role of healthy ecosystems, riparian areas, forests, and green infrastructure in responding to climate change. The District's Strategic Plan also identifies Climate Change Action as a governing principle and commits to both mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Community Climate Action Plan Update: https://squamish.civicweb.net/FileStorage/D5D55458B96A4D9CA9309645D19AFC3C-Community%20Climate%20Action%20Plan%20Update.pdf
District Strategic Plan 2023-2026: https://squamish.ca/assets/Strategic-Plan/2023-2026-Strategic-Plan-2024-update.pdf

3. The District has demonstrated implementation of biodiversity conservation objectives through its partnership with the Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society (managing the designation of the Átl'ka7tsem / Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region). In 2025, approximately 85 hectares of District-owned lands zoned Ecological Reserve and Protection (P-4) were added to Canada's Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD). This increased the amount of protected and conserved land within the District to approximately 2,426 hectares, representing roughly 20% of the municipal land base.

Implementation of climate action policies can be demonstrated through ongoing municipal initiatives. Progress has been made on 78% of the actions in the 2020 climate plan, and over $2million in funding has been secured for EV chargers, building studies, embodied carbon guides and for the continued work of a Squamish chapter of the Youth Climate Corps BC, operating locally since 2024. In 2022, Squamish had the fastest growing rate of EV ownership in Canada. Larger projects include installing a landfill gas capture system, constructing active transportation infrastructure, and constructing and retrofitting low carbon municipal buildings.

CPCAD and Protected Areas Update: https://squamish.civicweb.net/FileStorage/689CBC65F03043C08CB72459B85C7CE3-Update,%20Howe%20Sound%20Biosphere%20Region%20Initiative%20%E2%80%93%20C.pdf
Climate Action Progress: https://indicators.squamish.ca/pages/climate

4. While the District continues to advance biodiversity protection, regional industrial projects such as the nearby Woodfibre LNG project and FortisBC Eagle Mountain pipeline (cutting across town) have the potential to affect habitats used by species of conservation concern. However, these projects are subject to local, provincial and federal environmental assessment processes and mitigation requirements. The DoS Mayor and Council has consistently strived to seek accountability from the proponents.

Woodfibre LNG: https://www.squamish.net/woodfibre-lng-marine-construction-update/
Fortis BC: https://talkingenergy.ca/project/eagle-mountain-woodfibre-gas-pipeline-project

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The DoS has adopted a range of policies, plans, and initiatives that collectively function as a habitat management strategy. As already mentioned, the District's OCP establishes the protection and enhancement of the natural environment as a core objective. Section 10 (Natural Environment) includes policies to protect environmentally sensitive areas, improve habitat connectivity, restore degraded ecosystems, expand green infrastructure, and support climate adaptation through ecosystem conservation. Policies explicitly recognize the role of natural assets in maintaining biodiversity and community resilience. The OCP also contains specific objectives supporting urban forest expansion. Policy 10.19 directs the District to protect green infrastructure, maintain water quality, and prevent harmful substances and species. 10.20(f) support growing the local forest canopy and increasing carbon sequestration. These actions directly contribute to habitat enhancement for birds and other wildlife while providing climate adaptation benefits such as urban cooling, stormwater management, and carbon storage.

In 2025, the District completed the Downtown Squamish Urban Forest Enhancement Strategy, which assessed existing canopy conditions and identified opportunities to increase urban tree cover, improve ecological function, and enhance climate resilience within the downtown area.

The District has been granted funding to develop a municipality-wide Urban Forest Strategy. This work will establish a long-term framework for protecting, managing, and expanding Squamish's urban forest canopy while delivering biodiversity and climate adaptation benefits.

District of Squamish Official Community Plan: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/157445/?preview=203927
Our Squamish Urban Forest Report: https://www.oursquamish.ca/_files/ugd/1c873b_63126cf08fad4a74b2cd0c9696fa341d.pdf
District of Squamish Urban Forest Strategy Provincial Funding: https://squamish.ca/government-and-administration/district-information/news/district-secures-15k-in-provincial-funding-help-create-a-healthier-community/

2.2 (B) MUNICIPAL LANDS

DESCRIPTION

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

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The District of Squamish has regulatory and operational measures to protect trees on both private and public lands, recognizing trees as an important environmental and community asset.

On private lands, tree protection is provided through the District's Tree Management Bylaw (no. 3229, 2026), which regulates the removal of trees during development and other land-altering activities. The bylaw protects trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) greater than 20 cm, while "significant trees" (including trees greater than 60 cm DBH and designated wildlife trees, photos within the evidence folder) receive additional protection. Tree removal generally requires a permit; where removal is authorized and the site does not meet the tree density target of 50 trees per hectare, applicants are required to provide replacement planting or cash-in-lieu contributions. The requirement for replacement planting helps ensure that the environmental benefits provided by existing trees are maintained or enhanced over time. This bylaw is regularly enforced, with options such as stop work orders, surcharges, and fines used in circumstances where unpermitted tree removal occurs.

District of Squamish, tree management bylaw: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/19302/?preview=163244

The District also protects trees on municipal lands through internal policies and procedures. Trees on District-owned property may only be removed under specific circumstances, such as public safety concerns, infrastructure requirements, invasive species management, or approved wildfire risk reduction. Municipal tree management decisions incorporate environmental considerations and are reviewed by qualified staff.

