



Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

Vancouver Bird Strategy

January 19, 2015

Visit the Park Board website at: vancouverparks.ca



Vancouver Bird Strategy

January 20, 2015





Resident Birds
live in the area year-round
e.g. Steller's Jay



Migratory Birds
live in the area in the summer
e.g. Wilson's Warbler



Over-wintering Birds
live in the area in the winter
e.g. Barrow's Goldeneye



Important Bird Areas

1. Greater Vancouver Watershed
2. English Bay and Burrard Inlet
3. Pacific Spirit Park
4. Fraser River Estuary

- Greenest City Action Plan Goal 6: Access to Nature
- Park Board Strategic Plan
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Urban Forest Strategy
- Vancouver Food Strategy
- Healthy City for All Action Plan
- Environmental Education and Stewardship Action Plan
- Green Operations Environmental Framework

- Chicago's Bird Agenda - 2006
- City of Chicago - A Habitat Guide for Chicago Land Owners - 2006
- City of Chicago - Bird-Safe Building Design Guide - 2006
- City of Toronto Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines - 2007
- Portland Oregon's Bird Agenda - 2011
- City of Calgary - Bird-Friendly Urban Design Guidelines - 2011
- City of Portland - Resource Guide for Bird-friendly Building Design - 2012



Becoming a Bird Friendly City

- 2011 - Park Board motion for City to recognize World Migratory Bird Day.
- 2011 and 2012 - The Mayor proclaimed World Migratory Bird Day and partners planned events.
- May 2013 - City Council and the Park Board directed staff to develop a Bird Strategy.
- 2013 and 2014 - Bird Week proclaimed by the Mayor with more partners for a week-long series of events.
- 2014 - First City Bird competition.



- Bird Studies Canada
- Environment Canada
- Nature Vancouver
- Pacific Wildlife Foundation
- Stanley Park Ecology Society
- Tourism Vancouver
- UBC Greenest City Scholar Program
- Vancouver Artist Studio Residencies in Parks
- Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
- Vancouver - Corporate Communications
- Vancouver - Facilities Planning and Development
- Vancouver - Planning and Development Services
- Vancouver Public Library
- Vancouver School Board
- Vancouver - Sustainability Group



Vancouver Bird Advisory Committee

Bird Studies Canada • Environment Canada • Nature Vancouver
Pacific Wildlife Foundation • UBC Greenest City Scholar Program
Stanley Park Ecology Society • Tourism Vancouver • City of Vancouver
Vancouver School Board • Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

Bird Week and City Bird 2015



Vote for your favorite Vancouver City Bird
Mark your choice by checking one of the circle.

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| | 1 Anna's Hummingbird <i>Calypte anna</i> @annathumbird | <input type="radio"/> |
| | 2 Black-capped Chickadee <i>Parus atricapillus</i> @vancityblackcap | <input type="radio"/> |
| | 3 Varied Thrush <i>Ixoreus naevius</i> @thevariedthrush | <input type="radio"/> |
| | 4 Pacific Wren <i>Troglodytes pacificus</i> @pacificwren | <input type="radio"/> |
| | 5 Pileated Woodpecker <i>Dryocopus pileatus</i> @vanwoodpecker | <input type="radio"/> |
| | 6 Northern Flicker <i>Colaptes auratus</i> @northernflicker | <input type="radio"/> |

Enter for a chance to win a signed copy of David Sibley's revised Guide to Birds. Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip: _____

Check here if you would like to stay informed about Vancouver Bird Week.



City of Vancouver's CITY BIRD 2015

Black-capped Chickadee



Vancouver's inaugural City Bird competition was held in 2014 to select a City Bird for 2015. The winner was the Black-capped Chickadee with over 75,000 votes more than the second place Varied Thrush. This can-do bird loves to explore and is always the first to find a feeder in the area. It's a social, popular bird who lives in the forest and in our neighbourhoods, hides food to eat later, and has a well-known whistled song.

A large group of ducks, likely mallards, are swimming in a body of blue water. Some ducks are in the foreground, while others are scattered throughout the background. The water is slightly rippled, and the overall scene is bright and clear.

