



CHICAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY
5801-C N. Pulaski Road Chicago, IL 60646-6057

COMPASS

Navigating the world of birds and nature

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Building designs with large areas of transparent and/or reflective glass will create a hazard that birds will fly towards. Photo by Annette Prince.

A Safer City for Birds: Announcing the formation of Bird Friendly Chicago

by Annette Prince, Director, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors and Secretary, Chicago Audubon Society

Chicago Audubon Society has brought together members of the Chicago birding community to form a working group for the advancement of a bird-friendly building ordinance for the city of Chicago. Representatives from Chicago Audubon Society, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors and Chicago Ornithological Society have formed “Bird Friendly Chicago”, an alliance working to promote a safer urban environment for birds through improved lighting, landscaping and glass features of buildings.

Here is how you can learn more:

- Attend a presentation at the North Park Village Nature Center on November 13th to learn about the importance of protecting resident and migratory birds from the hazards of dangerous building features. Socializing at 7:00 p.m. Program begins at 7:15 p.m.
- Listen to a two minute radio segment on this topic on BirdNote www.birdnote.org/show/why-birds-collide-buildings
- Read our FAQs (below) that review the issues of making bird safety part of sustainable design.
- Have your organization sign onto our website, birdfriendlychicago.org, to support the adoption of a bird-friendly building ordinance.
- Contact us through the same website to become part of our efforts to educate and petition city officials, developers, architects, designers and planners to make Chicago a leader in protecting the birds that are a valued part of the natural world we depend on and enjoy.



Birds do not perceive glass as a solid barrier. Tens of thousands die or are injured each year in Chicago when they strike transparent or reflective glass. Photo by Annette Prince.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Proposed Bird-Friendly Building Ordinance

Prepared by Bird Friendly Chicago

Why do birds matter?

Birds are a critical part of a sustainable, balanced environment that people and all life depend on. They control insect and rodent populations, pollinate plants and distribute seeds.

Birds are an important and inspirational connection to the natural world. Birds enrich human lives and bird enthusiasts make important contributions to local economies. A US Fish & Wildlife Service survey in 2011 estimated that bird watchers spent \$44.5 billion annually on travel and equipment.

Why is Chicago so important?

Chicago is within a major flight path for millions of migratory birds that move along its rivers and the shores of Lake Michigan every spring and fall. Birds have used this region’s critical green spaces to rest and feed for thousands of years before human development created an urban environment filled with hazards.

How are birds affected by buildings?

It is estimated that 300 million to one billion birds are killed annually in North America by collisions with buildings.

Why is glass dangerous for birds?

Birds cannot see or know to avoid transparent glass. They do not understand that sky and landscaping that they see reflected on glass surfaces are merely images.

Why is nighttime lighting dangerous for birds?

Most species of songbirds migrate at night. Lighting that emanates from

urban areas into the nighttime sky confuses birds and attracts them away from their migratory flights, bringing them down into the hazards of the city.

Are collisions a year-round problem?

The greatest concentration of collisions occurs during spring and fall migration (March to June and August to November) when millions of birds pass through the Chicago region. Resident, wintering and breeding birds are victims of collisions throughout the year.

Can collisions and bird mortality be reduced?

Many collisions can be prevented in both new and existing structures by incorporating bird-friendly design and appropriate lighting and landscaping.

Why should we worry about birds when we can’t even provide affordable housing for many people? Aren’t there more important priorities?

- Bird-friendly building design need not come at the expense of other social or infrastructure investments. The City of Chicago already has a long list of sustainability criteria for both new construction and renovation projects. Bird-friendly building design would be implemented in the same way: it would simply be another element of sustainable design required of development in Chicago.
- Many bird-friendly design features also provide energy and cost savings in building operations.

- Protecting birds is important to a healthy environment that people depend on.

What’s already being done in the Chicago region?

