

A large flock of Red-winged Blackbirds is captured in flight against a background of tall, golden-brown grasses. The birds are predominantly black with a distinctive red and yellow patch on their wings. They are scattered throughout the frame, creating a sense of movement and density. The lighting is warm, suggesting a late afternoon or early morning setting.

# Bird City Texas Certification

YVETTE STEWART, AUDUBON TEXAS



## Bird City Texas

### 2015-2016



- **Conversations with WI and PA**
- **Audubon TX and TPWD Urban Biologists**
- **Steering committee**

### 2017-2018



- **Stakeholder meeting and survey municipalities**
- **Criteria finalized, pilot year**

### 2019-present

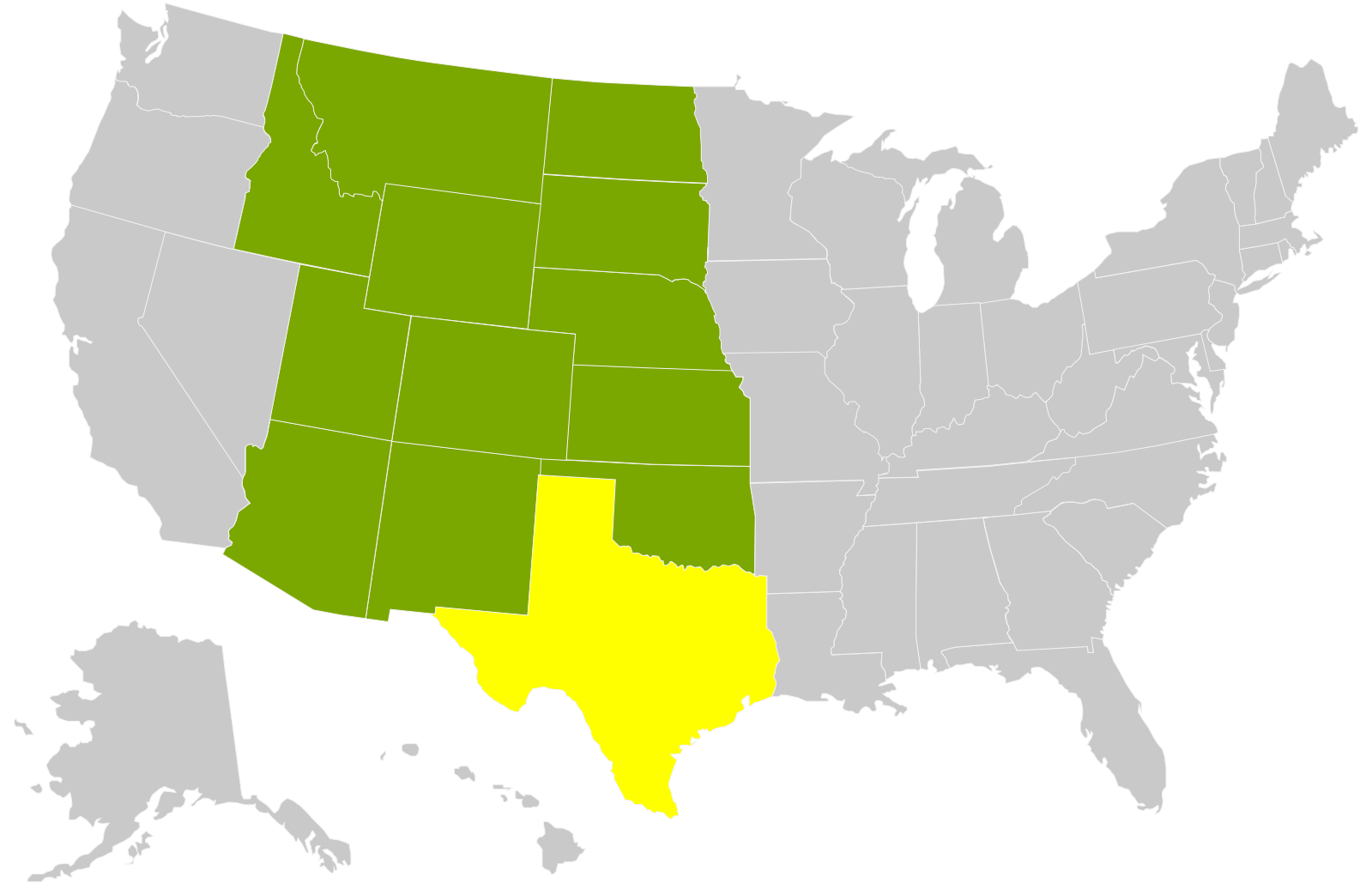


- **Launched August 2019**
- **8 communities**
- **Going into our first round of re-certs**