Implementation of these protections occurs through the District's permitting and development review processes. Applications involving tree removal are reviewed by District staff, and conditions may be imposed to protect retained trees, require replacement planting, or mitigate environmental impacts. These measures ensure that tree protection is actively applied throughout the municipality.

District of Squamish Tree Management webpage: https://squamish.ca/building-and-land-development/home-land-and-property-development/tree-and-soils-management/tree/

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The DoS has established policies and operational procedures that protect nesting birds and other wildlife during sensitive breeding periods by restricting vegetation removal activities and requiring mitigation measures where work cannot be avoided.

The District has Wildlife Risk Windows and permit conditions that effectively protect birds during nesting periods. The District's Wildlife Risk Windows identify sensitive periods for breeding birds and other wildlife and are used to guide municipal operations, vegetation management, infrastructure maintenance, and development activities. These timing windows are publicly available and are routinely applied by District staff and through the development review process.

Vegetation management on municipal lands is scheduled outside sensitive breeding periods whenever possible. Where work must occur during the regional migratory bird nesting season (generally late March through late August), additional protections are required.

A condition of all Tree and Soil management permits specifies:

"Should tree/vegetation removal or limbing works occur within the regional migratory bird nesting window (late March to late August), a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) shall be consulted to ensure the protection of migratory bird nests and eggs."

Permit holders must conduct nesting bird surveys prior to works during the nesting window, and submit the results to District Environmental Services staff. Any active nests identified during surveys must be protected through species-appropriate buffers until nesting activities are complete. These requirements ensure compliance with both the Migratory Birds Convention Act and the BC Wildlife Act.

District of Squamish, Wildlife Risk Windows: https://squamish.ca/assets/ENVIRONMENT/220331-Squamish-Wildlife-Time-Tables-v1.0.pdf
District of Squamish, tree management bylaw: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/19302/?preview=163244

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The DoS recognizes the importance of habitat for biodiversity protection and as such, protects and enhances riparian areas, shorelines, and other natural habitats through municipal bylaws, development regulations, restoration projects, and public guidance.

1. Development Permit Area 1 (DPA 1) protects environmentally sensitive areas, including streams, wetlands, channelized watercourses, marine shorelines, and terrestrial habitats. Development within these areas requires environmental assessment and measures to protect habitat, water quality, and ecological function. This is explained in detail in section "34. Development Permit Area 1 (Bylaw 3078, 2024) - 34.7 is specific to Aquatic Guidelines (Freshwater + Riparian) Environmental Protection".

District of Squamish, riparian and aquatic protection: https://squamish.ca/environment-and-sustainability/environment-and-sustainability/environmental-protection/
District of Squamish, Official Community Plan: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/document/203927/BYLAW%202500%20SCHEDULE%20A%20-%20JULY%202021.pdf

2. Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR) is provincial legislation that requires a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to assess development near streams. The District implements these requirements through DPA 1 and extends protection beyond the provincial minimum by including additional environmentally sensitive areas.

Government of British Columbia, Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR): https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/fish/aquatic-habitat-management/riparian-areas-regulation

3. Sanitary Sewer and Storm Sewer Use Bylaw (no. 2474, 2016) regulates wastewater and stormwater discharges to help protect streams and aquatic habitats from pollution:

District of Squamish, Sanitary Sewer and Storm Sewer Use Bylaw: https://squamish.civicweb.net/document/137390/

4. Wastewater Discharge Bylaw (no. 2418, 2015) includes fines for unauthorized discharges that could impact water quality and wildlife habitat:

District of Squamish, Wastewater Discharge Bylaw: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f3dP7C8vQJvK-GNfuuql4mNyzC6CjOhL/view

5. Hot Tub and Pool Drainage Guidelines provide residents with best practices for safely discharging water to prevent contamination of streams and waterways.

District of Squamish, Hot Tub and Pool Drainage Guidelines: https://squamish.ca/home-and-property/water-and-waste-water/residential-hot-tub-and-pool-drainage-guidelines/

6. Berm Restoration Projects restore and enhance riparian habitat while improving ecological connectivity and shoreline resilience. Further details on the goals of the District of Squamish for future restoration and protection can be found on pages 44-55 of the Official Community Plan.

District of Squamish, Central Estuary Restoration Project: https://squamish.ca/government-and-administration/district-information/news/central-estuary-restoration-project-update-2/
District of Squamish, OCP: https://squamish.civicweb.net/filepro/document/203927/BYLAW%202500%20SCHEDULE%20A%20-%20JULY%202021.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

These policies and initiatives work together to protect watercourses, reduce erosion and pollution, and maintain habitat corridors that support birds and other wildlife.

PDF versions of the documents above are present within the evidence folder, should they be required.

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.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The Squamish River has been designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA) since the mid-1990s: https://www.ibacanada.ca/mobile/site.jsp?siteID=BC023&lang=en

This IBA largely overlaps with the District of Squamish municipality boundary. The Important Bird Areas program is currently in transition to the Key Biodiversity Areas program. The Squamish River was designated as a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) in 2025, as the Squamish River supports 2.63% of the global population of glaucus-winged gulls.

KBA Canada, Squamish River: https://kbacanada.org/site/?SiteCode=BC023

IBA/KBA Caretakers are appointed to the role of ongoing stewardship and monitoring of the area. The current volunteer Caretaker is Adrienne Peltonen. Prior to Adrienne, the IBA/KBA was taken care of by John Buchanan and Chris Dale.

