

Bird-Friendly Design Guidelines

Draft Report: <http://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/webdrawer/rec/4902299/view/>

Media Release:

[A Draft Guide for Bird-friendly Building Design Introduced to Portland Architects, Developers, Building Managers, Planners and Bird Enthusiasts at June 14 Forum](#) - June 8, 2012

Audubon Society of Portland, City of Portland, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service collaborate with local architects to develop resource guide

Coverage:

[Oregonian: Bird-friendly building design forum and new resource guide come to Portland](#) - June 6, 2012

by Katy Muldoon | June 6, 2012; updated | BPS mentioned as sponsor

<http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/20...>

[Willamette Week: Murmurs/Where Not To Put Birds](#) - June 18, 2012

by editorial staff | June 13, 2012 | BPS Director Susan Anderson quoted re: bird-friendly resource guide

<http://www.wweek.com/portland/article-19320-murmur...>

[WillametteWeek: Report: Portland Buildings Not For The Birds](#) - June 15, 2012

by Corey Pein | June 12, 2012 | BPS Director Susan Anderson quoted about new resource guide for bird-friendly building design

http://www.wweek.com/portland/blog-28750-report_po...

<http://djcoregon.com>

Daily Journal of Commerce

Bird-friendly design gaining momentum in industry

by Reed Jackson

Published: June 21st, 2012

Across the country, sustainable design strategies are being used for new buildings. However, even those projects are disrupting the ecosystem.

That's because buildings in the U.S. cause more than a billion bird deaths each year, according to **Bruce Fowle**, founding principal of New York-based [FXFOWLE Architects](#), a firm known for innovative, bird-friendly design. This toll will continue to rise, he said, unless projects start incorporating strategies that will deter birds from striking windows.

"We talk about green buildings that have ([Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design](#)) platinum ratings, but they could be one of the worst bird killers in the country," he said. "We continue to build glass buildings - whether they are a one-story residential or a 150-story high-rise - and they are major problems."

Fowle preached this point in Portland last week when he led a bird-friendly design seminar, which was attended by many local architects, developers and planners. Building-related bird deaths are particularly common in sizable cities like Portland, he said, that are in migratory corridors and frequently have cloudy weather that causes birds to fly low.

Only a few buildings in the city incorporate bird-friendly strategies, and even those often were chosen for other reasons. For example, Oregon Health & Science University's South Waterfront building has fritted windows for privacy.

Most major cities have not addressed the issue yet, Fowle said. But discussions have at least begun in some cities, including Portland, which teamed with the [Audubon Society of Portland](#) to hold the seminar. City officials believe the issue is timely because of the improving economy, which will lead to more new construction.

"We're in the middle of updating our comprehensive plan as well as our city plan, and we're looking to the future of the city and how it's going to develop over time," said **Roberta Jortner**, environmental planner for the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. "This is a good opportunity for us to start thinking about this now."

Bird-friendly design strategies are not entirely related to windows, though they are the main cause of concern, Fowle said. Birds see reflections of trees in windows and fly into them. Those birds that don't die from impact frequently fly in circles out of confusion and eventually collapse from exhaustion.

Buildings that have large windows on their bottom floors and those that sit near parks or rivers - like much of Portland - are the most susceptible to bird strikes. One preventive measure is installation of some sort of barrier - like tubing - to deter birds.

Another option is installation of windows with frit patterns or UV coatings for greater visibility to birds. For example, one side of the Jacob K. Javits Center in Chicago incorporates UV coating windows, and bird deaths on that side were reduced 85 percent, Fowle said.

Illuminated buildings also contribute to bird deaths. As a result, some cities, like New York, require that public buildings' outdoor lights be turned off during nighttime hours in migration season.

At this point, some of the design strategies are not feasible choices. Only a few companies in the world make windows with UV coatings, so they're expensive. Fritted windows and barriers, when used properly, can be costly as well. But those prices can change via increased awareness and demand, said **Alan Scott**, who spoke at the seminar and is a principal at [Cadmus Group](#).

“When the LEED building rating system was released, there were some aspects of it, like low-emitting materials, that weren’t available and were expensive to obtain,” he said. “Now contractors tell me it doesn’t cost any extra to do those certain areas ... the same thing could happen with (bird-friendly design).”

Those strategies often can tie to sustainable design and provide paybacks. Fritted and UV windows reduce solar glare and can greatly reduce energy costs. Barriers, like the tubing being added to the Edith Green-Wendell Wyatt Federal Building, can reduce solar glare too. However, vegetation will eventually grow on that tubing, and reduce its benefit to birds, Fowle said. Measures are being adopted in the U.S. to help birds. In San Francisco, buildings constructed near a park or a river must have fritted windows on their bottom floors. And the U.S. Green Building Council has created a point for bird-friendly design in the LEED certification program. In Portland, the Audubon Society, the BPS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have developed a resource guide that will soon be presented to the Design Commission and the Planning and Sustainability Commission. New incentives could be put in place as a result, Jortner said.

Portland architects are starting to pay attention to the issue, Scott said.

“They just weren’t aware of the magnitude of the problem,” he said. “This is a place where incremental improvements would make a difference. I don’t think that waiting until you have all the right products and a budget to fix the problem is necessary. This is a place where we can take the information that’s available and do some investigation on our own buildings.”

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