## Central Flyway

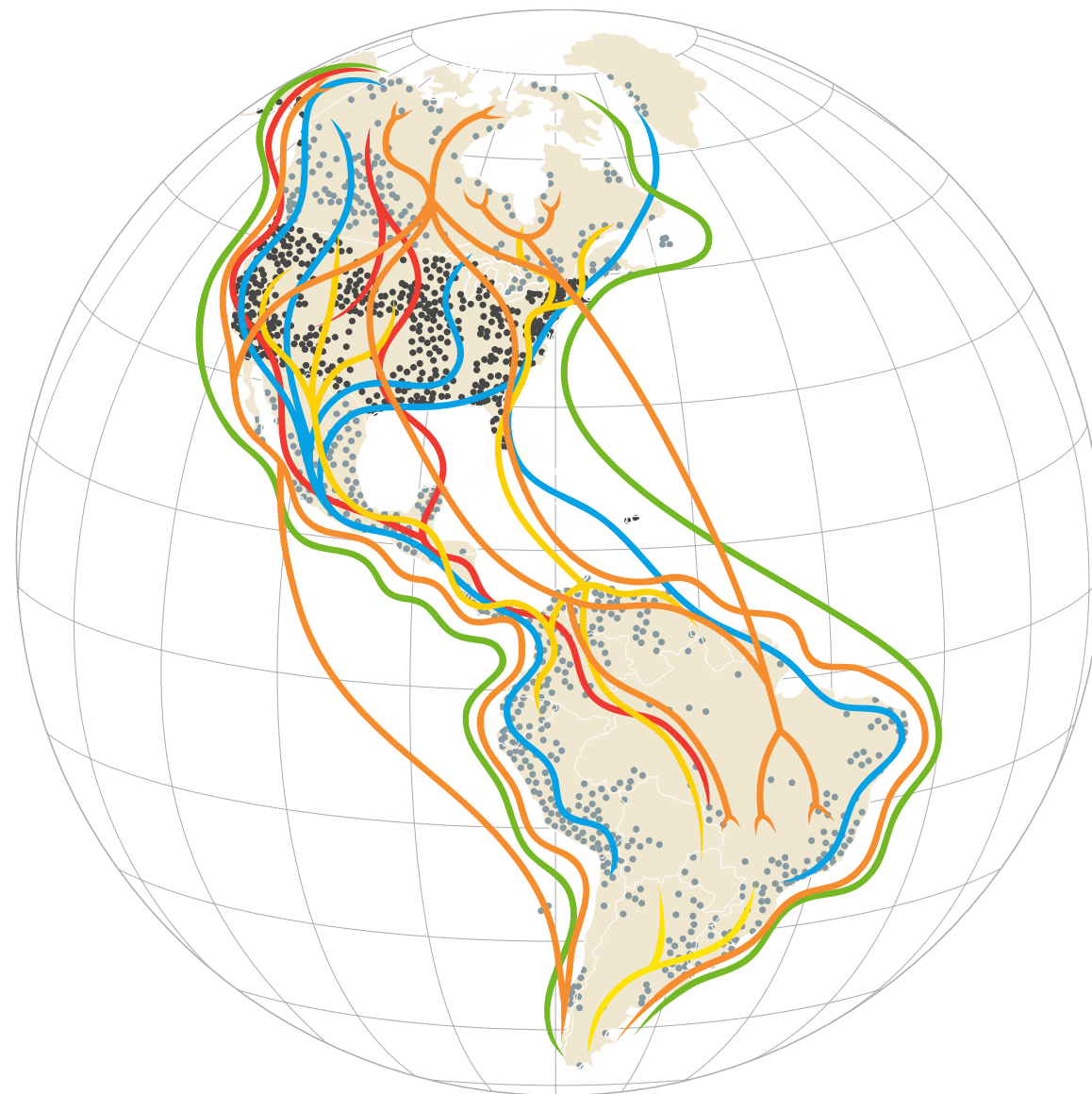
650+ species

98.5% of all migratory warblers pass through



## Flyways of the Americas

Each year, billions of migratory birds follow these flyways from wintering to breeding grounds and back again.



Shorebirds



Land birds



Seabirds



Raptors



Waterfowl

# What is a “Bird City”?



9 required  
actions

17 criteria from  
48 options

5 community  
8 habitat  
4 threat

## What Characterizes A “Bird City”?

Communities of any  
size

Makes management  
decisions based on  
science

Makes sustainable  
and long-term  
decisions

Engages with its  
birding and naturalist  
communities

Links economic  
success to wildlife by  
promoting nature-  
based tourism

Strives to reduce its  
ecological footprint

## **Bird City Texas Communities**

**Dallas – 2020**

**Houston – 2020**

**San Antonio – 2021**

**Galveston – 2021**

**Bastrop – 2020**

**Port Aransas – 2020**

**Surfside Beach – 2021**

**Dripping Springs -  
2022**

## What Actions Does A “Bird City” Take?

Prioritizes wildlife habitat in planning decisions

Creates landscape-level impact whenever possible

Creates, manages wildlife habitat, large and small

Works across departments to prioritize healthy wildlife habitats

Develops permanent policies that prioritize habitat management

Identifies and brands itself to include birds and images of nature



What is **NOT**  
a “Bird City”?

City passes ordinance prohibiting the killing or trapping of birds