VANCOUVER BIRD STRATEGY VISION

By 2020, Vancouver will be a world leader in supporting a year-round rich and diverse assemblage of native birds, accessible to Vancouver residents in every neighbourhood and park in the city, and attracting visitors from all corners of the globe.

GOAL FOR A BIRD FRIENDLY CITY

**In keeping with the Greenest City
Action Plan, create the conditions
for native birds to thrive in the
City of Vancouver.**

SUPPORT HABITAT:

Protect, enhance and create habitats for a diversity of native birds.

REDUCE THREATS:

Reduce threats to birds in the urban environment.

ENHANCE ACCESS:

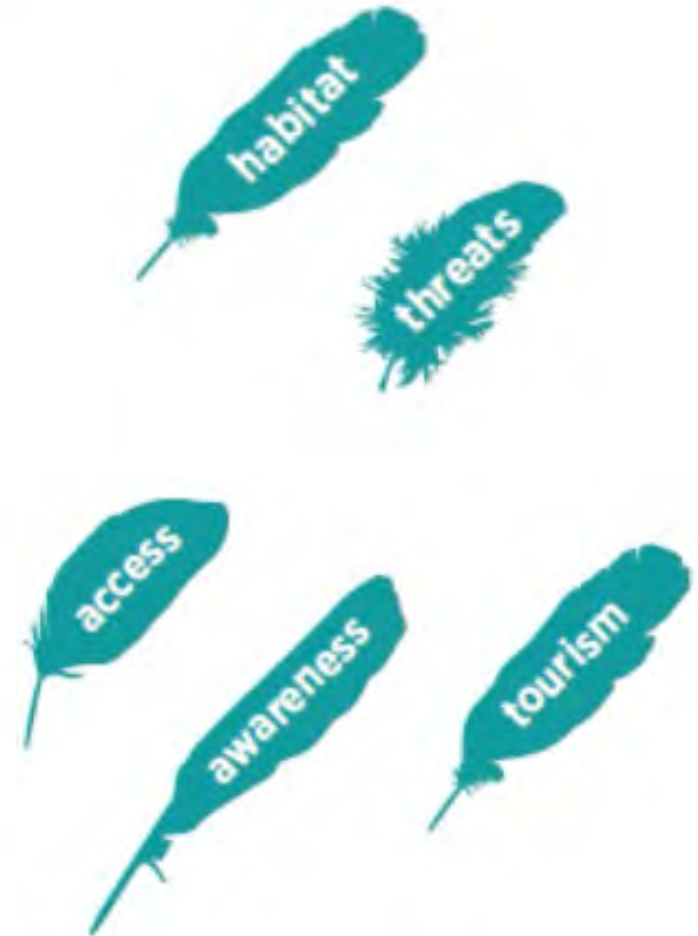
Enhance access to nature for Vancouver residents and visitors to the city.

ENHANCE AWARENESS:

Increase awareness of the importance of birds and their needs.

GROW TOURISM:

Encourage birding tourism and economic development opportunities related to birding.



key challenges

1/
habitat loss
due to
urbanization

Habitat loss has caused a
35% decline
in characteristic bird
species in the Pacific
Coast region of Canada
since 1970.

In Canada, an estimated
**16-42
million birds**
collide with glass on
buildings every year.

2/
invasive
species



English ivy is an invasive plant and will outcompete native plants that provide ideal habitat for native birds.

3/
predation and
disturbance by
domestic pets



It is estimated that
**100 - 350
million birds**
die every year in Canada
due to predation by feral
and house cats.

