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What are feathers used for? They're more than just plumage and hat decorations. They are an integral part of *Our Feathered Friends*, a travelling exhibition from Ottawa's Canadian Museum of Nature.

The exhibition 'takes off' at the Centre for Conservation from April 30 to September 5, 2011.

Discover the keys to bird watching by learning what birds are, how to identify them and where feathers grow. This exhibit includes a scavenger hunt, craft and activity station to engage all ages in bird life.

Forest, field and water birds can be seen throughout Ball's Falls Conservation Area. Discover these hidden gems in our forest with the new bird sleuthing skills you can learn during your visit.

Soar to great heights as a birdwatcher by visiting *Our Feathered Friends* and or take part in our special programs in conjunction with this exhibit. Included with the exhibit is a self-guided craft and activity area, a scavenger hunt in the hallway and the National Film Board documentary the Great Blue Heron will be shown.

The travelling exhibit, *Our Feathered Friends* and the programs in conjunction with this exhibit, is supported in part by the Museum Assistance Program at Canadian Heritage.

Points of Interest when visiting

- There are over 162 nesting bird species in the Jordan Valley
- Bring your binoculars to get closer to our feathered friends
- Take part in our citizen science bird count and help us document the birds that live here.



Canadian Heritage

Patrimoine canadien

Canada

April/May



Great Horned Owl
One of the many resident
species at Ball's Falls.

- Sat. April 30 Our Feathered Friends Travelling Exhibit from the Canadian Museum of Nature opens.
- Sunday May 1, 9 a.m.-noon, Bird Banding, Join James Smith of the Haldimand Bird Observatory for a morning of bird banding. We will be catching birds (unharmd) to band them and study them as they fly through the conservation area.
- Sat. May 14, 10 a.m.—4 p.m. International Migratory Bird Day, Visit the displays by local naturalist clubs and enjoy discovering more about birds. John Black and Kayo Roy will be signing and selling their blockbuster book *Niagara Birds*. From 9—10 a.m., join Rob Kuret, Superintendent of Ball's Falls for a Warbler Hike and see many of our migrant visitors. At 10:00 a.m. Kim Frohlich, NPCA ecologist will be giving a 45 minute general bird hike. You might be caught by one of our banders in the park and learn about the value and importance if you find a banded bird. Bird Studies Canada will also have a display from 12-4. Bird Kingdom will present a 30-45 minute live show about exotic birds at 11, 12, 1 and 2. You can have your photo taken with one of the talking birds.
- Sat. May 14, 12:30-3:30p.m. Chimney Swift Workshop, 12:30-3:30, pre-registration required for those committing to assist with this Bird Studies Canada project. The Chimney Swift has been assessed nationally as endangered by the federal Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). Status: threatened provincially and designated threatened nationally. This presentation is free to anyone who can assist in this research.
- May 28, 1-2 p.m. Great Bird Quiz and Singing Songs, improve your bird listening skill by trying out this activity.

June

- June 10, 10a.m.-11 p.m. Let's Fly, how to look for birds in flight and more sleuthing techniques to discover our bird friends and take a short guided hike to spot bluebirds around the centre for conservation.
- June 11, 10 a.m.—3p.m. Bye Bye Birdy, discover Birds through arts and crafts, story-telling and birdsongs.
- June 18, 10 a.m.—3p.m. Niagara Woodcarvers Association, bird carving demonstration
- June 25, 1-2 p.m. Bird Body Parts, clue to Bird identification by looking at beaks, wings tails and even colour. This also helps connect birds to their habitats.
- June 20, 10 a.m.—2p.m. Summer Holidays Begin at the Centre for Conservation, bring a picnic and spend the day enjoying Ball's Falls and the bird crafts and activities.

**"Birds are indicators
of the environment. If
they are in trouble,
we know we'll soon
be in trouble."
Roger Tory Peterson**



Chimney Swift

The Chimney Swift

Chimney Swifts are a Threatened species in Canada, and over the past 40 years have experienced an overall population decline of 95%. There are several suspected causes for this rapid and alarming decline, including a reduction in essential food and habitat resources. Bird Studies Canada has recently initiated Ontario Swift-Watch, a project that aims to identify important nest and roost sites, areas of concentration and occupancy, and trends in numbers over time; and will also facilitate the

preparation of appropriate Chimney Swift recovery strategies. Participants will be citizen science members assisting with the identification and observation of Chimney Swifts in Niagara.

Our presenter on May 14 is Elisabeth van Stam of Bird Studies Canada. Although a lifelong bird-watcher, Elisabeth has recently joined the ranks of professional bird biologists. Elisabeth is also a bat specialist, performing environmental assessments for wind farm

sites. Elisabeth holds a M. Sc. Ecology and Evolution, and has worked as an Ontario Region Project Biologist for Bird Studies Canada over the past three years. She has been integral in the development of Ontario SwiftWatch, a monitoring based program that uses "Citizen Scientists" to identify causes for the decline in Canada's Chimney Swift population. Elisabeth misses the bats, but is comforted by the fact that Chimney Swifts are essentially bats that have feathers and lay eggs!

July

- July 1, Canada Day, 9-4 Make a Canada Day Bird Banner. Listen to the story of Sparrow Girl and realize the true value of our bird friends.
- July 2, 9:30-10:30 A.M. Bird Hike, join Marcie Jacklin as she takes you for a stroll in the woods looking for our resident birds. Add them to our list as part of our citizen science program.
- July 9, 10-3 Niagara Woodcarvers Association, bird carving demonstration
- July 16, 10-3 Help us look for birds in the conservation area. List what you see and report it back today, we will keep a tally and help you spot birds.
- July 23, 10-11 A.M. Binocular Workshop, Join Jill of Brave Adventure and gain some insight and experience into binoculars. This fun workshop will get out looking for special clues in the conservation area.
- July 30, 1-2 P.M. Build a birdfeeder from recycled material, get it ready for the fall feeding at in your backyard.