- Chicago was the first US city to have a “Lights Out” program which for almost two decades has encouraged building managers to turn off exterior and interior lighting during the migration seasons after 11 p.m.
- Chicago has led the country with Chicago Bird Collision Monitors, the largest bird collision monitoring project in the nation, that has for 16 years documented thousands of birds every year that have been killed or injured by window collisions in downtown and surrounding areas.
- The Chicago Department of Planning and Development introduced voluntary credits for incorporating bird safety into building design and operation in its 2017 Chicago Sustainable Development Policy.
- In 2008, Cook County adopted a bird-friendly requirement for all new construction and major renovation projects in County-owned buildings.
- Universities in our area—Northwestern, Loyola, University of Chicago, and Northeastern Illinois—are embracing bird safety as part of sustainability plans for new and retrofitted buildings on their campuses.



Building design that incorporates visual elements that birds can see and avoid will protect them from collisions with glass. Photo by Annette Prince.

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What are other cities doing?

- Other cities and states have passed ordinances or laws mandating bird-friendly building design:
- San Francisco, Standards for Bird-Safe Buildings, 2011
- Toronto, Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines (2007), Best Practices, Glass (2016), and Best Practices for Effective Lighting (2016)
- Oakland, California (ordinance similar to San Francisco's), 2013
- State of Minnesota, adopted LEED "Reducing Bird Collisions" program, 2013
- San Jose, California, Riparian Corridor Protection and Bird-Safe Design, 2016

What does Chicago need to do next to solve the problem of collisions?

The solution is to require bird-friendly building design as a standard in Chicago.

What are some effective ways to make buildings bird-friendly?

- Architectural design can reduce the size of windows, rather than have glass as the entire surface of a building.
- Glass can be treated to provide patterns visible to birds.
- External screens or sun shades placed in front of glass can be a buffer.
- Exterior lighting can be eliminated, reduced, shielded or equipped with timers.
- Interior lighting can be adjusted in evening and early morning hours when birds are most active by drawing shades, installing motion detection or station lighting in order to reduce the amount of light emanating from a building.

Is there any evidence that these measures will have a real impact?

Scientific research, product testing, and post-occupancy evaluations of buildings incorporating bird-friendly features have demonstrated the effectiveness of these measures.

Among measures that have been shown not to work are decals (e.g., hawk or owl silhouettes) that do not cover sufficient surface area to deter a bird or to which birds become habituated.

What would the Chicago Bird-Friendly Building Ordinance specifically propose?

The ordinance would establish requirements for bird-friendly design with general guidelines and more specific criteria, such as:

- Design buildings to limit the percentage of transparent or reflective glass in the overall building exterior.
- Utilize glass that provides patterns visible to birds that can prevent



Bright lights from buildings, along with reflective or transparent window and lobby glass, are hazards for birds migrating through Chicago.

Each year Chicago Bird Collision Monitors recover more than 6000 birds that have collided with buildings.

With your help our rescue and prevention efforts can be expanded and more birds can be saved.

Join a morning rescue team.

Monitor a building where you live or work.

Transport birds to wildlife rehabilitation centers.

Support collision prevention work.

Assist in public outreach and awareness programs.

For more information:

www.birdmonitors.net

them from striking transparent or reflective surfaces.

- Limit the amount, location and timing of exterior lighting.
- Reduce interior lighting visible from the outside using timers, dimmers, blinds and motion controls.
- Avoid situations where plantings can be reflected on glass surfaces or seen in building interiors through transparent glass.

Which buildings will the ordinance affect?

Bird-friendly design would be required for larger residential projects and all commercial development.

Existing buildings will not be affected unless they undertake a major renovation project, although voluntary efforts to reduce building collisions will be encouraged.

Bird-friendly design would not be required for single-family homes or two- and three-flats, although it is encouraged.

Will bird-friendly measures increase costs?

- Retrofitting an existing structure can be very expensive and can alter the planned look of a building. Including bird-friendly features from the start can integrate them into an attractive design.
- Reduction in the number and size of windows can reduce initial cost, replacement and maintenance.
- There may be a higher upfront cost for treated glass but these costs may be recovered over time. Bird-friendly glass can be cost-neutral because products such

as fritted glass used to decrease collisions can also reduce heat gain in summer and heat loss in winter thereby reducing cooling and heating costs. Treated glass surfaces and modified use of glass can enhance a building design.

