



# Waterloo, Iowa is bird friendly because:

## **We encourage habitat development...**

- The City of Waterloo manages 1,100 acres of greenbelt within the Waterloo City limits. The diverse habitats include 8 miles of Black Hawk Creek, a prairie, a couple of lakes, and miles of trails. Several natural areas in Waterloo are listed as birding hotspots in e-bird.
- The city is also developing a 3-acre prairie area of native forbs and grasses for birds and other wildlife in the Katoski Greenbelt adjacent to an existing prairie. The Waterloo Leisure Services (WLS) works closely with the University of Northern Iowa Tallgrass Prairie Center to plant and maintain this prairie. 56 varieties of native forbs and grasses planted should start to stand out as the prairie matures.
- Waterloo has been a Tree City for over 33 years and meets all criteria for this honor each year. All Waterloo citizens are encouraged to celebrate Arbor Day by planting a tree following suggestions detailed on the city's [forestry website](#).

## **We manage storm water and reduce pesticide use...**

The City of Waterloo has an active and multi-faceted stormwater program which includes:

- Training & workshops for local engineers & contractors, workshops for homeowners interested in green practices.
- A partner program with the surrounding communities and Hartman Reserve Nature Center to bring stormwater outreach to our local schools, as well as the development and distribution of print materials.
- Storm sewer inlets and stream channels within city limits are inspected regularly.

- New construction and redevelopment projects in Waterloo are required to submit Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP).
- The first permeable pavement alley is being implemented. This project will be a valuable learning opportunity that can provide insight for further implementation.
- The City of Waterloo is working with the Center for Energy & Environmental Education at the University of Northern Iowa in an initiative to reduce chemical usage in city parks.

### Our citizens value birds...

- The City of Waterloo has a valuable partnership with the [Prairie Rapids Audubon Society](#) (PRAS) to promote bird-friendly practices in our community.
- Prairie Rapids Audubon (PRAS) holds meetings Sept-May which attract 70-100+ people each month to learn about birds, nature, wildlife conservation, etc. PRAS field trips are well attended and showcase the parks and natural areas in our city, some of which are e-bird hotspots.
- PRAS generally awards \$6,000+ in annual grant monies to local projects or organizations which benefit education, habitat development, conservation practices, etc.
- Citizens mobilize to help avian life in Waterloo. In 2015, Orange Elementary School in Waterloo was awarded grant money by Prairie Rapids Audubon Society and the Iowa Ornithologists' Union (IOU) to build two Chimney Swift towers for an established colony of birds who were going to lose their homes when the chimney of the old Orange schoolhouse is demolished. The two towers have been erected in the reconstructed prairie/wetland area on the new school grounds. Both towers have had successful nests and have been used as roosts for Chimney Swifts. A



large educational sign about swifts has been placed at the site. In 2016, the towers were dedicated at an all school Earth Day ceremony with speakers representing the Iowa DNR, PRAS, IOU, and the student body. Grant money has also been used to plant native trees on the school grounds and to establish a bird feeding area used to teach students about birds, habitat, and citizen science. Photos courtesy of Tom Schilke.



- The community provides information regarding safe and responsible wildlife rescue and assistance, including contact information for aligned organizations and Iowa-permitted wildlife rehabilitators, including Black Hawk Wildlife Rehabilitation (319-277-6511) and other licensed rehabilitators. Pictures courtesy of the Black Hawk Wildlife Rehabilitation Facebook page.



### **We participate in citizen science...**

- While Waterloo Christmas Bird Counts have been conducted for over 40 years, our partner, the [Prairie Rapids Audubon Society](#), has been coordinating the count since 1999. Most of the city is included in the 15-mile diameter count circle. Data is sent to a state coordinator and shared via the PRAS newsletter and the state birding journal.
- An increasing number of Prairie Rapids Audubon Society members have been participating in the annual Great Back Yard Bird Count and Cornell Lab Project Feeder Watch, collecting data from bird feeders and habitats in and around Waterloo. A number of Audubon members also consistently use e-bird to document local sightings.
- PRAS members have also participated in the National Audubon's bluebird surveys and the Swift Night Out surveys that collect data about Chimney Swifts.