



# Sale of the Glenmore Landing Parkland

## Birds

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News / Local News

## Chickadee recognized as Calgary's official bird by city council

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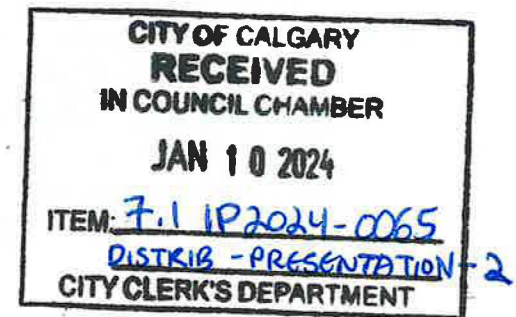
A black-capped chickadee sits on a branch at Fish Creek Park on Tuesday, March 16, 2021  
PHOTO BY AZIN GHAFARI/POSTMEDIA

Calgary city council has formally recognized the black-capped chickadee as Calgary's official bird.

The announcement was first made May 14 — World Migratory Bird Day — that [the chickadee had won a citywide contest](#) to become Calgary's official bird.

More than 36,000 votes were cast among five contenders. The also-rans included the magpie, the northern flicker, the blue jay and the red-breasted nuthatch.

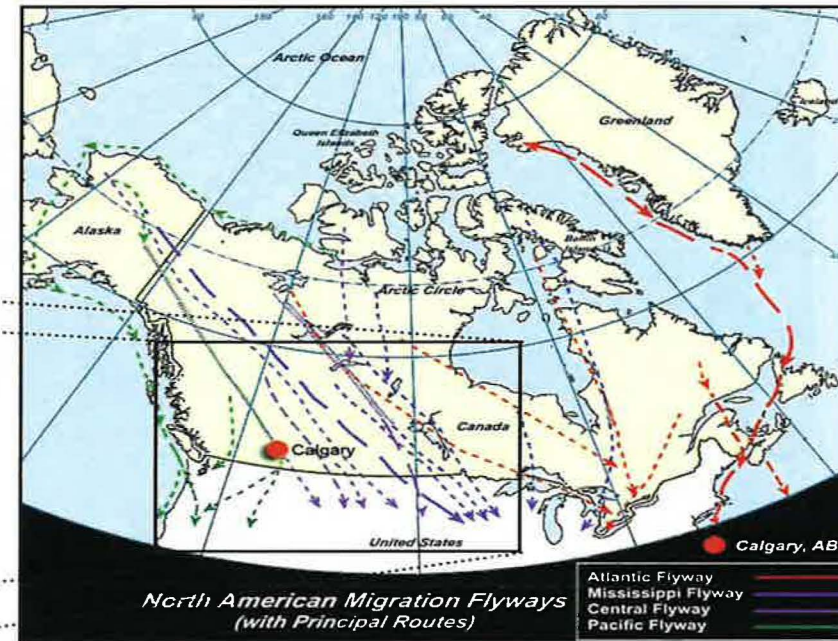
Did you know that there are 3 kinds of chickadee in the Calgary area?



# Background Information

1. Calgary has reported **387 species of birds** as of January 3, 2024  
Bird Life International avibase.bsc-doc.org
1. Calgary is on **2 migratory flyways**; Pacific and Central
1. Birds are an indicator species for environmental issues.

Image 10: North American Migration Flyways





# BIRD-FRIENDLY URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Integrating Natural Systems with Human Activities REPORT March 2011



The City of Calgary was aware of this in 2011 and created these guidelines for urban design. It is part of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP).

[calgary.ca/landuse](http://calgary.ca/landuse) | call 3-1-1





## 2.0 Role of the Guideline

### 2.1 Policy Alignment

The City of Calgary Bird-friendly Urban Design Guidelines (the "Guideline") provides a variety of bird-friendly urban design suggestions that can be considered to achieve the environmental objectives as outlined in the following high-level policy documents approved by Council:

#### The City of Calgary's Environmental Policy

The City of Calgary's Environmental Policy states:

The City will lead and inspire actions to reduce Calgary's ecological footprint and conserve, protect and enhance the environment for all Calgarians and the regional community. The City will integrate social, economic and environmental principles and performance objectives into all decision-making processes to maintain a high quality of life for present and future generations.