The local community is deeply involved in the stewardship and promotion of this area. Nature Squamish have run monthly bird counts since 1991 to gather data on the birds present in the Squamish estuary and surrounding areas, the location of which is included within the IBA/KBA.

Nature Squamish, Bird Counts: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/bird-counts/

Nature Squamish has a portal which holds all the data for visualisation and analysis. They also run the Western Purple Martin Recovery Program, the EagleWatch program and the Brackendale Winter Eagle Count, all of which also take place within the IBA/KBA area and the information can be used to support the protection of this area.

Nature Squamish, Monthly Bird Count Portal: https://mbc.naturesquamish.ca/count-report/

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The DoS and its community partners have established several projects on public lands showcasing the use of native plants and habitat restoration to support birds, pollinators, and biodiversity.

Restoration work undertaken at McNaughton Park, a former industrial zone developed for housing and recreation use adjacent to the downtown core, saw more than 150 native plants installed during community planting events held on BC Rivers Day in 2025 and through the Youth Climate Corps program in 2026. The project engaged volunteers in restoring native habitat within a public park and demonstrated the value of native plant species in supporting local biodiversity. Photos from this project are present in the evidence folder.

Sea To Sky Invasive Species Council, BC Rivers Day 2025: https://ssisc.ca/blog/rivers-day-squamish-recap-2025/

The District and community partners have also undertaken invasive species removal and native habitat restoration at Cardinal Drive, improving riparian habitat through the replacement of invasive vegetation with native species. This project serves as a visible example of how degraded areas can be restored to provide habitat for birds and other wildlife.

At Sp'akw'us Feather Park, part of the Oceanfront Squamish development, over 6,500 m^2 of habitat restoration, environmental remediation, and native landscaping has been established since 2016 following remediation of a polluted industrial zone. The park includes native shrubs, trees, and berry-producing species that provide food and shelter for birds. Interpretive signage throughout the site highlights the cultural significance and traditional uses of plant species by the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw, providing an important educational component for visitors.

District of Squamish, Oceanfront Development: https://squamish.ca/projects-plans-and-initiatives/projects-in-our-community/squamish-oceanfront-development/

The District has also preserved a pollinator patch at Brennan Park Recreation Centre, where there is an abundance of naturally occurring native and pollinator-friendly plants, and a high diversity of pollinators has been found. Fencing prevents trampling while still allowing visitors to view the patch. Interpretive signage is being added to explain the role of pollinators and the importance of native vegetation. This site provides residents with a practical example of how public spaces can support wildlife while educating the community about biodiversity conservation. Photos are present within the evidence folder.

Collectively, these projects demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting native flora on public lands. Through volunteer participation, educational signage, and highly visible locations, these demonstration sites encourage residents to adopt similar practices on their own properties and contribute to a more bird-friendly and biodiversity-rich community.

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.

SCORING INDICATORS

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Pollinator-Friendly Squamish Program

A new program for Nature Squamish, launched in 2026, focuses on creating a patchwork of pollinator-friendly, pesticide-free habitat in both private and public spaces in the community, as well as forming a ‘seed-sitters’ club for volunteers to grow seedlings in preparation for spring planting events, and aim to achieve Bee City certification for Squamish.

https://naturesquamish.ca/project/pollinator-friendly-squamish/

Squamish Climate Action Network Indigenous plant garden project at Howe Sound secondary school

The Indigenous Plant Garden at the Downtown School Farm is a community-led initiative celebrating Indigenous knowledge while promoting native biodiversity in Squamish. Initiatives by Squamish CAN and created through a collaboration between Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Elders, ethnobotanist Leigh Joseph (Styawat), students, educators, and Youth Climate Corps BC, the garden provides an educational space where visitors can learn about native plants, their Sḵwx̱wú7mesh names, and their cultural significance. The garden showcases a variety of native plants that provide important habitat and food sources for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife. Volunteers from the community and students from the school maintain this space.

https://www.squamishcan.net/indigenousplantgarden

Squamish Climate Action Network Library Talks
Squamish CAN runs a series of educational talks each year, hosted at Squamish public library. Topics have included pollinators, organic gardening and sustainable land care. Special guest Taren Urquart from West Vancouver library presented a talk on mason bees and the importance of native habitat plantings in March 2026.

https://events.squamishlibrary.ca/event/15612124

Squamish based ecologically sound landscaping companies
SOLscapes Landscape Design Inc. specializes in eco-friendly land and garden care, emphasizing low-impact electric equipment, native flora, educating clients and installing edible landscapes.

Recent native plant and pollinator installation: https://solscapes.ca/finch-drive/
Rain garden and indigenous food forest at the Cheakamus Centre, Squamish: https://www.canada.ca/en/housing-infrastructure-communities/news/2025/11/federal-government-invests-in-building-a-food-forest-and-rain-gardens-at-cheakamus-centre.html

Hawthorn Landscape Design is an eco-friendly landscape design and maintenance company in Squamish. Founded in 2010, the company specializes in sustainable, pesticide-free horticulture, invasive species removal, native plant installations, habitat restoration, drought-tolerant landscapes, organic/edible gardens, and green roofing.

