



Memo

To: Chair and Members of Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC)

From: Jay Stanford, Director, Climate Change, Environment & Waste Management

Date: July 26, 2023

RE: **Green Week Collection**

Background

At the AWCAC meeting on July 6, the committee passed the following motion:

“That the Civic Administration BE REQUESTED to attend the next Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee meeting to update the committee on Green Week, including but not limited to the following, as it may impact migratory and nesting birds:

- a) how they plan yard waste schedules;
- b) what the process is for determining the schedule; and,
- c) is it possible to look at different times or days for Green Week.”

This motion was passed at the CPSC meeting on July 18, 2023 and approved by Council on July 25, 2023.

Answers

a) how they plan yard waste schedules;

Yard waste includes tree, plant and hedge trimmings, tree prunings and limbs, vegetable and ornamental garden trimmings, weeds, leaves, etc. Grass clippings are not permitted for curbside collection but can be brought to the EnviroDepots at \$1.50 per bag.

The City is currently divided into six collection zones (Appendix A). It takes six weeks to complete six zones across the city (Zone A through Zone F). In 2023, Week 1 started March 27 (Zone D). Week 6 started May 1 and ended around May 6 (Zone C). Then the cycle starts again.

Green Weeks are generally all about yard waste until early October when the materials at the curb are dominated by fall leaves. During the heavy fall leaf period, two Zones are done in the same week,

EnviroDepots are open year round. Between mid December and mid-March they are open two days per week. Between Mid-March and mid-December they are open seven days per week to drop off yard waste and many other materials.

b) what the process is for determining the schedule

Building on the above answers, each year the starting Zone (i.e., the area of London) changes to be as fair as possible with which zone starts the collection season (i.e., generally the Zones rotate to later in the schedule and a new Zone starts). The actual start date remains about the same, but the area of London where collection starts changes. Each Zone has between 20,000 and 22,000 houses (stops).

c) is it possible to look at different times or days for Green Week

No, for primarily two reasons:

1. When yard waste is not picked up at the curb, many Londoners travel to the EnviroDepots with yard waste; and

2. It does not appear that nesting periods can be avoided. In preparation to address these questions from AWAC, City staff examined nesting information and related information provided by Government of Canada ([Nesting periods - Canada.ca](#) [Guidelines to avoid harm to migratory birds - Canada.ca](#)). Extracts are contained in Appendix B. London appears to be near two zones; C1 and C2. The Regional Nesting Periods noted are between late March and late August.

This is likely the first time since 1996, when the Green Week program was introduced, that there has been discussion that the yard waste collection program may be causing an impact on migratory and nesting birds.

The habits of yard maintenance in the spring, summer and fall are long standing practices for the majority of Londoners. Any warm weather in March or April brings people out of their house and into their yards. If service was not provided at the curb, more and more people would travel to the drop-off depots with their yard waste. This increase in vehicle/pickup travel and congestion at the depot is not desirable either. This activity would also consume more fossil fuel which does not support the direction of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP).

Each year the City also receives requests for more curbside service in the spring as some say late April or early May is too late for the first collection. That is not an option either as staff resources are not available to provide additional services to all areas in a shorter period of time. Until the majority of Londoners recognize the importance of more environmentally friendly yard maintenance practices, it would be very difficult to have less service than offered now.