4/
building
collisions



5/
direct human
disturbance



Opportunities and Action Areas

key opportunities

1/
protect and
restore habitat

2/
bird watching
and tourism

3/
bird friendly
development

Vancouver Bird Strategy action areas

1/
landscape
design
guidelines

3/
research
and monitoring

2/
building
design
guidelines

4/
art,
awareness
and education

5/
economic
development
and tourism

- Architecture Institute of BC
- BC Society of Landscape Architects
- Building Operators and Managers Association
- Planning Institute of BC
- Urban Development Institute



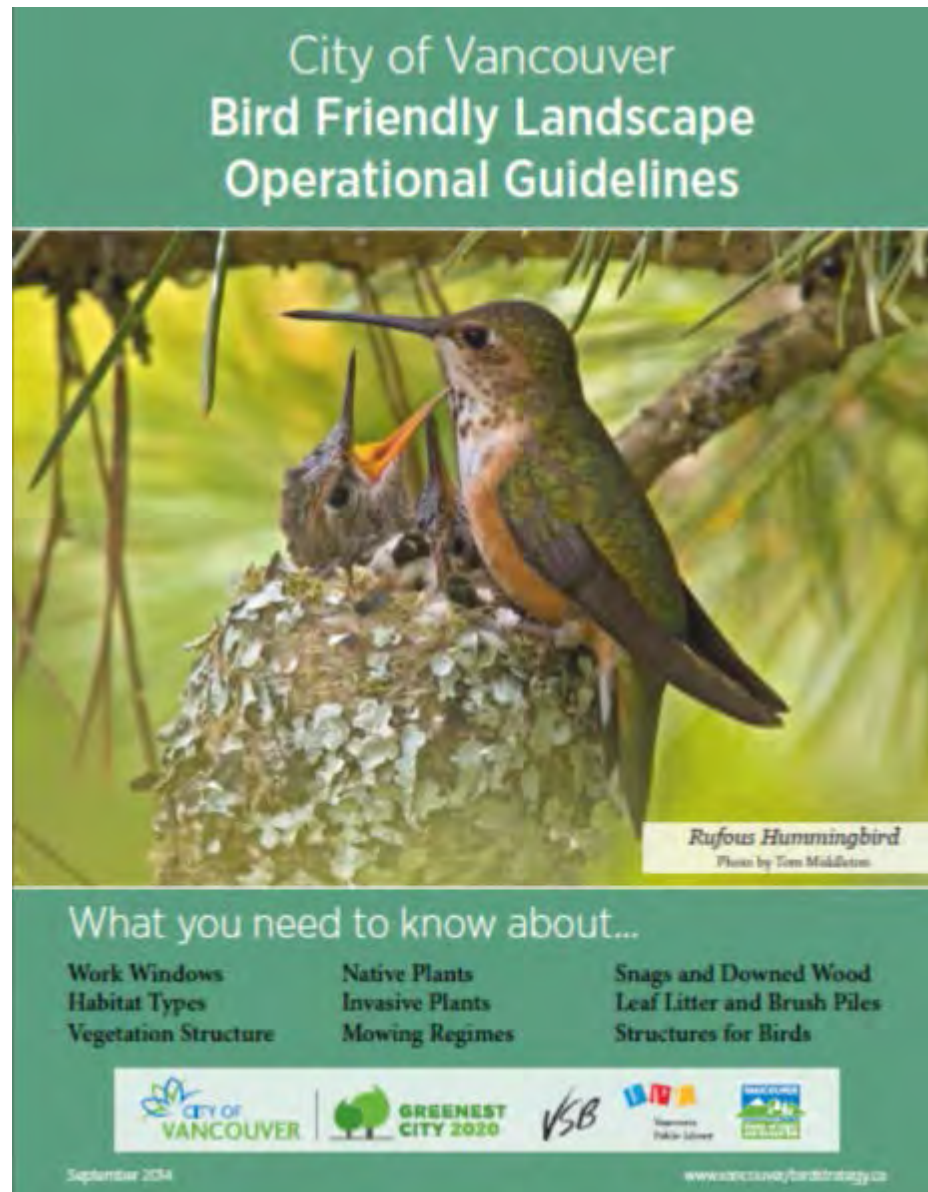
- Adopt and promote voluntary *Bird Friendly Landscape Design Guidelines* for development industry and landowners.