Examples of native habitat enhancement projects include:

- Aristotle Drive (The Highlands): Complete landscape installation using exclusively native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants. The property was designed to provide year-round habitat and forage for native pollinators and birds while demonstrating the beauty and resilience of native landscapes in a residential setting.
- Cheekye, Cheakamus, Cardinal Drive, and Squamish Estuary area: Numerous residential projects incorporating native plant communities appropriate to local ecosystems, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas adjacent to creeks and riparian corridors. These landscapes improve habitat connectivity and support local biodiversity.
- Garibaldi Village Phases 1 and 2: Native trees, shrubs, and pollinator-friendly plants were incorporated into landscape enhancement works to increase ecological value within a commercial development.
- Walmart Commercial Landscape: Native and pollinator-supporting plant species were added as part of landscape improvements, demonstrating that commercial properties can also contribute meaningful habitat for birds and beneficial insects.
- Downtown Squamish Pollinator Garden: Installation of a predominantly native, bird-and pollinator-friendly garden at a private residence. Developed in collaboration with a professor at Quest University (the university before Capilano University), the project includes interpretive signage and serves as an educational demonstration landscape highlighting the value of native plants for urban biodiversity.

Collectively, these projects illustrate a consistent commitment to restoring native vegetation and increasing habitat across private residential, commercial, and mixed-use properties throughout

Squamish. By incorporating native species into landscapes of all sizes, Hawthorn Landscaping has helped expand habitat for birds and pollinators while encouraging broader community adoption of ecologically responsible landscaping practices.

https://www.hawthornlandscape.ca/

Native plant nursery in Squamish
Their mission is to make native plants more accessible to the community, to contribute to the health of our ecosystem and support native wildlife.

https://raincoastnursery.ca/pages/who-we-are-what-we-do

CAN Grow community garden plots
The Squamish CAN Community Gardens comprise three organically managed sites with 189 garden plots and a growing waitlist, reflecting strong community interest in sustainable gardening. Gardeners are supported with resources on native plants, pollinator conservation, and wildlife-friendly practices.

These gardens have become important urban pollinator hotspots, providing habitat and forage for birds, bees, and other beneficial wildlife while promoting biodiversity, ecological stewardship, and bird-friendly gardening throughout Squamish.

https://www.squamishcan.net/community-gardens

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

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Squamish is present within Bird Conservation Region no.5 - Northern Pacific Rainforest. The Purple Martin is listed as a priority species within the Bird Conservation Strategy for this region.

Environment Canada, Bird Conservation Strategy for Bird Conservation Region 5: Northern Pacific Rainforest: https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/eccc/migration/main/mbc-com/df49c9a5-e2a7-466f-b06c-2df69b0e0664/bcr-5-pyr-final-feb-2013.pdf

The Squamish Western Purple Martin Recovery Project has supported a population of the highly migratory Western purple martin (*Progne subis arboricola*) since 2015. The most recent and successful project iteration saw two nesting structures erected in 2023 on the Western side of the Squamish River Estuary. The nest boxes see frequent upgrades and modifications over the seasons as project leads determine what changes can increase breeding success of the purple martins. Temperature data is currently leading design choices for the nest boxes, and volunteers attempt to understand nesting habits captured on video. Increased clutch yield leads to a stronger return rate and presence of Purple Martins in the Estuary, as well as individual birds dispersing to other nesting colonies.

There are many volunteer opportunities associated with Squamish's Western Purple Martin Recovery Project, including reviewing nesting footage online and frequent in-person monitoring. Recording of the sex and age of birds present helps shed more light on the issues this species is facing. Signage near the boxes located on the popular Chelem Trail in the Estuary provides information on the birds/project to any passers by. In 2025, live monitoring and inspections found at least 23 chicks were confirmed to have fledged the boxes, a healthy increase from previous years that saw fledgling numbers in the single digits. Increases over the years have shown a steady incline in birds reaching fledgling stage and an increase in adults at the colony overall.

Program page including annual reports: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/purple-martin-recovery/
Understanding temperature within the nest boxes: https://naturesquamish.ca/updates/an-insight-into-the-temperature-of-western-purple-martin-nest-boxes/
Educational signage: https://naturesquamish.ca/updates/purple-martin-interpretive-sign-installed-on-the-chelem-trail/
Nest box update from 2019: https://naturesquamish.ca/nature-notes/purple-martin-nest-box-update-december-2019/

Spring 2026 saw the installation of ten new tree swallow nest boxes spread throughout the Estuary, intended to draw swallows away from the purple martin nesting structures (space is limited and purple Martins have more specific nesting conditions). Seven boxes are occupied this year. These boxes support nesting efforts and breeding success of Canada's declining aerial insectivore populations. Nature Squamish has committed to creating more nest boxes for sensitive species in Squamish, and is considering next steps for the ongoing project. Photos are provided in the evidence folder.

In 2019, the Squamish River Watershed Society began their Central Estuary Restoration Project. The most visible component removed a large portion of the Squamish 'spit' in 2022, a river 'training berm' built for industry that never came. The spit removal and installation of four large culverts beneath the road allow the Squamish River to flow more freely into the rest of the Estuary. This project focused on chinook salmon but has massive year-round benefits for many other Estuary species. Brackish water now occurs in parts of the Estuary that remained inaccessible until recently. Brackish water creates a unique set of conditions allowing species to thrive in the estuarine ecosystem. This is an inherent benefit to the migratory waterfowl population that calls the Estuary home during the winter, and shorebirds and waders that often feed on aquatic species in these habitats. A healthier Estuary means more habitat and support for the species that migratory birds use as food sources.

