

## Poudre River Important Bird Area (IBA)

In partnership with Fort Collins Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society, the City-owned properties along the Cache la Poudre River were designated as an Important Bird Area in 2018.

An Important Bird Area (IBA) is defined by the National Audubon Society as a site that provides essential habitat to one or more species of birds during some portion of the year (nesting areas, crucial migration stop-over sites, or wintering grounds). The goals of the IBA Program are to: identify the most essential areas for birds, monitor those sites for changes to birds and habitat, and conserve these areas for long-term protection of biodiversity.



The IBA designation conveys no legal authority over land ownership and/or use. This designation supports City education initiatives aimed at increasing awareness, conservation, and enjoyment of Poudre River bird habitat.

Of the approximately 500 bird species recorded in Colorado, over 300 have been seen in the natural areas that adjoin the Poudre River as it flows through Fort Collins. This IBA is one of only about 50 IBAs in the state, and 2 in Larimer County. Fossil Creek Reservoir, which is also a Fort Collins Natural Area, is also an IBA. Volunteers from Fort Collins Audubon Society donated many hundreds of hours inventorying the Natural Areas along the Poudre River and Fossil Creek Reservoir to document their use by birds and to demonstrate how crucial they are as Important Bird Areas.

The Cache la Poudre River provides vital habitat for birds, as riparian habitat constitutes only 2-4% of the land in Colorado. The beauty and health of this riparian area has been recognized and protected due to the sustained and concerted efforts of Fort Collins Natural Area staff and the communities of Fort Collins and Larimer County.