

Abstract

Creative Project: Bird-Friendly Indianapolis: Developing a Guide to Supporting Urban Avian Populations for the Benefit of Birds and Humans Alike

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Bird-friendly cities are an emerging concept in the field of urban planning. Stemming from the biophilic urbanism movement, which seeks to seamlessly integrate nature into all dimensions of urban life, bird-friendly cities emphasize the pivotal role that birds play in natural and built environments. From reducing human stress to maintaining thriving ecosystems, birds offer a range of environmental, economic, and health benefits to communities around the world. Existing literature has explored bird-friendly cities across the globe, from Vancouver to Singapore, but cities in the Midwestern United States, including Indiana, have yet to be comprehensively studied. To ensure that Indiana's capital city is doing enough to protect native birds and maximize the benefits that birds provide, this study explores the extent to which Indianapolis is a bird-friendly city. Through mapping and analysis, stakeholder interviews, and descriptive inventories, existing conditions are assessed, and Indianapolis is assigned a bird-friendliness rating. This creative project culminates in the creation of a public-facing Bird-Friendly Indianapolis Guide which summarizes key findings and identifies recommendations for future initiatives.