Squamish River Watershed Society, Central Estuary Restoration Project: https://www.squamishwatershed.com/central-estuary-restoration.html#/
Restore the Shore, Central Estuary Restoration: https://www.restoretheshore.ca/

Lastly, Nature Squamish has coordinated the Squamish Monthly Bird Count since 1991, helping track bird population trends and to engage the community in citizen science and birdwatching. They also carry out their popular and longlasting EagleWatch program, a volunteer program focusing on the bald eagles (also a priority species for this region) that overwinter

in Squamish (generally in the hundreds). These programs help track the abundance and presence of birds listed as priority species within the Bird Conservation Strategy for region no.5 - Northern Pacific Rainforest.

Nature Squamish, Bird Counts: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/bird-counts/
Nature Squamish, EagleWatch: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/eagle-watch/

HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY SCORING: 10/12 POINTS - HIGH

ENTRY 6 points from at least 3 categories.

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

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

3.1 CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION

DESCRIPTION

There are educational programs and activities for children and youth about birds and nature in the municipality.

A) 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.

B) Educational programs include specific elements designed to engage children and youth who could be considered underprivileged, racialized or recent arrivals to Canada.

C) At least one school does a specific bird-related program such as Christmas Bird Count for Kids, the Great Backyard Bird Count, Global Bird Rescue, or curriculum from Keep Cats Safe and Save Bird Lives.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Squamish has several wide-ranging examples of providing opportunities for children and youth to connect with nature, enjoy birds, and understand how to help them. These examples are through a mix of environmental organisations and schools, many of which are public schools, providing opportunities to underprivileged and racialised groups, and recent arrivals to Canada.

Valleycliffe Elementary School's 'Outdoor Classroom'
Valleycliffe Elementary School's 'Outdoor Classroom' began in 2014. The reclaimed spaces in the Outdoor Classroom have become important habitats to reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and birds. To protect these precious creatures, students learn the importance of biodiversity, ensuring both their gardening practices and stewardship activities contribute to thriving schoolyard ecosystems.

Valleycliffe Elementary, Outdoor Classroom: https://www.sd48valleycliffe.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1111395&type=d&pREC_ID=1377464
SD #48 Sea to Sky, Valleycliffe Elementary Outdoor Classroom: https://www.sd48seatosky.org/apps/pages/vceoutdoorclassroom

The Cheakamus Centre
The Cheakamus Centre, located in the Paradise Valley (16km from Downtown Squamish), offers an Outdoor School Program aligned with Grades 4 and 6 of the BC School Curriculum, where students can experience integrative learning in nature. They have a Field Study called "Birds & Wildlife", where the students, armed with a bird ID sheet and binoculars, walk the site looking for birds. The Salmon Study explores eagles, and at their Teaching Longhouse, they incorporate learning about spáḵw̓us (eagles) and sḵewḵ’ (ravens). The Cheakamus Centre can provide subsidies for youth who otherwise could not afford the program. This Outdoor School program sees about 1500 students per year (roughly 70 students per week from October to May). Of these students, two-thirds take part in the Birds & Wildlife study, and all of the students would participate in the

Salmon study. The Bird Team are working with the Cheakamus Centre to incorporate more bird-related education into their activities, as well as provide advice and guidance on reducing the risk of window strikes at their centre.

Cheakamus Centre, Field School Program: https://cheakamuscentre.ca/education/field-school-program
Cheakamus Centre, Field School Program Factsheet: https://cheakamuscentre.ca/assets/docs/Cheakamus_Field_School_Flatsheet-(11_22)-1673640515.pdf

Squamish Climate Action Network
The Squamish Climate Action Network (Squamish CAN) has carried out bird walks with 25 students from Howe Sound Secondary school. They used the Merlin app to listen and learn bird calls, and used eBird to log their walk, contributing to citizen science and teaching the students the importance of such data. The students had regular bird lessons included within their curriculum as part of the elective course for credit, Farm Studies (first offered to Howe Sound Secondary in 2022).

White crowned sparrows regularly nest at the school farm, providing a valuable teaching opportunity and a chance for students from Howe Sound Secondary and Squamish Elementary Schools to see eggs in nests and hatchlings up close.

eBird tracks from the walks: https://ebird.org/checklist/S338939363
https://ebird.org/checklist/S354672897

Photos are present within the evidence folder.

Squamish CAN has installed edible gardens and implemented educational programs in 6 schools. Squamish Elementary, Mamquam Elementary, Valleycliff Elementary, Sky Ridge, Howe Sound Secondary and newly-installed Garibaldi Highlands Elementary with a section dedicated to birds (designs are present within the evidence folder). This program focuses on connecting kids to nature, biodiversity, growing food and native plants.

SquamishCAN, edible school gardens: https://www.squamishcan.net/edible-school-gardens

Nature Squamish
Nature Squamish collaborated with the Squamish Welcome Centre this past Bird Festival to carry out a guided bird walk with newcomers. The Squamish Welcome Centre provides services for newcomers and support for migrant workers in Squamish.

Squamish Welcome Centre, Instagram post: https://www.instagram.com/p/DYFbIT3FE5i/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

Daycares and Early Years Education
A large proportion of Fresh Air Daycare is outside. They promote outdoor child development for ages 6 weeks to 12 years old.

https://freshairdaycare.wixsite.com/mysite

We have also reached out to other schools and providers of early years education in Squamish such as Squamish Nature Learners, Sol Outdoor Learning and Kiddie Cloud Montessori Preschool to understand the scope of their nature programs.

https://www.squamishnaturelearners.ca/about
https://www.soloutdoorlearning.ca/
https://kiddiecloudmontessoripreschool.com/about

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).

