



# Bird City Wisconsin Newsletter

January 2023

## Making a difference: Bird City Green Bay raises, donates \$25,000 for urban bird protection

By **NANCY NABAK**

Green Bay became one of the inaugural Bird Cities in 2010, then immediately got to work to determine urban bird conservation needs in the community.

Knowing key issues would need funding, **NANCY NABAK** and **ADAM SINKULA** created the Big Bay Birdathon fundraiser in 2012. Ten years later, nearly \$25,000 has gone toward addressing bird protection in Northeast Wisconsin and statewide.

There are now more than 100 Bird City communities in Wisconsin, and each one is **making a difference** for bird conservation efforts in the state.

Bird City Wisconsin wants to shine a light on these special efforts. We invite other communities to share stories of their efforts to make a difference for Wisconsin's birds.

Send your story in 400 to 600 words to newsletter editor Carl Schwartz at [cschwartz3@wi.rr.com](mailto:cschwartz3@wi.rr.com)

Please share any photos illustrating your work.

Funds raised during this competitive 24-hour event have supported urban pollinator gardens, species sponsorships for the second Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas, Red-shouldered Hawk DNA research, Motus tower migration research, children's binocular kits for a botanical garden, prairie habitat restoration, Chimney Swift education efforts, and shoreline preservation in a conservation corridor near Suamico, just

north of Green Bay.

In all, 24 different projects have been funded through Bird City Green Bay and the Big Bay Birdathon.

The local Bay Area Bird Club is heavily invested in the birdathon, which makes it fun as a club event and allows members to take ownership in making a difference. The birdathon also coincides



**TOM PRESTBY** (left) and **JAY WATSON** won the 2021 Big Bay Birdathon competition. They found 180 species in a 24-hour period. The event raised more than \$5,000 for urban bird conservation and Bird City Green Bay.

with World Migratory Bird Day, held annually in May alongside the "Springs Wings" celebration sponsored by the Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary that has included songbird banding, children's banding demonstrations, birding tips and educational birds.

## Bird City renewal deadline for 2023 is approaching

By **CHARLES HAGNER**

**Bird City Wisconsin Director**

The deadline for communities to renew their recognition is fast approaching. Renewals for 2023 are due by Jan. 31.

As every year, the renewal process can be completed electronically, on the Bird City Wisconsin website at <https://birdcitywisconsin.org/>

To get started, log in using your email and password, click on "APPLY/RENEW," and read the instructions. The renewal fee is \$175, unchanged from last year. You can pay online with a credit card or mail us a check.

Remember, renewing is how your community can be recognized publicly for the steps it has taken to be friendly to birds and healthy for people. It's also a great way to let the world know that your hometown is a

desirable place to work, live, take a vacation, and do some bird watching, and it signals that you want to be counted not only in Bird City's statewide network of conservation advocates. Some tips to keep in mind:

**Form a team:** Bird City Wisconsin is all about community action, not the efforts of a single person. If responsibility for preparing and submitting your community's renewal is shouldered by one hard-working, long-suffering soul, we urge you to re-assemble the team that was involved with your community's application/renewal process (or create a new one) and divvy up the work. Many hands really do make light work.

**Notes:** Suggestions for improving your 2022 renewal application were emailed to you. Please use them!

**Do more:** If your community did the same

things in 2022 that it did in 2021, that's fine, but keep in mind that being a Bird City is intended to be an ongoing process. Your community should take new bird-friendly actions, satisfying additional recognition criteria, each year.

**Resolution:** We require all Bird Cities to submit a resolution celebrating World Migratory Bird Day every two years, but truly, what's best for birds is for you to submit one every year.

Act quickly to prepare a resolution that your municipality's council or board can vote on.

**Questions:** If you have questions or need help, write to me, Chuck Hagner, director of Bird City Wisconsin, at [director@birdcitywisconsin.org](mailto:director@birdcitywisconsin.org).