The policy further states:

The City of Calgary will integrate environmental considerations into all decisions and approvals relating to growth, planning, infrastructure, transportation and development.

#### The City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan (MDP)

The City of Calgary Municipal Development Plan incorporates the following specific environmental objectives and policies into land use, urban form and transportation planning to help to reduce impacts on the environment:

- Protecting environmentally-sensitive areas that conserve biodiversity and contribute to people's quality of life, the quality of communities and the quality of ecological systems.
- Creating a more compact urban form that uses less land and, therefore, reduces habitat loss and fragmentation and adverse impacts on wildlife, vegetation and water quality and quantity.
- Maintain biodiversity and landscape diversity, integrating and connecting ecological networks throughout the city.
- Give the highest priority to the protection of environmentally-significant areas in the allocation of land use.

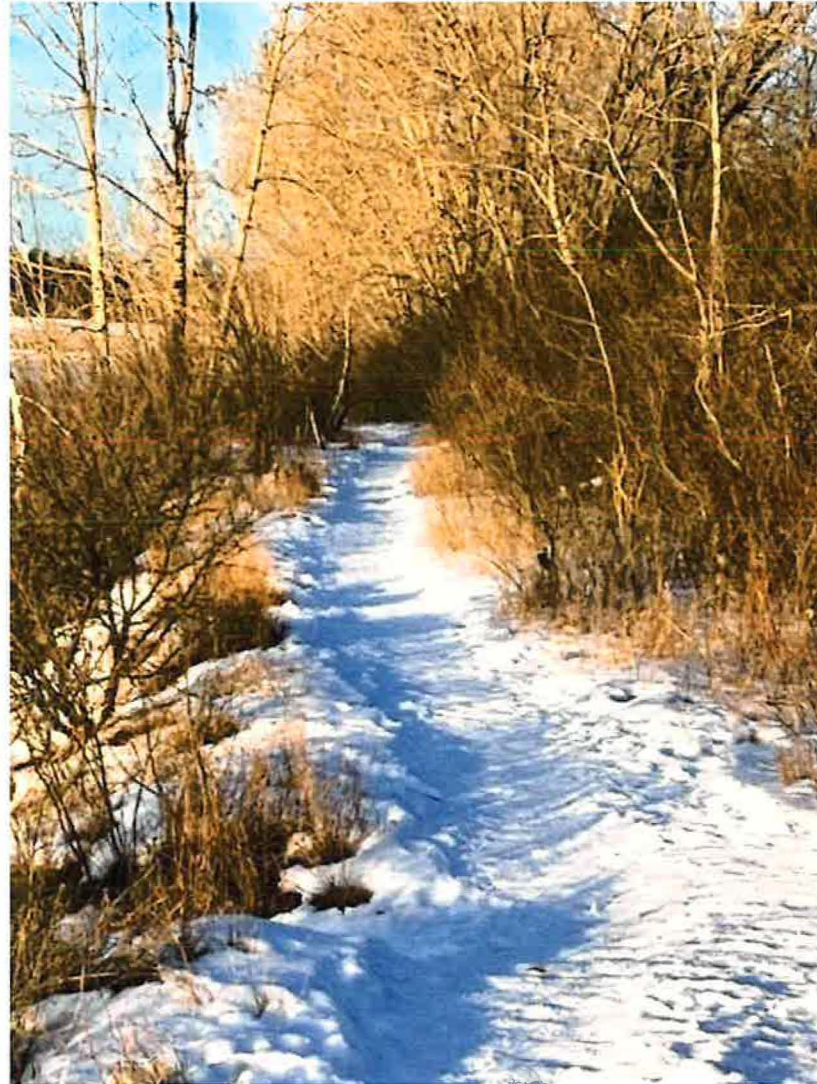
- Protect biodiversity within river valleys, ravines, coulees and wetlands.
- Ensure that the protection of significant habitats (sensitive ecological areas/unique environmental features) within the city's parks and open space system takes precedence over other uses.
- Protect riparian areas to meet habitat, water quality and public access through environmental reserve dedications and design alternatives.
- All land use and transportation planning and development should seek to conserve and protect ecosystems by:
  - i. Recognizing the interconnectedness of air, land, water, climate, ecosystems habitat and people;
  - ii. Considering and managing the cumulative impacts of development;
  - iii. Establishing, protecting and restoring native habitat and areas of biodiversity locally and regionally.

