

July 19, 2023

Dear Mayor Josh Morgan and Members of London City Council,

Next month, the City of London will host one of the largest international meetings of ornithologists! Hundreds of bird researchers from across the Americas will visit London from August 8-12, 2023 to attend the “Birds as Bridges” conference hosted at RBC Place by the American Ornithological Society and the Society of Canadian Ornithologists. The theme of this conference honours the connective roles that birds play as bridges between peoples and landscapes across the world.

**On behalf of the local organizing committee for the conference, I am writing to extend an invitation to the Mayor and to all members of City Council.** It would be wonderful to have representation from the municipal government at the public opening reception on Tuesday, August 8th where we will welcome international guests to our City. Please get in touch if you wish to attend the opening reception or other parts of the conference.

The conference will include several opportunities for the London public to participate. On the afternoon of Tuesday August 8 there will be a Public Outreach lecture, followed later that evening by a keynote address and opening reception. There will be a free screening of *Flyways*, a new documentary about shorebird migration. Additionally, on Friday August 11 there will be a pub night at the London Brewing Co-op featuring bird-themed beer and music where the public can mingle with conference attendees. In partnership with Nature London, birdwatching excursions will be offered in London and the surrounding region for conference registrants that are also open to Nature London’s members and affiliates. The public is welcome to register to attend the academic portion of the conference, and attend the free public events. More information is available at [meeting.americanornithology.org](https://meeting.americanornithology.org).

### **London is a Bird Friendly City**

As you may know, the City of London is nationally recognized under Nature Canada’s Bird Friendly Cities program. In 2021, the London Bird Team was formed consisting of representatives from various community organizations and staff from the City who together aim to conserve birds and their habitat, and to help Londoners understand and enjoy coexistence with birds in places where they live, work and play. London has led by example as the first and only municipality participating in the program to achieve the highest level of certification, thanks to outstanding historic and ongoing efforts within our City. Other municipalities across Canada look to London as a model of what it means to be a Bird Friendly City, pointing to successful initiatives such as our no-roaming by-law for pet owners, the Natural Heritage System and ongoing work to incorporate bird friendly building design requirements into site plan control.

The London Bird Team is now preparing an application for Nature Canada to renew London’s certification as a Bird Friendly City. The application includes a mandatory criterion that the municipal Council adopts a motion or resolution of support to endorse London’s continued participation in the program. This acknowledgement from City Council is an opportunity to underscore important efforts that are already underway in London for the benefit of wild bird populations.



**To facilitate London’s re-certification as a Bird Friendly City by Nature Canada, we request that Council please pass a motion or provide a resolution in the spirit of the following by August 31, 2023:**

Whereas bird populations in North America are declining at alarming rates due to human factors that require urgent corrective actions to address;

Whereas the City of London and its surrounding region are home to many species of birds that migrate through or occur here throughout the year;

Whereas the City of London, through its programs, policies and operations, aims to protect the Natural Heritage System and to conserve birds and biodiversity wherever possible;

Whereas Nature Canada has developed a certification standard to certify eligible municipalities as a “Bird Friendly City” that recognizes and celebrates their contributions to saving bird lives within their jurisdictions; and

Whereas the City of London’s existing “High-level” Bird Friendly City certification reflects the ecological, economic and cultural significance of birds to Londoners;

Be it resolved that the City of London supports efforts by the London Bird Team to pursue London’s re-certification as a Bird Friendly City.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to celebrating birds in our community with you in August!

With gratitude for all that you do to protect birds and nature,

Brendon Samuels  
Coordinator, Bird Friendly London

**Invitation to attend the American Ornithological Society / Society of Canadian Ornithologists conference in London.** Please RSVP by emailing Brendon Samuels at [bsamuel2@uwo\[dot\]ca](mailto:bsamuel2@uwo[dot]ca)

**Tuesday August 8 at RBC Place:**

- Keynote Speaker (7:00 - 8:00 pm)
- Opening Reception (8:00 - 9:30 pm)

**Wednesday August 9 at RBC Place:**

- Free screening of Flyways documentary (8:30-10:00 pm)

**Friday August 11 at London Brewing Co-op**

- Pub night with live music (9:00 - 11:00 pm)