



ALBERTA



Northern flicker

The tongues of most woodpeckers are adapted to spear and extract insects from wood, but the Flicker's tongue is a bit different—in ways advantageous for lapping up large numbers of ants.

All woodpeckers have an elongated tongue attached to an arrangement of bones, cartilage and muscles known as the hyoid apparatus, which wraps around the bird's skull, ending near the rear of its eye socket. The Northern flicker has an extra long tongue that can extend up to two inches past the tip of its beak. It's the perfect tool for probing into anthills. This lengthy tongue is supported by an elongated hyoid bone, which extends into the bird's upper mandible.

The Northern flicker is the only woodpecker that frequently feeds on the ground. As a matter of fact, ants are their favourite food. They have a long, barbed tongue that they use to lap up the ants that can make up 45% of their diet.



FACTS



- Northern flickers use a drumming technique to attract a mate and to announce to others that this is their territory. They often use the metal flues on fireplaces or even the power transformers on telephone poles
- Hybrids between red-shafted and yellow-shafted subspecies are common where population overlap
- A group of Flickers are collectively known as a “guttering”, “menorah”, and “Peterson” of flickers

Gilded Flicker



Found only in parts of the southwestern U.S. and northwestern Mexico, a distinct species called the Gilded Flicker has yellow wing linings and head coloration similar to red-shafted Northern Flickers.)

The nest is a cavity built by excavating a hole in a saguaro cactus, or less often in a large tree in a riparian zone (such as a cottonwood). No materials are used to augment the nesting cavity, as eggs are laid directly on the floor of the cavity.



Celebrating our 24th year ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, October 2, 2021
10:00am to 5:00pm



Make a purchase/crack an egg
Every egg is a winner!



Bird Book Nook



We have also set up one of many jigsaw puzzles—please feel free to place puzzle pieces while enjoying your visit. Be sure to check out our many jigsaw puzzles for sale all with a wild bird theme and in sizes of 500 or 1000 pieces.

The Galler-oom has been transformed into Bird Book Nook, a library of the birding/nature books that we carry as well as some local artwork and birding/nature videos on the TV screen. We invite you to browse the new set-up and enjoy the many publications we carry.

The Bird Book Nook is also for rent for small groups of 35 people or less that need a meeting or event space. Table and chairs are available as well as refreshments for \$50/hour. For more information or to book the room, please email info@wildbirdstore.ca.

Rare Bird



Blue-eyed Ground-Dove.

Photo by [Ciro Albano](#)

The Blue-eyed Ground-Dove was considered extinct until 2015, when it was sighted for the first time in 75 years — setting off a race to save the species. Two years later, ABC's local partner SAVE Brasil created a reserve protecting important habitat for the dove, and the following year a state park was created, ensuring that all known individuals were contained within a protected area. In coming years, increased support from conservation groups and concerned birders will be critical to help this species recover.

Already one of the world's rarest birds, the Blue-eyed Ground-Dove becomes even harder to find outside of the breeding season. During these times, it eludes detection, slipping out of sight when approached. This small dove is named for its vivid blue eyes, which match the spots on its wings and contrast with the rest of its rich tawny and rufous plumage.

We offer a discount if you return your seed bags (sorry—not the Mother Nature bags which we cannot re-use), suet ball containers, if you bring your own container to fill or use a bag from our re-cycle bin. This discount is in addition to any other discount offered.



Write a Google review on your experience at The Wild Bird Store, and as a thank you, we will give you 100 customer loyalty points (\$5.00 value). To get a promo code, kindly email info@wildbirdstore.ca



(one Google review per customer)

Earn 200 customer loyalty points (\$10.00 value) by referring a friend, acquaintance or fellow birder.

Please visit the store to get a promo code.



No need for a card, just give your phone number. You earn \$1.00 for every \$20.00 spent (excludes “sales” items, books & optics) and can be used in-store and on Mobile Seed Truck. As a loyalty member our monthly promotions and in-store “specials” are automatically given at the cash register.