**“...Calgary will integrate environmental considerations into all decisions...”**

**“Protect environmentally-sensitive areas”**

**“Creating a more compact urban form that uses less land”**

**“Maintain biodiversity and landscape diversity”**





## 5.0 Bird-Friendly Urban Design Guidelines

### 5.1 Goals

The goals of the Guideline include:

- Provide effective locally-appropriate design guidance that can be applied to new development;
- Illustrate modifications that can be made to improve an existing building's bird-friendliness; and
- Demonstrate how, with the judicious application of appropriate design strategies, both goals of design aesthetics and bird-friendliness can be achieved.

### 5.2 Guideline Area

This Guideline is intended to be relevant to citywide, and applied particularly where developments interface with environmentally significant areas including the patches, corridors and matrixes as defined by Section 2.6.4 Ecological Networks of The Municipal Development Plan (e.g. the Bow River and the Elbow River valleys, ravines, creeks, coulees, wetlands). Care should be taken with buildings and structures in the Centre City area, where the immediate adjacency to the Bow River and predominant concentration of the city's largest built structures are located, and the incidence of bird strikes has been observed to be highest.

Specific consideration should be given to building facades facing directly onto open spaces in urban areas (such as urban parks, pocket parks, green roofs, street-tree corridors, etc.) and onto natural landscapes in suburban areas. The following table lists the Areas of Particular Concern for applying bird-friendly urban design strategies and guidelines. Image 14 illustrates those areas, and Calgary's natural parks which have been identified as preferred natural habitats for local and migratory birds in Calgary.

Areas of Particular Concern

Areas of Particular Concern	Descriptions
Development/Building/Structure Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the Centre City area (Centre City Plan, 2007)</li> <li>• Adjacent to Bow River and Elbow River valleys and open space, Weaselhead and Glenmore Park, and Fish Creek Provincial park (Within a distance of 1/4 mile or 400 metres from the edge of the open space)</li> <li>• Adjacent to Calgary's natural parks and associated open spaces as identified on Image 14 (Within a distance of 1/4 mile or 400 metres from the edge of the open space)</li> </ul>
Window or Glass Façade Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abutting attractive bird habitat areas (trees, shrubs, meadows, water features, etc.)</li> <li>• At the first 4 levels of a building or up to 16 metres (especially the atriums, lobbies, linkways and +1.5 bridges)</li> <li>• Abutting a rooftop garden</li> <li>• Abutting a landscaped courtyard</li> <li>• At building corners</li> </ul>

# Why do we need to protect this environment?

## It's simple...

- Development that consists of tall buildings causes bird strikes. 50-90% of the birds die. This has become an issue in downtown Calgary.
- Migrating birds get confused by bright lights at night and they can lose their way
- Changing the environment causes changes in the species that can live there



Image 3: A photo of birds collected by FLAP volunteers in Greater Toronto Area in 2009



**2021**

Calgary became a member of Nature Canada Bird Friendly Cities!

**2023**

Calgary is recertified and upgraded to the Intermediate Level!

It seems that they are committed to parkland and environments that support wildlife.....



## What Makes a Bird Friendly City

Nature Canada with support from Environment and Climate Change Canada looked at the top threats facing birds in the urban environment and created a rubric to score cities in different areas.