- Modification of exterior and interior lighting are already part of sustainability measures and can result in energy savings.

Won't a bird-friendly building ordinance be difficult to implement and enforce?

No, the City of Chicago implements and enforces many kinds of complicated building regulations on a daily basis. One of the methods is self-certification, where the architect or other professional reviews the code requirements, designs the building accordingly, and certifies that the building design meets the specific criteria. This is done with a great many building permit requirements that are more complicated than bird-friendly building design.

Other cities have adopted various forms of bird-friendly building design and enforce the code routinely.

Building and zoning and other codes are, by definition, limits that are imposed for the sake of public safety and the greater civic good.

The Bird-Friendly Building Ordinance would simply correct a problem that has worsened with the increased use of glass exteriors and internal and external building illumination. An ordinance will provide for the protection of migratory birds as an important part of a sustainable and green Chicago which benefits all residents.

COMPASS

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Report sightings to: 773-539-6793

Report injured birds to Chicago Bird Collision Monitors hotline:

773-988-1867
Annette Prince, Director,
info@birdmonitors.net

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Christmas Bird Counts: We've come a long way!

by John Elliot, CAS Board member



In December, 1900, an intrepid group of 27 observers set out to count all the birds they could find on the very first Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Those 27 people covered 25 separate circles, from New Hampshire to California and Louisiana, and two in Canada. They found a total of 89 species, with California at the top with 36.



Raising awareness of decimation of bird populations by collection for hats was one goal of the first Christmas counts.

One counter set out from Glen Ellyn, Illinois, and found 7 species, including 8 prairie chickens. The Wisconsin participant did a little better at 12 species, but did not find prairie chickens, and the Missouri counter beat that at 15 species. Surprisingly, the second lowest count in the U.S. was in New York's Central Park at 6 species. One Connecticut counter found only 5 species.

Data from these and all other counts are posted online at netapp.audubon.org/cbcobservation. (Canada counts are not included in the 1900 data.)

On the 117th count (2016–17), 2,536 counts—1,933 in the United States, 447 in Canada, and 156 in Latin

America, Caribbean, Pacific Islands—were conducted; 641 species were recorded in the U.S., of 2,636 worldwide. Individual count results for last year can be viewed on the website, but a summary has not been posted.

This year the Chicago area will be well covered by count circles so wherever you are there will be a count near you. CAS is a co-sponsor with Evanston North Shore Bird Club of the Chicago Urban count, started by board member Jeffrey Sanders and now in its 53rd year.

You don't need to be an expert birder to participate. Check this site for information on other counts, including compiler contact information: audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count.

Leaders will be happy to pair new participants with experienced counters. Joining a count is good motivation for getting outside for a break from the hectic season, and the data you contribute add one more bit of help for scientists working for bird and habitat conservation.



Red Crossbill, Pine Siskin, and Northern Cardinal. Photo by John Elliot.



Purple Finch. Photo by John Elliott.

CAS Annual Appeal

In the near future members of Chicago Audubon Society will receive a letter asking for your financial support for our local conservation and education programs.

WE DO THIS ONLY ONCE A YEAR (though you may receive other requests from National Audubon or other birding groups) and we need your support to continue our work.

As the letter will describe we have made great progress this past year and are looking ahead to even greater accomplishments.

Please open the letter when it arrives in your mailbox and, if you like what you read there, add CAS to the organizations you support in 2018.

We are grateful for your membership and support and always appreciate hearing from you.

Dave Willard, President
and the Board of
Chicago Audubon Society



Sandhill Cranes. Photo by Greg Dixon.

Crane Congregation Tours

November and December

The Leopold Center
E13701 Levee Road
Baraboo, WI 53913

Learn about the sandhill cranes' staging phenomenon in an informal, family-friendly setting led by education and land stewardship fellows. For weeks before they take flight to migrate south, sandhill cranes gather in mass, by the thousands, on the islands and sandbars of the Wisconsin River. The Aldo Leopold

Shack and Farm has become the region's premier vantage point to experience the incredible sights and sounds of this wildlife spectacle. Witness the cranes up close in Leopold Country!