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The Bird Team runs social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram, sharing information about how to help birds, volunteer opportunities, and what the team and other volunteers have been doing in the community. We continue to provide information to our followers on the threats birds face and how the community can help/advocate for them, and continue to grow our following.

https://www.instagram.com/BirdFriendlySquamish/
https://www.facebook.com/profile.php/?id=61588029083999

These accounts were created in 2026, so are new. Prior to this, information on this program was posted on Nature Squamish's social media pages (The Bird Team is nestled within the Bird Friendly Squamish program held by Nature Squamish). Here are some examples of the posts:

- https://www.instagram.com/p/DVJmI_8iOVg/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==
- https://www.instagram.com/p/DOZbz-vgYeh/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==
- https://www.instagram.com/p/DM4TdiAubpd/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==
- https://www.instagram.com/p/DD8FRSVPZXw/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==
- https://www.instagram.com/p/Cyz33kZOLvd/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==
- https://www.instagram.com/p/Bi7wV18lGb_/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==

Due to the interlinked nature of Nature Squamish with the Bird Friendly Squamish program, and that Nature Squamish currently have more reach than the newer Bird Friendly Squamish account, we often collaborate with Nature Squamish's social media pages and tag their account in our posts to increase our reach. Please find social media activity statistics in the evidence folder.

The Nature Squamish website also holds information about the Bird Friendly Squamish program, and posts regular blog posts about ways to help birds and information to educate and mitigate threats to birds (note that this website is in the process of an upgrade!)

- https://naturesquamish.ca/nature-notes/how-does-light-pollution-affect-birds/
- https://naturesquamish.ca/stories/protecting-birds-on-the-move-how-you-can-help-this-migration-season/
- https://naturesquamish.ca/nature-notes/9-simple-ways-to-help-protect-birds/
- https://naturesquamish.ca/nature-notes/from-fort-langley-to-squamish-a-purple-martin-banding-success-story/
- https://naturesquamish.ca/nature-notes/squamishs-most-wanted/
- https://naturesquamish.ca/nature-notes/winter-help-for-our-resident-hummingbirds/

Organisations linked through the Bird Team also provide information for the community, such as the problem with invasive species and birds and pollinators.

- https://ssisc.ca/birds/
- https://www.squamishcan.net/post/what-we-are-learning-about-pollinators

The District of Squamish will host a page on the Bird Friendly Town certification, with links to resources, once certification is achieved (see mandatory criteria). Currently, the Municipality has information on their website providing information about wildlife friendly landscaping and native, drought-tolerant plants for your garden.

- https://squamish.ca/home-and-property/bylaws-and-guidelines/wildlife/landscaping/
- https://squamish.ca/home-and-property/water-and-waste-water/water/smartscaping/

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).

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

In Spring 2026, the Squamish Adventure Centre assisted in the Bird Friendly Squamish program by sharing our poster about window collision monitoring on their screens in their reception and cafe areas.

In summer 2023, the Bird Friendly Squamish program recruited volunteers to complete a project to treat the glass paneling at the Mamquam Blind Channel community walkway after identifying it as high risk for bird collisions. Feather Friendly collision deterrent markers (and 2 info decals) were installed on glass railing panels and glass structures leading to underground parking.

https://naturesquamish.ca/updates/preventing-bird-glass-collisions/

The Sea to Sky Gondola has also installed these decals (and info decals) on several high risk glass panels at the summit. Also in 2023, interpretive eagle signage was installed (by Nature Squamish) at Eagle Run dike viewing shelter to replace and renew much older panels. In 2025, Nature Squamish installed purple martin interpretive signage near the new purple martin nest box structures along the Chelem trail. The sign aims to educate visitors about these remarkable migratory birds and highlight the important conservation efforts taking place locally. Both the Chelem trail and Eagle Run dike viewing area have Important Bird Area signage to communicate the importance of these areas to birds/wildlife.

For at least the last 3 years, BC Parks have run their nesting peregrine falcon protection campaign for climbers on the Chief. They have held community presentations and provided outreach at the 2025 Squamish Bird Festival and also social media outreach. The Squamish Adventure Centre has an education station for visitors to learn about local wildlife and nature. Other signage around town includes: additional interpretive signage along the Chelem trail, interpretive signage at the Sea to Sky Gondola, interpretive signs at Sp'akw'us Feather Park, interpretive and informational signage along the central channel estuary trails, and signage at Brohm Lake Interpretive Forest and at Amblepath Slough.

Local artists led by Toby Jaxon, Tatiana Lee, and Zoe Evamy lead the Birds & Words project, promoting local artists and supporting conservation initiatives. Birds & Words is a collaborative art exhibit showcasing Sea-to-Sky visual artists and poets,

inspired by species listed in Nature Squamish's Monthly Estuary Bird Count. In 2024, the paintings were raffled off and the money raised was donated to Nature Squamish to support their bird conservation programs.

