

Bird Friendly Iowa

Minimum Criteria for City Designation

Designation as a Bird Friendly community indicates that minimum standards have been met. Community engagement to continually recognize and ameliorate threats to birds is critical for long-term success. Each year a community must reapply and demonstrate it continues meeting the minimal criteria. After three years of successful participation in the program, a community will be awarded Sustained Flight status.

Bird Friendly Iowa anticipates that in the years ahead its communities will want to strengthen their commitment to bird conservation. These additional criteria demonstrate a significantly higher level of commitment. High Flyer applications may be submitted by those currently recognized as Bird Friendly Communities as part of their annual renewal.

Population-based Standards for Category 2

- Less than 10,000 population - 1 of 6
- 10,000 to 50,000 population - 2 of 6
- More than 50,000 population - 3 of 6

Protect, restore & enhance bird habitat (3 of 12)
1-A. Community has prepared a park system or open spaces habitat assessment.
1-B. A list of bird species present has been completed for the community.
1-C. A portion of the community's land has legal protection through public ownership or conservation easement.
1-D. Park management provides native habitat for birds, plants and other wildlife.
1-E. Community has programs to encourage native habitat development on private property and/or does not restrict "wild" or natural lawns comprised of native plant species.
1-F. A local leadership organization, civic club, etc., takes active role in planning for protected habitat favorable to birds native plants and other wildlife.
1-G. Community has a volunteer support group for a DNR Bird Conservation Area or Audubon Important Bird Area.
1-H. Community offers public information about controlling or removing invasive plant species.
1-I. The community follows sustainability principles for land use planning and resource management recommended by aligned organizations.
1-J. The community has established a storm water management program that reduces polluted runoff and ensures protection for wetlands (including riparian and other aquatic ecosystems) and also promotes use of native plantings to accomplish management goals.
1-K. The Community is currently designated as a TREE CITY USA.
1-L. Demonstrate in narrative account some other community action to further native habitat creation or protection, or some other important accomplishment in this category.
Reduce threats to birds (1-3 of 6)
2-A. Community has regulatory or administrative program to control free roaming cats & actively publicizes the "Cats Indoors" campaign. Trap- neuter-release does not reduce bird predation!

2-B. Community provides information on how businesses and homes can protect birds from building and window collisions (such as Lights Out), and publicly recognize those taking such steps.

2-C. Community supports bird- friendly construction and placement of communication towers.

2-D. Community has a program to reduce pesticide use on public lands and/or an educational effort to reduce pesticides use by home & property owners.

2-E. The community strongly discourages destruction and removal of bird and wildlife native habitat during nesting seasons (i.e., through its permitting process).

2-F. Demonstrate in narrative account some other important accomplishment in this category.

Educate & engage people in birding & conservation (3 of 12)

3-A. A program is in place to help students and community members in general take part in developing a community species bird checklist.

3-B. Schools in the community are implementing "Flying WILD", or similar curriculum, to help insure students learn about conservation of birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

3-C. Through bulletin boards, brochures and publications in the city hall, public library or other public places, plus newsletters, websites or other media, the community provides information to property owners on methods for creating and enhancing backyard habitat.

3-D. Community encourages property owner or homeowner use of best practices, ordinances, & building codes to reduce bird collisions, create wildlife- friendly gardens, etc.

3-E. Local news media periodically runs stories about migratory birds, habitat conservation, etc.

3-F. The community provides links to organizations with information about backyard habitat programs.

3-G. The community is represented in at least one bird monitoring program such as the Great Backyard Bird Count, Audubon Christmas Bird Count, Project FeederWatch, or other actively coordinated citizen science project.

3-H. The community adopts an official resolution recognizing International Migratory Bird Day and hosts a celebration recognizing International Migratory Bird Day during spring or fall migration season.

3-I. The community sponsors and supports an annual birding festival.

3-J. The community has a program that involves schools, garden clubs or other organizations, habitat development or butterfly & bird conservation activities.

3-K. The community provides information regarding safe and responsible wildlife rescue & assistance, including contact information for aligned organizations & Iowa permitted wildlife rehabilitators.

3-L. Demonstrate in narrative account some other community accomplishments in public education about native birds & birdwatching, & other forms of wildlife.