Combining our Seniors 10% discount with the Loyalty Program. (Excludes “sales” items, books & optics).



Discount for membership 10% discount for members of Fish Creek Park, AIWC, Priddis Golf Club, Nature Calgary, Sandy Cross Conservation and Springbank Garden Club. Must present valid membership card at time of purchase.

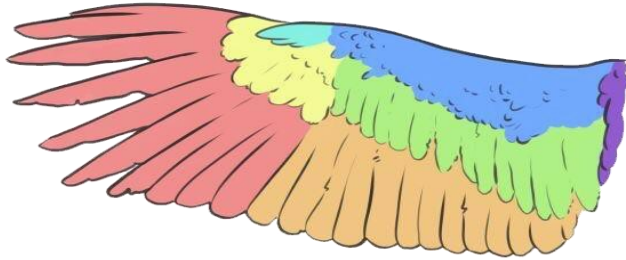


BIRD ANATOMY



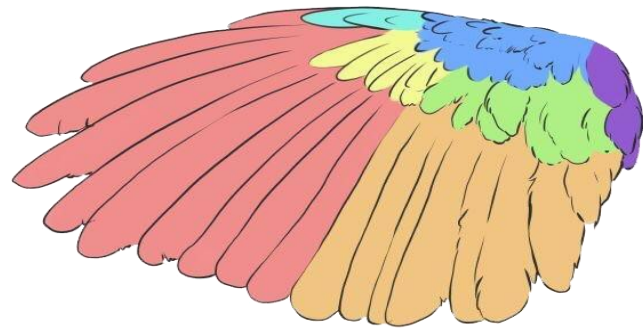
Active Soaring Wings

Long and narrow. Excellent for soaring, idling without flapping over water as long as wind currents are favourable. Example: Great shearwater



Passive Soaring Wings

Long and broad wings ending in long primary feathers with wide gaps in between. These slots help the bird take advantage of columns of rising hot air, allowing it to soar without reliable wind currents. Example: Wandering albatross/Andean condor



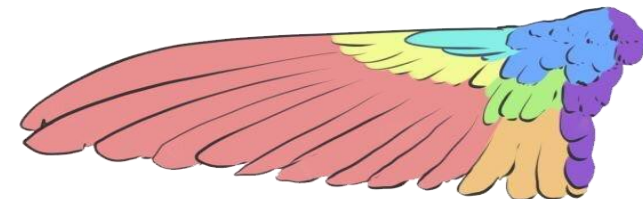
Elliptical Wings

Optimized for bursts of fast, tightly controlled flight. Excellent at taking off quickly, maneuvering through branches, and avoiding predators. Ordinary flight is low and usually requires flapping. Example: Partridges/Pheasants



High Speed Wings

Medium-long and narrow, optimized for sustained speed. Example: Peregrine falcon



Hovering Wings

Small relative to body size. Excellent for tightly controlled flight and hovering. Articulates mostly at the shoulder rather than the wrist. Example: American Kestrel

- Primary feathers
- Secondary feathers
- Primary coverts
- Secondary coverts
- Alula
- Marginal coverts
- Scapulars

Wing Shapes

Why Do Birds Flick Their Tails?

The way that some birds flick, wag or flare their tails can be distinctive. A flicking or flashing tail might suggest to a predator that a bird is particularly alert or hard to catch, while also warning others in the flock of danger. Tail flicking can also help flush out prey. A Hooded warbler may flare its tail while foraging low to the ground to cause insects to jump, making them easier prey.

Dark-eyed junco foraging on the ground, rapidly flashed white tail feathers that normally remain hidden.

When a Song sparrow walks, hops or flits from bush to bush, its tail flicks jerkily up and down.

What's it all about? One reason is that a bird's repeated, habitual movements communicate information. Kind of like a person using hand gestures to signal to others. The tail flicking can also be used to deceive predators or to flush out prey.