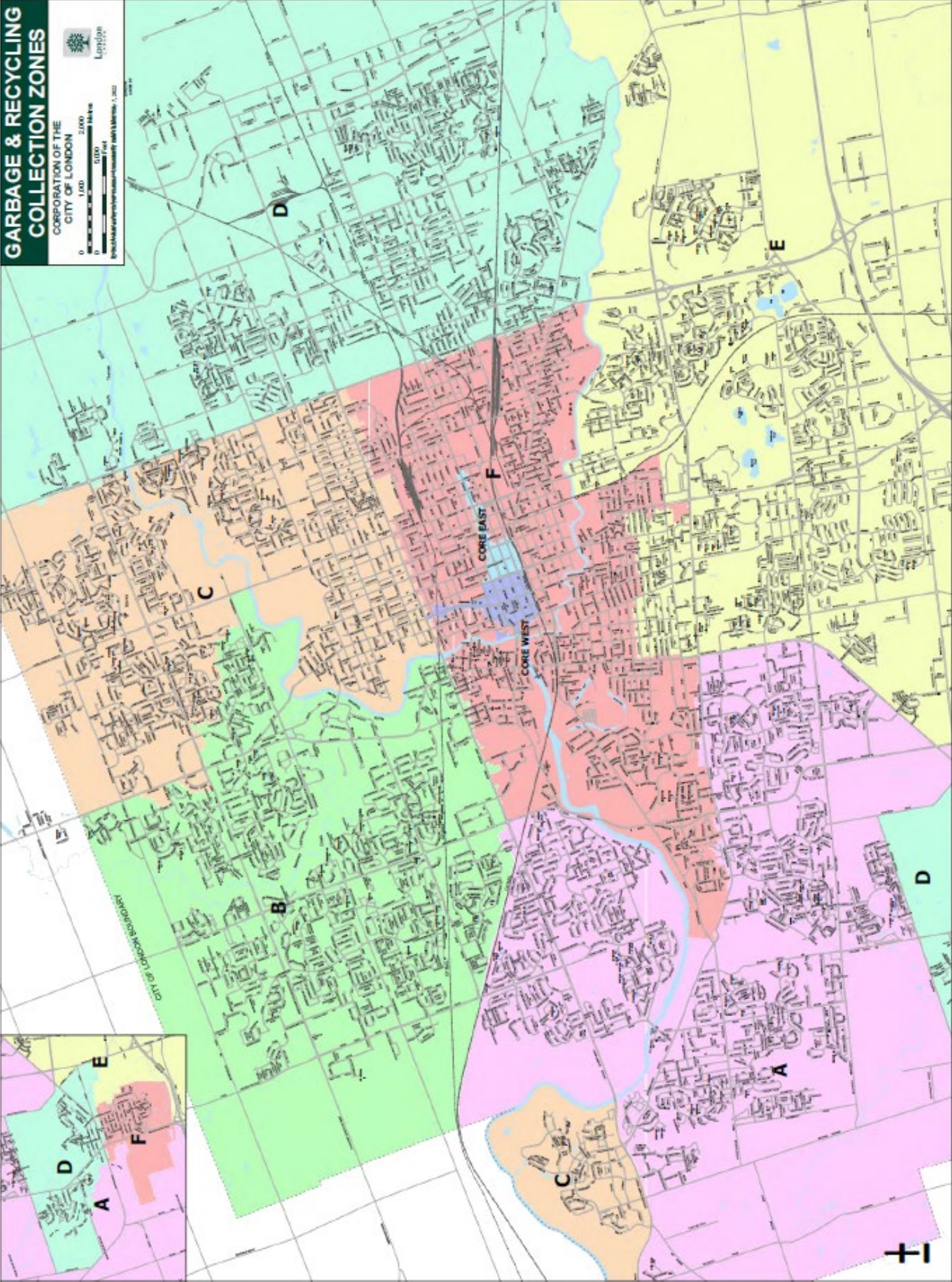
There is a need for more people to understand how they can improve the local environment through better landscaping and related practices at home for birds, pollinators, etc. More can be done.

One of the City's programs in the past was called Growing Naturally and it is currently being refocused and made more accessible. It has been around for many years, but is currently being redefined from an information perspective. The level of effort in promoting it varies based on available resources.

The Internet is also full of excellent resources. Definitely more can be done to educate residents about the importance of urban habitat for pollinators, other insects, bird nesting, etc.

As the City re-aligns the collection system for Green Bin, there may be an opportunity to start a little later in the spring to allow a longer period for pollinators assuming Londoners are prepared to wait and not have an increase in residents driving to the EnviroDepots.