[Home](#)[Mission and Vision](#)[Mandatory Criteria](#)[Threat Reduction](#)[Habitat Protection](#)[Education and Outreach](#)[City Bird Vote](#)[Being Bird Friendly Additional](#)

# Habitat Protection, Restoration and Climate Resiliency

Habitat protection is vital to ensuring bird's continued presence in our urban areas. With urbanization continuing and climate events becoming more frequent, ensuring there is adequate, high quality habitat in our cities becomes even more important. While there is plenty of work to do in this area, Calgary has already put a lot of effort into supporting biodiversity and working towards climate resiliency. [Learn more below](#)



# Habitat Management Strategy

The Criteria:

Municipality has a habitat management strategy based on ecological and climate considerations. These considerations include:

A. Increasing the number of trees and area of the urban forest canopy

The City of Calgary's tree canopy is currently at 8.25% (including public and private trees), and the city is trying to increase that to 16%. The city has an inventory of all public trees, and a management plan for these trees.

B. Snag protection - leaving snags standing in cases where public safety is not jeopardized

Calgary promotes leaving snags or portions of trees after tree removals in certain areas (and where public safety is not jeopardized). Guidance for the protection of standing and fallen dead trees can be found in the Natural Area Management Plan.

## C. Protecting trees on private and public lands

programs to promote protection of private trees in the city

D. Responsible vegetation management - Prohibiting active vegetation management during breeding season on municipal lands, including forests, storm-water management facilities, and easements

The City of Calgary has an Urban Forestry Pruning Plan where City and contractor crews are engaged to prune/remove trees. City crews operate year round while contractors are brought in on an as needed basis, primarily for large tree removals that the City lacks equipment for. Both contractors and City crews are expected to adhere to Federal and Provincial regulations regarding birds. For instance, compliance with the federal Migratory Birds Convention Act and the provincial Wildlife Act is mandatory. City crews have a protocol which must be followed; if single trees are being removed they are examined for an active nest. If a nest is

**“Protecting trees on private and public lands”**



### Habitat Disturbance

The Criteria from Nature Canada: Municipality has policy and practices to prohibit or mitigate disturbance of birds from humans or their pets at natural areas or important bird habitat (e.g., leash bylaw, no-go zones certain times of year).

The City of Calgary has policy and practices to prohibit or mitigate the disturbance of birds and other wildlife by Calgarians and their pets in natural areas and has a suite of policies aimed at preventing disturbance by city workers and contractors. The City's [Natural Areas Management Plan](#) and [Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw](#) outline some of these policies. In addition, biodiversity hotspots are recognized by designation of natural areas as areas of "special protection", "major", "supporting" or "parks with natural area zones". They are also recognized in the City's *Open Space Plan 2002*.

### The Criteria from Nature Canada:

Municipality has policy and practices to prohibit or mitigate disturbance of birds from humans or their pets at natural areas or important bird habitat...

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Home

Mission and Vision

Mandatory Criteria

Threat Reduction

Habitat Protection

Education and Outreach

City Bird Vets

Being Bird Friendly

Additional

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## Biological Diversity

The Criteria:

Municipality has an official strategy to protect the biological diversity in its parks and natural areas. The strategy includes measures such as promoting connectivity between natural areas, buffering core biodiversity hotspots from harmful human activities, increasing the number of protected areas, and periodically monitoring birds on some city parks to assess the success of the strategy

Calgary's BiodiverCity Strategic Plan supports increasing ecological resilience and habitat connectivity for wildlife. As noted above the Plan has a target for success of restoring 20% of Calgary's open space for biodiversity. The Municipal Development Plan also has goal of supporting biodiversity and maintaining habitat connectivity which can be found with the recent inclusion of the ecological network in the plan.

There are also a couple of programs in place for biodiversity monitoring including a collaborative project called Calgary Connect. This program partners the City of Calgary with the Mistakis Institute for the Rockies, Friends of Fish Creek Park, Weaselhead / Glenmore Park Preservation Society and Alberta Environment and Protected Areas to support ecological connectivity in and around Calgary. This study includes a long term remote camera monitoring component which works to engage citizen scientists. In addition, birds are monitored in the city by the Calgary Bird Banding Society and changes over time are documented

“Buffering core biodiversity hotspots from harmful human activities....”