Birds & Words: https://birdsandwords.weebly.com/

Photos are available within the evidence folder.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

"Eagle Run Dyke" at Brackendale Eagles Provincial Park is a smooth gravel trail shouldering the Squamish River. It is one of the most important sites for Bald Eagles in Squamish. The annual salmon migration up Squamish River is an easily exploitable food source for the eagles, providing a great show for anyone watching. The location is easily accessible by public transit, with north and south bus stops touching the boundaries of the park in a main transportation corridor. There is ample seating and sheltered rest areas along the dyke trail to make the area more accessible. A long gradual wheelchair ramp with bright colours makes accessing the trail from the road possible for anyone, including the physically disabled and visually impaired. A range of interpretive signs depict and describe Bald Eagles, as they are the highlighted local species. Visitors can also learn about best practices and ethics of observing eagles and wildlife in the area. Signage informs visitors about the surrounding Important Bird Area, and shares seasonal maps and local trail networks. The dyke trail itself is located on the Siyich'em Reserve, and there is educational signage sharing stories and information on the importance of the location. The park is also home to the Eagle Watch program, as well as the yearly Eagle Count. Brackendale Eagles Provincial Park is easily researched, information can be found online on the BC Parks website, Tourism Squamish's website, and is featured on the BC Bird Trail.

Brackendale Eagles Provincial Park report: https://ecoreserves.bc.ca/1999/05/05/brackendale-eagles-provincial-park-background-document-bc-parks-1999/
Nature Squamish, EagleWatch program: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/eagle-watch/
Nature Squamish, Brackendale Winter Eagle Count: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/brackendale-winter-eagle-count/
BC Parks, Brackendale Eagles Park: https://bcparks.ca/brackendale-eagles-park/
Tourism Squamish, Brackendale Eagles Provincial Park: https://www.exploresquamish.com/things-to-do/areas-lakes-parks/brackendale-eagles-provincial-park/
BC Bird Trail: https://bcbirdtrail.ca/field-notes/bald-eagle-encounters-along-the-squamish-river/

Sp'akw'us Feather Park is a highly accessible birding location on the Squamish oceanfront, and is the premiere destination in Squamish for seabird watching. Feather Park opened recently with access for everyone in front of mind. The paved sections of the oceanfront park all include gradually sloped walkways and plenty of seating options throughout. The main path is a flat asphalt crescent around the peninsula before transitioning to a flat gravel trail along the edges of the development. Feather Park was constructed and designed with great consideration towards the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw, and many elements of

their culture and history can be found and studied through interpretive signage and infrastructure. There is an informational sign that describes the ties the Bald Eagle (sp'akw'us) has within Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw tradition and history, as well as bringing attention to Squamish's presence within the Átl'ḵa7tsem / Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region. There are several native plant gardens within the park, many with signs for each distinct species planted. The most important native planting area is off limits for the public, as traffic to the intertidal zone is limited to practicing traditional harvest and maintenance by the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw. There is also a shoreline remediation project, a replanting effort along much of the west side of the peninsula. A fence keeps the general public from straying into the important shorebird and waterfowl habitat. The park is a short walk from downtown, with the popular outer loop starting and ending along the main pedestrian street in Squamish. For those that struggle with mobility, public transit services the area.

Tourism Squamish, Sp'akw'us Feather Park: https://www.exploresquamish.com/things-to-do/areas-lakes-parks/spakwus-feather-park/
Átl'ḵa7tsem / Howe Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region: https://www.howesoundbri.org/

The Skwelwil'em Squamish River Estuary is located directly beside the downtown core of Squamish, and is a popular spot for walking, running, and enjoying nature. The most traveled area is the Inner Estuary Trail taking walkers to a former logsort site. A nearby gravel road is the most mobility friendly entrance. The Central Channel of the Estuary was home to a large logsort for decades, until the area was restored to natural tidal wetland habitat in 2014. This is interpreted on the first of several signs along the inner trail, as the following signs expand on the species that frequent or reside in the restored area. Peregrine Falcons are featured prominently, as they use this area for hunting throughout the year. They are a charismatic species that nests on nearby cliffs, meaning they serve as an excellent gateway species to biodiversity in the Estuary. The entrance is accessible from the Town Dyke Trail that separates downtown from the Estuary. The main bus exchange in Squamish is located 300 meters from the main estuary entrance. The trail is compact gravel, as it is flat and well-treaded. If walking the trail as a loop, the exit follows Bailey street and continues downtown. Bridges accommodate wheelchairs and mobility scooters, and are well constructed. Several benches are located near signage and at viewpoints along the trail. There is information on how to access the inner Estuary on the District of Squamish's website, as well as a feature on the BC Bird Trail.

Government of British Columbia, Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/wildlife/wildlife-habitats/conservation-lands/wma/wmas-list/skwelwil-em-squamish-estuary
Squamish Access Society, Reporting Peregrine Falcon Sightings: https://squamishaccess.ca/news/202447reporting-peregrine-falcon-sightings
DoS, Tourism Squamish, Squamish Estuary Trail: https://www.exploresquamish.com/trails/squamish-estuary-trail/
BC Bird Trail, Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area: https://bcbirdtrail.ca/experiences/skwelwilem-squamish-estuary-wildlife-management-area-7070/

Evidence is presented within the evidence folder for this criteria.

3.5 BIRD FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

DESCRIPTION

For your municipality, one or more businesses 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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The following businesses and organizations support bird conservation and bird-friendly practices through the products they sell, the initiatives they lead, and their participation in the Bird Friendly City program. Supporting photographs are provided within the evidence folder.