Appendix A Collection Zones



Appendix B

Extracts from Government of Canada (Nesting Periods [Nesting periods - Canada.ca](http://Nesting_periods - Canada.ca))

Nesting periods

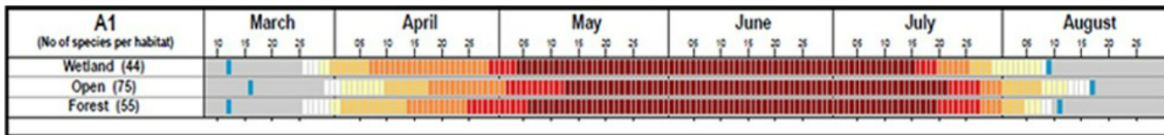
Determine when migratory birds might be nesting so you can plan your activities to reduce the risk of harming them.

How to interpret the nesting calendars

When interpreting the nesting calendars, remember that:

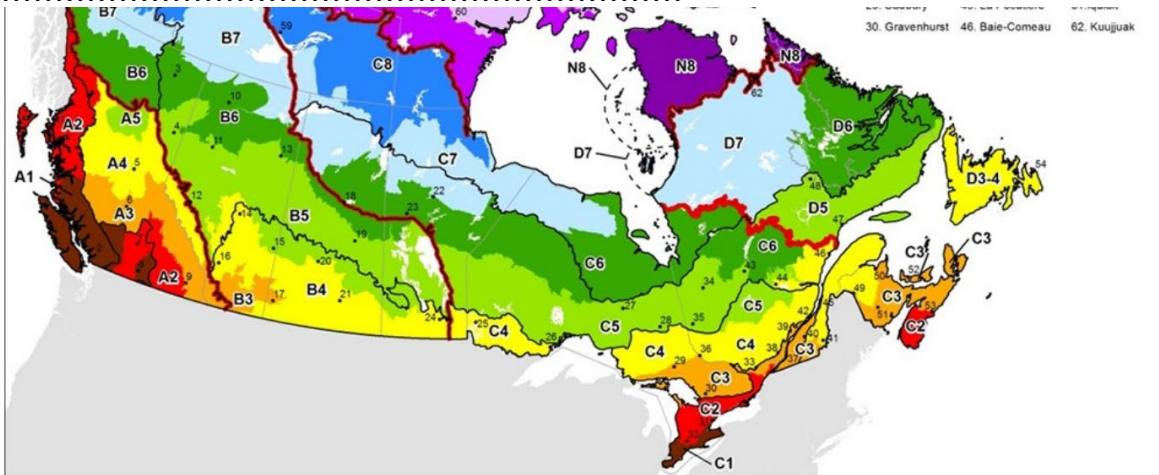
- higher nesting intensity is shown in dark red
- lower nesting intensity is shown in white
- blue markers show extreme earlier or later dates where nesting occurs for some atypical parts of the nesting zone

Example



In this nesting calendar for the nesting zone A1 in open habitat, you can see that:

- the general nesting period is predicted to begin on March 30th
- the general nesting period is predicted to end on August 16th
- in some atypical parts of the nesting zone, the earliest nesting record is March 16th
- in some atypical parts of the nesting zone, the latest nesting record is August 17th
- the highest nesting intensity is predicted to begin on May 14th
- the highest nesting intensity is predicted to end on July 21st



► Long description

Zone A: includes Northern Pacific Rainforest (BCR 5), Great Basin (BCR 9) and Northern Rockies (BCR 10)

Zone B: includes Prairie Potholes (BCR 11), Boreal Taiga Plains (BCR 6) and Northwestern Interior Forest (BCR 4)

Zone C: includes Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Plain (BCR 13), Atlantic Northern Forest (BCR 14), Boreal Hardwood Transition (BCR 12), parts of Boreal Softwood Shield (BCR 8) and parts of Taiga Shield and Hudson Plains (BCR 7)

Table 1c. Regional nesting period table in Canada, technical information for planning purposes: Nesting zone C

Nesting zone C: Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Plain (BCR 13), Atlantic Northern Forest (BCR 14), Boreal Hardwood Transition (BCR 12), parts of Boreal Softwood Shield (BCR 8) and parts of Taiga Shield and Hudson Plains (BCR 7)	Regional nesting period
C1	Late March - Late August
C2	Early April - Late August