



2017 CITY OF NORTHFIELD APPLICATION

Statistics:

Name:	City of Northfield, MN
Joined Bird City:	2017
Population:	20,581
Area:	8.61 mi ²
Park / Open Space	400+ acres
IMBD	Second Saturday in May May 13, 2017

Bird City 2017

Northfield celebrates "Taking Count Minnesota's Great Bird Count". The event offers citizens a chance to join in the live banding of birds. The volunteers learn the correct way and participate in counting Minnesota's birds through the citizen science project. This event is held on the 2nd Saturday in May. The City of Northfield & Carlton College collaborates in hosting the event. Everyone is welcome and invited to participate including those with a new interest in birds, as well as experienced birders. The experienced birders will be teamed with those new to birding for the breeding bird count. This is a fun family activity and great way to meet new friends while exploring Northfield's many natural areas.

Category 1: Educate and engage citizens in birding and conservation.

❖ **BP #1: Increase awareness of birds in your community** Photo credit: Street & Park Dept.



Northfield encourages the public to engage in local birding via educational information and other tools. This information is currently on the City of Northfield website. The website offers a list of birds that frequent the area and directions to several parks where optimum bird watching can be found. The City of Northfield will also be offering bird watching classes. These classes will be offered by the Community Education & Recreation programming. Watch the website for upcoming dates and times.

Photo credit: MN Audubon Society



❖ **BP #3: Educate and engage youth audiences.**

The City of Northfield will be offering bird watching and classes that demonstrate the importance of birds, their traits and habitats. These enrichment classes will be offered through the Community Education & Recreation in their upcoming 2017 programming. Watch the City of Northfield website for upcoming dates and times.

Photo credit: Street & Park Dept.



❖ **BP #4: Promote citizen science monitoring and research**

Northfield citizen's birder clubs collect bird data on a yearly basis. The data is collected to track as well as support the benefits of birds in the Northfield environment. Currently there is an active MN Bluebird club in the Northfield area that has erected bluebird house on City of Northfield property as well as several private properties. The houses are placed near retention ponds or in parks to allow the public to monitor and enjoy the Northfield bluebird population. Chimney Swift habitat is promoted in the City of Northfield area. City parks have several wooded areas in their park system. When allowed, dead trees are left standing to increase the Swift's habitat.

Category 2: Protect, restore and enhance bird habitat.

Photo credit: EQC Commission



❖ **BP #7: Create and protect habitat**

The City of Northfield has 35 parks in their park system. Several of the parks have wooded or native planted areas. The City of Northfield has 30+ storm water retention ponds. The ponds have had their shorelines planted with native wild flowers and grasses to promote bird habitat. Citizens are encouraged to either install bird houses or feeder. Installation of Raingardens either in parks or by citizens are also promoting bird habitat.

BP #8: Promote use of native and beneficial plant species.

In 2016 the City of Northfield became a “Pollinator Friendly” City. With this recent accreditation there will be several parks and retention ponds that will be planted with wild flowers and native grasses that will enhance bird habitats.

BP #10: Create and protect nesting opportunities

Currently the Northfield Standard Operating Procedures follow the DNR’s recommendations related to mowing of our nesting areas. Governor Dayton’s buffer initiative provides a 50 foot buffer to allow all water courses in the state to help with migratory bird habitat. Road ditches, storm water retention ponding basins, and other grasslands are not mowed, grazed, or hayed until August 1st to maximize wildlife habitat and reproduction. Bluebird volunteers also encourage and educate the public in regards to the correct maintenance of the bluebird houses in Northfield.

Photo credit: Arbor Day Foundation



BP #11: Ensure best management of urban forests

In 2001, Northfield become a Tree City USA in which every year requires re-certification. This certification proves that “at least half of the trees in our City are on public property along streets, in parks, and around public building.” On the Northfield Tree Guide, all of the recommended boulevard trees for planting are environmentally friendly and native trees to Minnesota.

The City of Northfield requires all park keepers to be certified tree inspectors as part of their job requirements.

Category 3: Reduce Threats to Birds

BP #14: Reduce collisions with other man-made structures

Many birds use the Cannon River as migratory paths to move through Northfield and south to the Gulf of Mexico. Many songbirds migrate at night and use the stars and other nocturnal cues to navigate. Artificial light, such as Street lights, can confuse and disorient migration. In order to prevent further bird confusion and death, Northfield will look into ways to retrofit their downtown street lights. The lights could possibly be converted to LED bulbs with the light aimed downward.

BP #17: Reduce the threat of pesticides and other toxins

The City of Northfield also requires that their Street & Park staff be certified MN Pesticides Applicators as part of their job requirement.

This ensures that the park keepers are implementing the most efficient methods of using pesticides but also to have the ability to identify a problem and how to solve it with limited pesticide usage.

Renewal Suggestions:

- Continue efforts toward energy efficiency.
- Review the Northfield Tree Guide to remove any non-native/invasive trees on the recommended planted trees list.
- Review all hyperlinks and online PDFs are up-to-date and still valid links.