- a. Parks and Public Gardens
- b. Residential Gardens
- c. Green Streets
- d. Green Roofs and Walls
- e. Community Gardens
- f. Golf Courses
- g. School Grounds
- h. Cemeteries



- Apply and integrate *Bird Friendly Landscape Operational Guidelines* into public land operations and maintenance.
- Develop and promote voluntary *Bird Friendly Residential Landscape Guidelines* and other resources for homeowners and renters.
- Apply the *Bird Friendly Landscape Design Guidelines* and *Bird Friendly Landscape Operational Guidelines* to civic properties.



City of Vancouver
Bird Friendly Landscape
Operational Guidelines

Rufous Hummingbird
Photo by Tom Mollstrom

What you need to know about...

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Work Windows | Native Plants | Snags and Downed Wood |
| Habitat Types | Invasive Plants | Leaf Litter and Brush Piles |
| Vegetation Structure | Mowing Regimes | Structures for Birds |

City of Vancouver | Greenest City 2020 | VSB | Vancouver Public Library | Vancouver Greenest City 2020

September 2014 www.vancouver/birdstrategy.ca

Building Design Guidelines

- Apply and promote voluntary *Bird Friendly Building Design Guidelines* for development industry and homeowners.
- Initiate pilot projects on civic facilities and integrate into new City-owned developments.
- Explore solutions to light pollution on birds and reduce light pollution on City-owned buildings and infrastructure.



Portion of dead birds recovered in Toronto by FLAP during the fall 2002 migration. Photo: Mark Thiessen, National Geographic Society, from "Birds of Toronto."

2. BENEFITS OF BIRDS IN THE CITY

Birds contribute to human health, quality of life and benefit the economy, both directly and indirectly. Birds perform important ecosystem services; they disperse seeds, consume vast numbers of insects, reduce the transmission of disease, and provide pest control and pollination services for agriculture and forestry.² Birds are also beautiful and accessible forms of nature that bring the city to life with their songs and flight. Bird watching is one of the fastest growing leisure activities in North America, estimated to generate billions of dollars in tourism and recreation industries. According to a 2006 study, more than 1.8 million Canadians participated in a multi-day bird watching activity within the past two years.³ The Vancouver area is recognized internationally as a year-round hotspot for birds and a desirable destination for bird watchers, making consideration of bird friendly design a priority that has economic, social, and environmental benefits as we move towards the goal of becoming the greenest city by 2020.



People care deeply about birds, an important component of urban biodiversity.

3. GUIDELINES OBJECTIVES

The *Bird Friendly Design Guidelines*, if properly applied, should meet the following objectives outlined in the *Vancouver Bird Strategy*.

Support Habitat:

Protect, enhance and create habitats for a diversity of native birds.

Reduce Threats:

Reduce threats to birds in the urban environment.

Enhance Access:

Enhance access to nature for Vancouver residents and visitors to the city.

Enhance Awareness:

Increase awareness of the importance of birds and their needs.



In the U.S. in 2011, bird watchers spent **\$15 billion** on trip expenditures.

9. LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Visualizations of Bird Friendly Habitat in Vancouver.

CALLISTER PARK - Now and Potential

Landscape improvements in parks can increase habitat value and enhance access to nature.



- Establish a bird research and monitoring advisory group to compile and standardize bird data collection and reporting protocols.
- Explore opportunities for a citywide research and monitoring program and investigate other important research topics on urban bird populations.
- Evaluate City-owned buildings for bird collisions to assess the extent of the problem.
- Monitor and assess the effectiveness of the *Bird Friendly Design Guidelines*.



