



BIRD FRIENDLY IOWA

c/o Trees Forever
80 West 8th Avenue
Marion, Iowa 52302

2020 Steering Committee

Anna Buckardt Thomas
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Dan Cohen
Iowa County Conservation Board Association

Bruce Ehresman
Iowa Wildlife Center

Doug Harr
Iowa Audubon

Lisa Hein
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

Ann Johnson
Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Tom Schilke
Prairie Rapids Audubon Society

Patty Reisinger
Trees Forever

Carole Teator
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

June 9, 2020

Todd Derifield
City Forester
1101 Campbell Ave.
Waterloo, IA 50701

Dear Mr. Derifield and City of Waterloo,

On behalf of Bird Friendly Iowa, I would like to congratulate the City of Waterloo for achieving recertification as a Bird Friendly Community.

In addition, I extend further congratulations as Waterloo becomes the first community in Iowa to achieve "Sustained Flight" status, which is achieved after three consecutive years of participation in the Bird Friendly Iowa program. I have enclosed a copy of the press release Bird Friendly Iowa will be distributing announcing Waterloo's achievement.

Your community's dedication to birds and the habitat they rely on is outstanding. Thank you for recognizing that birds are an important part of a healthy ecosystem and critical to the quality of life in our communities. The steps that Waterloo has taken to make it possible for people to engage in birding, to reduce threats to birds and to protect bird habitat is exemplary.

Again, congratulations to you and to the residents and leaders of Waterloo! We look forward to working with you to coordinate a formal presentation in Waterloo at a time when you think it most appropriate.

Sincerely,

Carole Teator

On behalf of Bird Friendly Iowa

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Patty Reisinger, Bird Friendly Iowa steering committee member, 319-440-4195

Waterloo first to reach Sustained Flight status as a Bird Friendly Community

WATERLOO — After three consecutive years of being a designated a Bird Friendly Community, Waterloo has received Sustained Flight status by Bird Friendly Iowa. Waterloo is the first city in Iowa to achieve this status.

According to Iowa Department of Natural Resources Avian Ecologist, Anna Buckardt Thomas, “These remarkable achievements are the result of dedicated efforts made by Waterloo’s leaders and its citizens to make this community a front runner in bird conservation and environmental education. With nearly half of Iowa’s nesting birds declining, efforts by urban communities, like Waterloo, to provide more secure habitat in parks, greenbelts, and yards alike, can really make a difference for a significant number of bird species.”

Bird Friendly Iowa is an organization created to protect, restore and enhance bird habitat, reduce threats to birds and to educate and engage people in birding and conservation. While working with this organization, Waterloo has managed to provide substantial habitat for nesting and migrating birds within its 3,000 acres of greenbelts and parks.

“Waterloo is to be commended for achieving Sustained Flight status,” said Doug Harr, a steering committee member of Bird Friendly Iowa and president of Iowa Audubon. “With all the conservation efforts already underway in this community, there is no city in Iowa that is more deserving of this unique and honorable status.”

Waterloo has been designated a Tree City, USA for more than 34 years and makes significant efforts to protect bird and other wildlife habitat, particularly during nesting season. The community provides information to citizens and businesses on how to prevent birds from flying into windows, and its citizens actively participate (especially through Prairie Rapids Audubon Society) in bird monitoring and surveys, such as the National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count, the Great Backyard Bird Count, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology’s Project Feeder Watch and Iowa’s Breeding Bird Atlas.

Started with partnerships between conservation groups across Iowa, Bird Friendly Iowa certifies cities and counties as bird friendly based on a set of criteria that includes protection of habitat, reducing threats to birds, and educating and engaging people in birding. The goal of the program is to increase awareness and protection of bird habitat. Cities and counties can learn more about the program and apply at www.birdfriendlyiowa.org.