When a hawk dives at a flock of Juncos, there is an instant eruption of white flashing tails—a visual yell—which may distract a hawk's aim at a single Junco.

While we often focus on their calls and songs, there's a lot you can learn about what birds are communicating by watching their tails.



Dark-eyed Junco. Picture taken by Captain Yves .



Hooded warbler Evan Lipton April 24, 2014



Song sparrow Jonathan Irons October 25, 2018

Tufted titmouse plucking hair

Dozens of online videos document an unusual behaviour among Tufted titmice and their closet bird kin. A bird will land on an unsuspecting mammal and, cautiously and stealthily, pluck out some of its hair.

A new paper in the journal *Ecology* documents this phenomenon, which the authors call “kleptotrichy.” The authors found only a few descriptions of the behaviour in the scientific literature but came up with dozens more examples in online videos posted by birders and other bird enthusiasts. In almost all the video recorded cases, the thief is a Titmouse plucking hair from a cat, dog, human, raccoon or, in one case, porcupine.



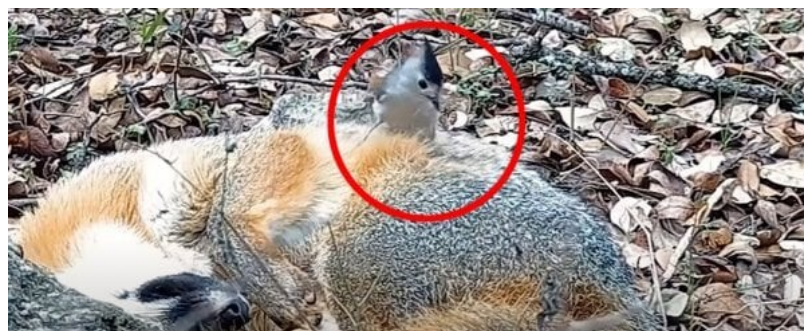
The hair’s role in the nest is still debated, although it is more commonly used by birds nesting in temperate climates, so maintaining warmth in the nest is thought to be one advantage.

It may be that the birds simply need the hair to insulate their nests, but the presence of mammal hair—and the associated odor of the mammal—could also deter nest predators like snakes or other birds, the researchers said.

The Great-crested flycatcher, which, like the Titmouse, is a cavity nester, that actually puts shed snakeskins into its nest, possibly to deter predators. There are also finches in Africa that put mammalian fecal material on top of their enclosed nests, presumably to confuse and thus keep predators away.

The hair may also repel nest and nesting parasites which are a common threat to chick survival, especially in cavity nests like those of Titmice.

Regardless of the purpose of the behaviour, the new paper is the first to documents so many examples of hair-plucking by birds in a single report. In addition to citing nine papers about the phenomenon, it also links to dozens of online videos. Collectively, the videos show Titmice—and in one case, a Black-capped chickadee—plucking hair from 47 humans, 45 dogs, 3 cats, 3 raccoons and a porcupine.



A black-capped titmouse stealing fur from a sleeping fox. (Texas Backyard Wildlife/YouTube)

To watch several videos go to Google and type in:

Titmouse pulling fur on YouTube

**WHO
KNEW...**

Alberta adds Sandhill crane hunting

CBC News · Posted: Jul 05, 2020


The province announced the launch of Sandhill crane hunting starting September 2020 in more than 50 wildlife management units in southern and east-central Alberta. The new hunting season will run around the same time as the province’s waterfowl season.

A press release stated that the number of Sandhill cranes in the province has increased steadily in recent years and that the birds have exceptional survival rates for both young and adult birds.

Meanwhile, provinces like Manitoba and Saskatchewan have had Sandhill crane hunting seasons for more than 50 years. The Sandhill crane population in those provinces remains healthy.

The province also states that they would be taking additional precautions by limiting the Sandhill crane hunting season to areas that are not known to overlap with the Whooping crane migration or breeding range.