For tour descriptions, dates and times, and to register, go to www.aldoleopold.org/visit/the-cranes.

We Are Accepting Nominations for the 2019 CAS Environmental Awards

Following a tradition initiated in 1977, Chicago Audubon Society is preparing for our biennial recognition of excellence and accomplishments in environmental conservation and education.

The exact date, place and time of this spring's awards banquet will be announced in the next Compass and on our website, but at this time members can help us to identify people and organizations that have made a difference for birds, habitat, or people. Send us your thoughts about outstanding candidates in the following award categories by emailing a short description of your nomination to chicagoaudubon@sbcglobal.net.

- Excellence in Environmental Reporting—All media eligible
- Protector of the Environment—Educator
- Protector of the Environment—Political Service
- Protector of the Environment—Single Act (Individual)
- Protector of the Environment—Single Act (Group)
- Protector of the Environment—Avocation
- Protector of the Environment—Vocation
- Protector of the Environment—Group
- First Friend of Chicago Audubon
- Service to Chicago Area Birders
- Good Business Neighbor
- Young Environmentalist

You do not need to be a member of Chicago Audubon Society to attend our programs or join any of our walks.

For updates on dates and times, visit chicagoaudubon.org.

Saturdays, November 3 and December 1, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Camp Pine Brush Cut Days. Warm up, get your daily exercise and contribute to bird habitat at this CAS restoration project. Bring water and gloves if you have them; dress for some moderate work. We'll have tools, gloves and snacks. Enter on the south side of Lake Avenue, eastbound ONLY from Des Plaines River Rd.—no left turn westbound on Lake. Contact: Laurel Ross (lross@fieldmuseum.org).

Saturday, November 3, 8:00 a.m. CAS Bird Walk, Penny Road Pond, Barrington Hills. Ducks will be the target at Penny Road Pond and other ponds in the Spring Creek forest preserves. Our pace will keep us warm as we try to visit a half dozen small bodies of water, observing anything else along the way. A good portion of the walk will be off-trail, and we may cover as much as five miles on foot. Penny Road Pond, Penny Road between Healy and Old Sutton, one mile west of Penny Road Pub. Leader: Craig Stettner (cstettne@harpercollege.edu, 847-239-3765).

Tuesday, November 13, 7:00 p.m. CAS Program: Making Chicago's Buildings Safe for Birds. North Park Village Nature Center, 5801, N. Pulaski Road, Building D. Come learn how you can be a part of reducing a major threat to birds. An amazing migration of bird life takes place through the United States twice each year, and Chicago gets more than its share. However, up to a billion birds are killed each year in North America as a result of window collisions. Join Annette Prince, Director of Chicago Bird Collision Monitors, and Carl Giometti, architect and president of the Chicago Ornithological Society, as they discuss the bird-safe building laws that are being developed currently in Chicago and around the region, share bird-friendly building designs and practices and discuss how to become a bird-safe building advocate. Join us for socializing at 7:00 p.m. Program begins at 7:15 p.m. For questions or

directions, call Chicago Audubon's office, 773-539-6793.

Wednesday, November 14, 8:00 a.m. CAS Bird Walk, Bemis Woods North, Westchester. Migration continues at Bemis Woods in mid-November. We will be looking for late fall migrants and species preparing to winter in the forest preserves. Join us to look for sparrows, kinglets, creepers and lingering migrants. Bemis Woods North, Wolf Rd. between 31st and Ogden, easternmost part of parking area, just west of Wolf Rd. Leader: Douglas Stotz (dfstotz@gmail.com).

Sunday, December 16, 5:30 a.m. Owl Calling and Urban Count, Trailside Museum, River Forest. Calling for owls is a traditional part of Christmas bird counts. Great horned or screech owls might respond before dawn in Thatcher Woods. Please register with Trailside Museum, 708-366-6530, or contact John Elliott (johnelliott4@gmail.com) for information. Trailside Museum is at 738 Thatcher Ave., at Chicago Ave., River Forest.