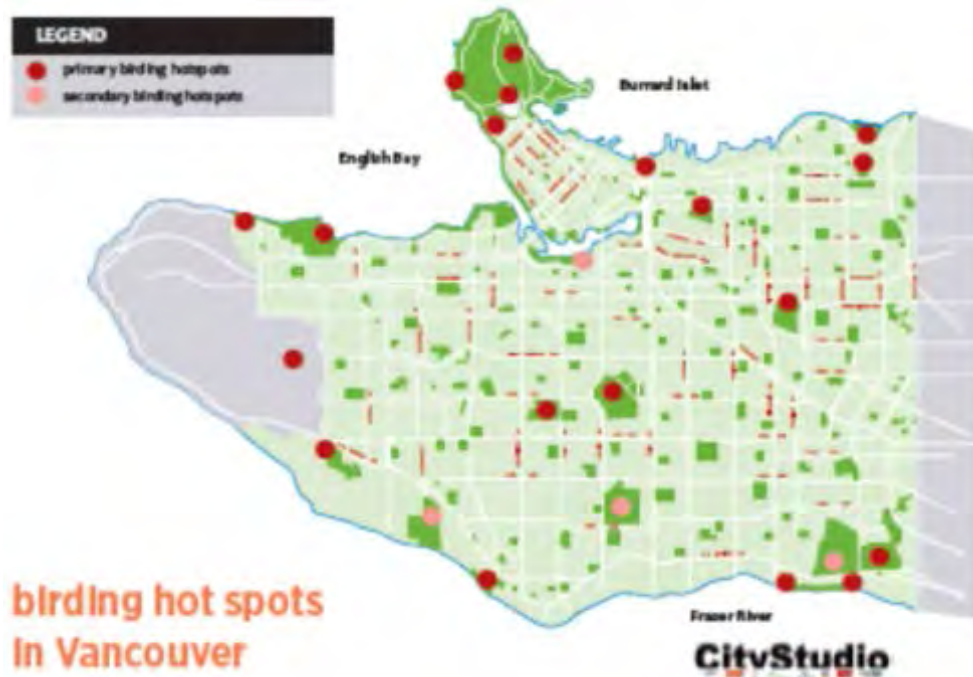
Monitoring by the Canadian Wildlife Service and thousands of volunteers has found clear trends in bird populations in Canada. Barn Swallows, previously a common bird in Canada, have declined by over 70% across the country and by over 90% in our Pacific Coast region since the early 1970s.

Arts, Awareness and Education

- Increase awareness through Bird Week and other events.
- Develop a communication strategy to support the Vancouver Bird Strategy Objectives.
- Develop educational programs and about bird conservation.
- Develop a private property residential bird habitat program and educational materials.
- Engage artists and the creative community in discussing and increasing awareness of birds.
- Continue the annual City Bird competition.
- Co-ordinate with the BCSPCA to increase awareness about the impact of domestic pets on birds.



- Seek opportunities to host large bird conferences in Vancouver.
- Establish a comprehensive resource inventory for Vancouver's birding products and experiences.
- Develop Vancouver-specific birding resources geared towards tourism.
- Increase awareness of and build content about birding for Vancouver as a destination for the emerging birding market.
- Work with tour operators to expand and increase awareness of birding offerings for visitors and encourage longer tourist visits to Vancouver.



- **Voluntary Guidelines:**
 - How successfully were the design guidelines used by developers or property managers?
 - Were there barriers or challenges to implementing the guidelines?
 - What changes should be made to the guidelines?
- **Bird Collision Monitoring Initiatives:**
 - How many birds were found and where?
 - What did we learn from monitoring bird collisions?
 - Can we use this information to implement additional measures in certain areas of the city?
- **Educational Initiatives:**
 - Did awareness increase?
 - Are more people participating in bird conservation and bird watching?
- **Economic Development:**
 - Did we attract birding conferences and conventions to Vancouver?
 - How many more tourists were attracted to Vancouver to participate in birding initiatives?

- A. That Council adopt the *Vancouver Bird Strategy* (Attachment A);
- B. That the draft *Bird Friendly Design Guidelines* (Attachment A's Appendix B and Attachment B) be applied on a voluntary basis to encourage bird friendly design of landscapes and buildings in Vancouver;
- C. That the *Bird Friendly Landscape Operational Guidelines* (Attachment C) be used to ensure bird friendly management practices in parks and other public open spaces; and,
- D. That staff review the effectiveness of the guidelines and report back to Council within two years with any revisions that may be required to improve them.



VANCOUVER

BOARD OF PARKS
AND RECREATION