- Be Clean Naturally: Local refill store promoting waste reduction through reusable and low-waste products. (https://www.becleannaturally.ca/)
- Bosley's: Sells bird seed and feeders to support backyard birds, and sell cat leashes that encourage responsible pet ownership. (https://bosleys.com/)
- Brackendale Art Gallery: Hosts the annual Brackendale Winter Eagle Count and was instrumental in establishing the event. (https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/thor-froslev-mural-squamish-1.6525909)
- Broken Seal: Local restaurant and brewery along the Mamquam Blind Channel with bird-friendly window markers to reduce bird collisions.
- Fox & Oak Café: Committed to supporting Squamish's Bird Friendly City application, and are exploring bird-related retail products and willing to display Bird Friendly City information in the café. The Bird Team are currently working on posters for display in establishments such as this.
- Hop Creek Farms: Sells binoculars to encourage birdwatching and nature appreciation. (https://hopcreekfarms.com/?srsltid=AfmBOoqT0ITHxQmjIwQPEeg8tiuaMu8V2jQB4ORf47QcXMSRdIPSW9BH)
- Howe Sound Brewing: Meeting location for the community's monthly bird counts. (https://www.howesound.com/)
- Squamish Climate Action Network: Leads environmental stewardship initiatives that improve habitat and benefit birds. (https://www.squamishcan.net/)
- Tourism Squamish: Provides birding brochures, books, maps, and visitor information highlighting local birdwatching opportunities. (https://www.exploresquamish.com/things-to-do/activities-adventures/birding-in-squamish/)
- Valhalla Pure Outfitters: Sells binoculars, birding books, and other equipment for birdwatchers. (https://vpo.ca/)

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

The Bird Team, via the Nature Squamish Bird Friendly Squamish program, will initiate a campaign to select a "town bird" once certification has been granted.

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.

EXPLANATION OF PROGRESS OR COMPLETION

Squamish has a variety of active participatory science programs, mainly fuelled or developed by Nature Squamish, to monitor birds in our municipality:

Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)
Nature Squamish coordinates the local bird counts contributing to the CBC program. 20+ years old with an average 30 residents of both field survey teams and backyard feeder watch options for residents counting at home.

Birds Canada: https://www.birdscanada.org/bird-science/christmas-bird-count
Nature Squamish: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/bird-counts/

Annual Brackendale Winter Eagle Count
A local, Nature Squamish-run count running for 40 years that recruits community locals and visiting volunteers to monitor wintering Bald Eagle populations up to 50 km up the Squamish River and along the Mamquam, Stawamus and Cheakamus rivers. Averages 50-75 participants, including local and provincial politicians and TV, print, and radio media.

Nature Squamish: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/brackendale-winter-eagle-count/

Monthly Estuary Bird Surveys
Nature Squamish coordinates this community science project, which has operated continuously since 1991. Volunteers monitor species composition across four zones in the Sḵwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area, with the longitudinal data made available for research and to contribute to Provincial and Birds Canada databases. Averaging about 20 participants per month.

Nature Squamish: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/bird-counts/

Nocturnal Owl Surveys
Local Squamish volunteers traverse preset local routes after dusk to record calling species of owls, contributing to the Birds Canada program.

Birds Canada: https://www.birdscanada.org/bc_yk_nwt_owls

Squamish Breeding Bird Survey
Local Squamish volunteers conduct annual June counts following designated routes feeds into a North American data set (~2-4 participants).

Environment and Climate Change Canada: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/bird-surveys/landbird/north-american-breeding/overview.html

EagleWatch
Nature Squamish have coordinated this program since 1995 as part of the Nature Conservancy of Canada's Eagles of Brackendale project to help preserve the wintering bald eagles and their ecosystem in the Squamish Valley. Volunteers record eagle numbers from early November to January. Education and outreach is provided by the coordinator and volunteers (averages 30 volunteers).

Nature Squamish: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/eagle-watch/

BC Breeding Bird Atlas (2008 -2012 data collection)
Nature Squamish coordinated the Squamish region of this program between 2008-2012, with approximately 10 volunteers including a local regional coordinator. This Provincial Program collected data to map the distribution and abundance of breeding birds.

Birds Canada: https://www.birdatlas.bc.ca/

Western Purple Martin Recovery Project
Nature Squamish developed this project in 2015, where volunteers have installed 28 purple martin nest boxes in the Squamish estuary to support the recovery of this blue-listed species which historically had disappeared from the area. Volunteers run a monitoring program to assess the success of nesting birds by understanding best nest box design and placement with the goal to support and to expand the local population.

Nature Squamish: https://naturesquamish.ca/project/purple-martin-recovery/

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION SCORING: 9/11 POINTS - HIGH

ENTRY 5 points from at least 3 categories.

INTERMEDIATE 7 points from at least 5 categories.

HIGH 9 points from at least 7 categories.

APPLICATION TOTAL FINAL SCORE: 31 / 37 Points - High

OUR NORTH STAR

The Normalization of Nature in Decision-Making

Bird Friendly Cities and Towns is a certification program run by Nature Canada.

Suite 1000, 141 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, ON K1P 5J3
1-800-267-4088 | info@naturecanada.ca | NatureCanada.ca
Charitable registration #11883-4704-RR0001

Nature CANADA

BIRD FRIENDLY CITY

CERTIFIED BY NATURE CANADA