



# Quinte Field Naturalists

*The Quinte Field Naturalists Association is affiliated with Ontario Nature, a non-profit organization sponsoring nature education, conservation and research.*

Dear Mayor Ellis & Councillors Kelly, Enright-Miller Seu, Brown, Chatten, Henderson, Carr & Thompson,

I am writing to you on behalf of QFN's 188 members, 266 friends and 24 project advocates. QFN engages in conservation projects and supports other organizations in their conservation efforts in order to support and promote biodiversity in the Quinte Region. Biodiversity is our greatest natural defense against climate change: healthy ecosystems populated with a diversity of species have the the potential to significantly reduce the costs which can be incurred by natural disasters.

QFN is extremely pleased that the City of Belleville is considering becoming a Bird Friendly City. This proactive decision would help to maintain a diversity of healthy avian populations throughout the area which would provide crucial environmental benefits like pest control, pollination and seed dispersal as well as offering Humans the enjoyment of bird watching and learning more about different species of birds. Birds powerfully connect people with nature by providing accessible beauty, sound and activity. Their presence culminates in people caring more about protecting the environments where birds live. Designating Belleville as a Bird Friendly City would be a positive development for all life in the community.

In addition to advocating for increased support of birds in the area through the establishment of a Bird Friendly City status, QFN wishes to continue working with the City of Belleville, adding greenspace to the urban environment. QFN's Tree Committee, under the leadership of Greg Parsons, has been working hard over the past three years to obtain funding for the planting of native trees and shrubs, and herbaceous pollinator plants. We understand that the City has had to decrease the funding allotted to tree planting and to parks due to financial concerns. Despite this barrier, we trust that we can continue to work with the City of Belleville to expand and enrich the greenspace throughout the urban environment.

QFN highly recommends the continued addition of trees to the City of Belleville because of their great contributions to the quality of life and their significant economic benefits. Trees offer immense benefits by cleaning air and water, combating climate change through carbon absorption, cooling urban areas with their shade, managing stormwater, and preventing erosion. Furthermore, they provide essential habitats for wildlife, boost human physical and mental health, create economic value through energy savings, and enhance community aesthetics and social connection. The City of Belleville and its inhabitants deserve to be recipients of all of the advantages offered by a diversity of native trees.

QFN trusts that we can continue to work with you and city staff in increasing the biodiversity across Belleville through tree planting and pollinator garden initiatives. We also are relying on you to support biodiversity and the quality of city life by committing to Belleville becoming a Bird Friendly City. These initiatives have the potential to attract individuals, families and businesses who are contemplating a move to the area. Achieving the status of a Bird Friendly City would also help to strengthen corridors and provide regional support for our neighbours in Kingston and Peterborough who, as Bird Friendly Cities, are working hard to make their urban ecosystems more resilient.

Thank you for your attention to our request, and for all that you are doing to enrich life in Belleville by attending to the natural environment.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elizabeth Churcher  
QFN Corresponding Secretary