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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Rotary Park Recognized for Environmental Excellence**

AYLMER, ON – The Town of Aylmer’s Rotary Park has achieved designation as a “Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary” by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System (ACSS), the educational division of Audubon International. Thom Polland, Municipal Property Manager, has led the effort to obtain sanctuary status for Rotary Park and is being recognized for Environmental Stewardship by Audubon International. Aylmer’s Rotary Park is the 1<sup>st</sup> property in Ontario, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Canada, and the 46<sup>th</sup> in the world to be certified in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Business and Corporate Properties.

“The Town of Aylmer has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife within Rotary Park,” said Shawn Williams, Staff Ecologist for the ACSS. “By taking action to implement indoor and outdoor conservation projects, the Town of Aylmer, as well as many of its residents have demonstrated their commitment to the sustainable management of their natural resources.”

Mayor Paul Baldwin of the Town of Aylmer said: “A special thank you goes out to Mr. Polland, town staff, Town Council and residents for their efforts, their continuing support and their pride in all of our Town Parks. To achieve certification is a milestone and to be recognized for our efforts is an honour.”

“As the Parks Manager, I have had the privilege of serving the residents of the Aylmer for the past eight years. The development and implementation of new park initiatives has been both a challenging and rewarding experience,” said Thomas Polland. “Observing the enjoyment our residents experience as they interact with nature is particularly satisfying. I look forward to working with the staff at Audubon International on many more Audubon projects in the years to come.”

“To achieve certification a corporation must demonstrate that they are maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in five areas,” explained Williams. These categories include Environmental Planning, Wildlife Habitat Management, Resource Conservation, Waste Management, and Outreach and Education.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programs provide information and guidance to help businesses preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, and protect natural resources. Businesses, schools, golfcourses,



and backyards from the United States, Canada, Australia, Costa Rica, and Europe have also achieved certification in the program.

In addition to businesses, the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System also includes programs for schools, individuals, and golf courses. For more information, contact Audubon International, 46 Rarick Road, Selkirk, NY 12158, (518) 767-9051, [acss@audubonintl.org](mailto:acss@audubonintl.org) or visit their website at [www.audubonintl.org](http://www.audubonintl.org).

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