City installs bird feeders at park

Council plants a 5x5 pollinator garden at City Hall

## Long-term trends vs. Healthy Community

76 responses from 5 presentations

- Fear of loss, sprawl
- Fear of unsupported population booms
- Always more green space
- Smart management of community resources





## Program Expectations

- **Partnership**
- **SMARTIE**
- **More than one go**





## Required Actions

R5 – cats indoors education

R6 – lighting education for business and residents

R7 – bird collision education





## Community Engagement

- 1b – Long-term community monitoring
- 1h – Engage public parks and/or museums
- 1l – Sponsor annual bird festival



## Habitat Enhancement and Protection

- 2e – Incentivize group participation in restoration
- 2h – community approved native plant list
- 2s – review municipal development plans



## Safer Spaces for Birds

3c – Lights out

3e – IPMs

3i – Prohibit feeding of ducks

## Value of a Bird

USFWS study

107 billion and  
building

Employment in Green  
Jobs

Mental health booster







## **Value of a Bird**

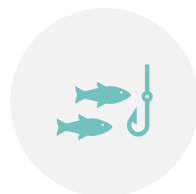
**Surfside (2021 certified)**

**500 visitors in 10 days**

**Santa Ana NWF**

**Visitors from across the  
country**

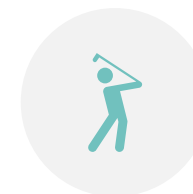
## Neighborhood Nature is Valuable



Detention and retention ponds



Cemeteries



Golf courses



Corporate and university campuses



Neighborhood greenbelts



River corridors



Thank You!

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