

Crash Course: Saving birds one window at a time

WHY DO BIRDS COLLIDE WITH WINDOWS?

Transparency and Reflectivity

Transparent glass, like in walkways or railings, can confuse birds into thinking there is no barrier, leading to collisions. Reflections, such as those of trees in a yard, or transparency, such as indoor plants by a window, also deceive birds and cause them to collide with the glass.

Environmental Context

Birds are attracted to areas with vegetation. Light pollution can also attract and confuse birds.

Design Traps

Design traps, like courtyards surrounded by glass on multiple sides, can pose significant risks for birds. Such areas lure birds in with vegetation but trap them within glass boundaries, increasing the likelihood of collisions or confusion with reflections. Similarly, buildings with glass on multiple sides can funnel birds into hazardous areas.

Bird Attractants

Bird attractants include intentional installations like bird feeders and bird baths, as well as natural features like trees with berries. Bird feeders should be placed within one metre of the window to prevent high impact collisions should the bird get started and fly off the feeder.



Photo: Safe Wings Ottawa

PREVENTING COLLISIONS

- Advocate for bird-friendly architecture and integrated features.
- Be mindful of the placement of bird feeders and bird baths.
- Close curtains to prevent see-through danger.
- Move indoor plants away from windows.
- Add visual markers, window films, and screens to your windows.
- Share your knowledge with others.



Photo: Safe Wings Ottawa

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Learn more about [Safe Wings Ottawa](#).
- Get involved in the [Bird-Friendly Cities Program](#).
- Read more about [preventing bird window strikes](#).
- Report collisions to [Safe Wings](#) in Ottawa or [Global Bird Collision Mapper](#) elsewhere.
- Discover Watersheds Canada's free resources about [light pollution](#).
- Learn about other organizations such as [BirdSafe](#) and [Calgary Urban Species Response Team](#).
- [Explore bird-friendly visual markers, paracord, and perforated vinyl film](#).