I'll be happy to help.



#### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Check out our website at [birdcitywisconsin.org](https://birdcitywisconsin.org)

#### HOW CAN I HELP?

Bird City is seeking to bolster its small-grant donations. Tax deductible donations can be made online at: <https://birdcitywisconsin.org/support-us> or by mail to BCW, 4230 N. Oakland Ave., #219, Shorewood, WI 53211

#### WHERE CAN I SEND NEWS ABOUT MY BIRD CITY?

Send pictures, stories and other information to [director@birdcitywisconsin.org](mailto:director@birdcitywisconsin.org)

#### WHAT ARE THE APPLICATION AND RENEWAL DATES?

New applications can be submitted at any time but are reviewed the first of March, July and November. Annual renewals are due on January 31.

#### WHAT ACTIONS DOES BCW ENCOURAGE?

1. Habitat creation, protection and monitoring
2. Community forest management
3. Limiting or removing threats to birds
4. Public education
5. Energy and sustainability
6. Celebration of World Migratory Bird Day

## Statewide bird conservation conference March 24-25

A statewide conference is in the works to explore how each of us, individually and as a community, can

help bring back some of the 3 billion birds our continent has lost since 1970.

The Wisconsin Bird Conservation Partnership, Bird City Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology have come together to plan a special two-day meeting. It will be



held Friday and Saturday, March 24-25, 2023, at the Culver Family Welcome Center on the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus.

There will be motivating talks and presentations on the latest in bird conservation efforts already underway in Wisconsin and how you, your organization and your community can join these projects or work on your own to make a difference.

There will also be plenty of time to network and interact one-on-one with equally committed conservationists. By working together, we can save Wisconsin's birds.

## Plan now for Great Backyard Bird Count

The 26th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations.

Participation is also a great way for local groups to help their communities gain or maintain recognition as a Bird City.

This year, participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) from Friday, Feb. 17 through Monday, Feb. 20. It's for beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world.

At <https://www.birdcount.org/> participants can explore real-time maps and charts that show what others are reporting during and after the count. Participating is easy, fun to do alone, or with others, and can be done anywhere you find birds.

**STEP 1** – Decide where you will watch birds.



**STEP 2** – Watch birds for 15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days, Feb. 17-20.

**STEP 3** – Count all the birds you see or hear within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

If you are a beginning bird admirer and new to the count, try using the Merlin Bird ID app.

If you have participated in the count before, try eBird Mobile app or enter your bird list on the eBird website (desktop/laptop).

## Nature Canada certifies 14 bird-friendly cities

The non-profit group Nature Canada recently announced that 14 new cities and municipalities across Canada have earned certification as a "Bird Friendly City."

The certification was developed by Nature Canada to encourage municipalities to become safer places for birds. The program was made possible by a \$655,000 investment from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

In the spring of 2021, Vancouver, Toronto, London, and Calgary were the first cities to be certified. Seven of the newly certified cities are in Ontario, Canada's most populous province, and three are the capital cities of their provinces.

The Canadian program is modeled on one launched in Wisconsin in 2010 that has spawned similar efforts in eight other states. This in turn has led the American Bird Conservancy and Environment for the Americas to create the Bird City Network, which is work-

ing to expand the program to other U.S. states and throughout Latin America.

The 14 newly certified Canadian cities are:

- Halifax**, Nova Scotia
- Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue**, Quebec (a suburb of Montreal)
- Barrie**, Ontario
- Burlington**, Ontario
- Guelph**, Ontario
- Windsor**, Ontario
- Halton Hills**, Ontario
- Hamilton**, Ontario
- Peterborough, Ontario
- Regina**, Saskatchewan
- Edmonton**, Alberta
- Strathcona County**, Alberta (located just east of Edmonton)
- Lions Bay**, British Columbia (a small community north of Vancouver)
- Saanich**, British Columbia (a suburb of Victoria)