“To support ecological connectivity in and around Calgary...”

Dear City of Calgary,

You have been advocates for our biodiversity. You have created documents and policy and practices to help everyone understand and respect this biodiversity. Your residents love being part of a city that is vibrant and alive and full of natural opportunities.

The parkland surrounding Glenmore Landing may seem like a small and insignificant piece of land that won't be missed. A piece of land that doesn't serve much purpose. A piece of land that could generate income for the city and it's owner.

**BUT AT WHAT COST....**

\*Selling and developing this land **WILL** change the ecosystem that surrounds it.

\*It will affect the biodiversity in a negative way.

\*It will chase species from our city or cause their death.

\*It will also affect the health of people from all over this great city, who come to use the pathways and parkland that surround the reservoir.

Please honour your previous commitments and choose to leave this parkland alone and to revise the development plan for this area.

Sincerely, Jane Kinzer, Haysboro Resident, Born and raised Calgarian, Nature enthusiast

Notes for Jane Kinzer  
Presentation on Jan.10/23  
Infrastructure/Planning Committee

1.

Hello, my name is Jane Kinzer. I'm a born and raised Calgarian, living in Haysboro. I am here as a citizen first but I am also a member of my community association and a group called Communities for the Preservation of Glenmore Landing.

I am in favour of responsible densification and development in our city. I am not in agreement with the current plans for the redevelopment of Glenmore Landing as the sale of this land will lead to a massive redevelopment.

2.

Today I am speaking specifically about birds and the impact that the loss of parkland can have on them.

3.

Calgary has reported 387 species of birds. Bird counts are done by the citizens of Calgary and then reported to official databases.

Some birds are residents and some migrate through our airspace on 2 flyways, pacific and central. The Glenmore reservoir as well as our rivers are guides and rest spots for 100's of thousands if not millions of birds twice a year.

**Birds are considered an indicator species for changing environmental conditions. This means if they are flourishing the environment is healthy.**

4.

The City of Calgary officially released it's bird friendly, urban design guidelines in 2011. Fantastic! It's goal is to **integrate natural systems and human activities**.

5.

Within this guide 4 statements really rang true for me

6.

**Calgary will integrate environmental considerations into all decisions**, I love that the environment will be considered, my question is what is the guiding principle?... money or a healthy environment

**Protect environmentally-sensitive areas** excellent! Question, what is the definition of environmentally sensitive?

**Create a more compact urban form that uses less land**, densification is great. Question, how do the development guidelines and the environmental guidelines intersect?

**Maintain biodiversity and landscape diversity**, what kind of buffer will be given around parkland to maintain our biodiversity?

7.

In the guide, Glenmore Park is identified as an area of particular concern.

It also states that ¼ mile or 400 metres should be the size of the buffer space between parkland and development



8.

Small changes in the environment will change a bird's behaviour.

If you don't fill the feeder they move on to feed elsewhere.

If there is no tree protection from the weather, they move on or freeze.

If the parkland becomes high rise towers covered in windows, birds will strike as they cannot comprehend the difference between a reflection and the actual sky or trees. 50-90% who strike will die.

The picture on the right was taken in 2009 in downtown Toronto, after one night during migration season. It shows all the birds that struck one building and died.

9.

In 2021 and again in 2023, the city of Calgary committed itself to be a bird friendly city. This initiative by Nature Canada, highlights threats that have contributed to the loss of 3 billion birds on Canada's landscape over the last 50 years.

10.

Habitat protection is key to this success. The parkland surrounding Glenmore Landing is habitat that needs to be protected.

11.

One of the key strategies is to protect trees BUT losing 200+ trees on the 5 acres of this parkland doesn't make sense...

12.

Calgary already has policies and practises in place

We don't need to reinvent the wheel, we just need to follow the work that has already been done.

13.

Buffers and ecological connectivity are key components in the design process.

The 5 acres surrounding Glenmore landing provide both, a buffer and ecological connectivity that support biological diversity

14.

Read the letter