Northern Cardinal, male

August/September

- Aug1, Civic Holiday, 10 a.m.—4 p.m Symbolic Birds. Birds are often chosen as images for sports teams, cities and on crests. Hear the northwest coast native tale of Eagle Boy and imagine your own your inner bird, and make your own totem.
- Aug 6, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Bird Hike, join Andrea Wilson as she takes you for a stroll in the woods looking for our resident birds. Add them to our list as part of our citizen science program.
- Aug. 13, 10 a.m.—3 p.m Niagara Woodcarvers Association, bird carving demonstration
- Aug. 20, Sleuthing for Science, 9 a.m. -4 p.m. Bring your binoculars and learn about our citizen science project, join in and tell us what you see today.
- Aug. 27, Backyard Bird Watching Basics, 1-2 p.m. Learn about the kind of birds you will find at your feeder, depending on the seed and location you will get quite a variety to your backyard.
- Sept. 3 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Bird Brained, find out how smart birds are, especially crows and make your own crow to take home.
- Sept. 5 Last day to visit the Exhibit.

"I once had a sparrow alight upon my shoulder and for a moment I felt that I was more distinguished by that circumstance that I should have been by any epaulet I could have worn."

- Henry David Thoreau

Bird Kingdom Visits Ball's Falls

As part of International Migratory Bird Day you can see some of the birds who live in other parts of the world with the live birds from Bird Kingdom! These birds will be on display from 11 a.m. o 3 p.m. with shows at 11 a.m. 12:15 and 1:45. Bring your camera and use it to take a picture of your family and friends with the birds. We are in the planning stages of having Bird Kingdom back for performances in July and August, so stayed tuned.

Binocular Workshop

Join Jill Davis Annett on July 23 from 10-11a.m. as she leads you on a journey around the centre for conservation to discover the value of binoculars in birdwatching. If you are new to birdwatching and want to learn more about which binoculars work best, this interactive workshop is for you. You will get to try out the binoculars while on a scavenger hunt for clues. This will help hone your skills and provide you ample opportunity to see what does and does not fit your style. Jill owns and operates Brave Adventure, a environmental training company. She helps people engage in nature for personal growth and a healthy lifestyles.



Wooden Decoy made by Pat Godin.

Ball's Falls Conservation Area
3292 Sixth Ave.
Jordan, ON
L0R 1S0
905-562-5235 ext. 0 for more information

Check out our Blog and see profiles of Birds at Ball's Falls. <http://ballsfalls.wordpress.com>

We're on the Web

www.BallsFalls.ca

Discover the Undiscovered



The Gift Shop has gone to the Birds!

Flocks of birds have invaded the gift shop! From the Cornell Centre for Ornithology's soft toy sound birds to books, suncatchers and more. Come and see how birds can inspire us in so many ways.

Citizen Scientists

This summer Ball's Falls is looking for your help. Visitors to the conservation area are asked to keep a list of those birds they see during their visit. This information will be valuable to determining our resident population. Bird Studies Canada tracks this information for use by scientists. You can add your own sightings to the data banks by logging in to Bird Studies Canada at <http://www.bsc-eoc.org/>:

Be the eyes and ears of science in this valuable research. Bird checklists are available at the front desk upon your arrival. You can use this to track what you see on your visit and report back to our staff. You can also join Swift Watch by attending our Workshop on May 14 and help document this endangered species.

Bird Resources



Niagara Woodcarver Association: <http://www.niagarawoodcarvers.ca/> Currently the club has over 100 members from all walks of life, who find woodcarving to be rewarding and creative.

Bert Miller Nature Club: <http://www.bertmillernatureclub.org/> Named after well-known naturalist and resident of Fort Erie, Bert Miller. Since its inception, the Club has been committed to preserving, protecting, restoring and improving the natural environment of the Niagara Peninsula



Niagara Falls Nature Club: <http://niagaranatureclub.tripod.com/> A social club for anyone interested in any type of nature or the environment. The club organizes hikes and is also involved in bird watching.

Bird Studies Canada: Elisabeth van Stamm, Ontario Programs Biologist, <http://www.bsc-eoc.org/>



Brave Adventure: Jill Davis-Annett, Organizational & Development Trainer, aj.davisannett@gmail.com



Haldimand Bird Observatory: Haldimand Bird Observatory was established in 1996 and now operates two stations: Rock Point and Ruthven. We have charitable status and an elected board of directors. <http://www.birdbanding.blogspot.com/>

Bird Kingdom: <http://www.birdkingdom.ca/> Amazing Birds, Reptiles and More!! 4x Winner of Niagara's "Attraction of the Year", this soaring adventure is for the whole family! Discover the world's largest indoor, free flying aviary with over 400 exotic birds from around the world. 9 Specialty Areas to explore as you journey through this "Awe" inspiring Kingdom".



Niagara Birds by John Black and Kayo Roy, http://www.niagarabirds.ca/Niagara_Birds_home.html

Watch for our Next Exhibit: Seeds in Disguise from the ROM Sept. 10—Nov. 7, 2011.

Seeds, like people, have many interesting facets to their complex biology. Travel, chemistry, medicine and industry are part of the stories of the ornamental seeds in this exhibition. This exhibition will delight all ages and levels of interest – from the curious child, to the backyard botanist, to the seasoned hiker, and everyone in between.