119th Annual Christmas Bird Count. Between December 14 and January 5,

Saturday, December 29, Calumet City/Sand Ridge. Compiler: John Elliott (johnelliott4@gmail.com).

Thursday, December 27 and Friday, December 28, 9:00–11:00 a.m. Kids and Birds Mini Camp, Trailside Museum, River Forest. Hey kids—what birds do you know? What would you like to know about them? John Elliott of Chicago Audubon will help kids ages 8 to 12 have fun with indoor and outdoor activities to introduce the colorful world of birds. For information, contact John (johnelliott4@gmail.com). Maximum 10 participants. Registration required, 708-366-6530.

Every Saturday, All Year, 8:00 a.m. CAS Bird Walks, Wooded Island, Jackson Park. These walks continue throughout the year, weather permitting. Bring binoculars and field guides; dress for the weather. Many species are seen. Meet at the parking lot south of the Museum of Science & Industry (MSI), which is accessible via Science Drive, the intersection just south of 57th Drive/MSI. For details and directions, contact Pat Durkin (pat.durkin@comcast.net). Everyone is welcome.

Every Second Saturday, All Year, 10:00 a.m. Skokie Lagoons Workdays. These workdays are sponsored by CAS. Activities include buckthorn cutting, brush pile burning and other management endeavors. Meet at the Tower Road parking lot, east of the lagoon bridge, in Winnetka. For further information, call Dave Kosnik, 847-456-6368.

Looking Ahead to 2019

Wild Things 2019 Conference, Saturday, February 23. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont. The long running Chicago Wilderness biennial conference just keeps getting bigger and better. Check out details at wildthingscommunity.org/2019-wild-things-conference.

*Birding and Conservation:
Compelling Voices
Upcoming new program series*

Alively and motivated committee representing three organization—CAS, COS and the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum—put our heads together this past spring to select and recruit a roster of speakers on important bird conservation topics. We wanted to focus attention on a group of presenters that have gotten less attention than they deserve—women and people of color. The committee had no trouble generating a long, exciting list of possible speakers and spent considerable time winnowing our list to four people for our first year's series. We are proud to announce these talks for next year, all of which will be held at the Notebaert's wonderful facility in Lincoln Park.

January 31	Amanda Rodewald
March 28	Bridget Stuchbury
June 25	Drew Lanham
September 19	Lynn E. Barber

Titles of talks and other details will be forthcoming soon, but for now mark your calendars!

Saturday, December 8, 8:30 a.m. CAS Bird Walk, Spring Creek Forest Preserve, Barrington Hills. We'll begin this search for winter birds across the street from the Penny Road Pond parking lot, walking around Galloping Hill Prairie and the Hidden Fen. We will then cross Penny Road and into the woods, paying particular attention to any open water at the time. These are not paved trails; be prepared for snow on trails. Penny Road Pond, Penny Road between Healy and Old Sutton, one mile west of Penny Road Pub. Leader: Craig Stettner (cstettne@harpercollege.edu, 847-239-3765).

birders, conservationists and just plain folks all around the world will count all the birds they can find in their count circles. All are welcome. Contact the compiler for these counts. You can find information on other counts, past results and more at audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count.

Sunday, December 16, Chicago Urban, co-sponsored by CAS. Compiler: Jeffrey Sanders (yellowstart5@yahoo.com).

Monday, December 17, Barrington. Compiler: Duane Heaton (dheaton19@comcast.net).

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Chicago Audubon Membership Form

If you wish to become a new member or to renew an existing membership, you may either mail in this form with a check or your credit card information or charge your membership online (chicagoaudubon.org). You may also make a straight donation with this form or online. If you prefer, you may call the office with your credit card information (773-539-6793).

Your name _____

Street address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone number _____ Email _____

Minimum yearly membership: \$25. At \$65 or above, new Membership or Membership renewal includes an official Chicago Audubon hat.

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