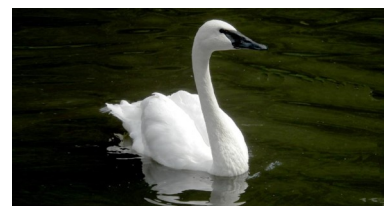


On the road again.....

We have spent a wonderful summer getting to know the birds of Alberta with days filled with new sightings. We had started out in April concentrating on waterfowl, in particular ducks and eventually moved on to shorebirds. Having seen the influx of hatchlings in late June and July, we continued to improve our knowledge but got side-tracked by wanting to spend some time getting to know the raptors of Alberta, not an easy task for novice birders but we saw so many Red-tail and Swainson's hawks.

As the summer progressed into mid-July, the temperatures started to soar and we were concerned with the lack of rain. Some areas have really suffered, but others continued to provide a wonderful habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds especially to the northeast of Calgary. Who knew we had so much water so close to Calgary. Very few Great blue herons, but lots of Avocets, Black-necked stilts, Yellowlegs, Willets and Snipes just about everywhere we went. Once you learn to identify a Common snipe by their call, they really are easy to find.

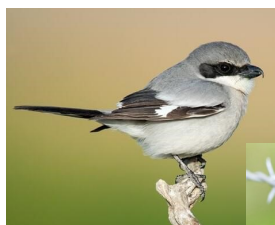
Well into August and the weather is still HOT! The sloughs and ponds in and around Calgary are all dry and the birds and their young have retreated to the bigger lakes. We are extremely thankful that most of the waterfowl and shorebirds had their babies early otherwise the adults would have been forced to abandon their young in order to survive. Mother Nature can be very cruel, but she always has a plan. All we can say is we had a great birding summer while it lasted.



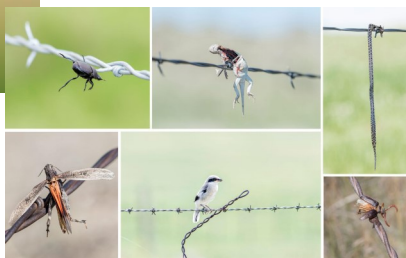
Trumpeter swan



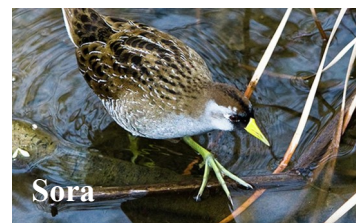
Swainson's hawk



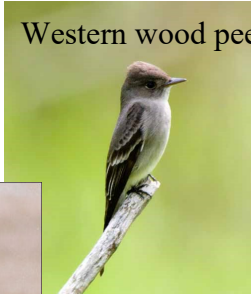
Loggerhead shrike



Loggerhead shrike's impaled victims



Sora



Western wood peewee



Snipe



Sandhill cranes east of Water Valley Golf course



Baltimore oriole



Cedar waxwings

Birding trip Sunday, August 15th



What we found at Frank Lake—
Great egret





Saturday Morning Birdwalks with Jim St. Laurent



The Wild Bird Store is happy to announce the return of Saturday morning bird walks led by Jim St. Laurent. Jim is well known in the birding community and brings years of experience in his ability to identify birds not only by sight but by sound.

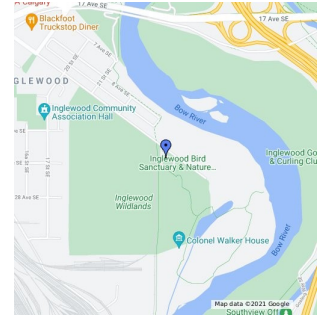
WELCOME BACK JIM!

Saturday, September 18, 2021 INGLEWOOD BIRD SANCTUARY

(9:00am meet at Inglewood Sanctuary 9th Avenue S.E.)

Ticket price: \$5.00 +GST + fees

Tickets must be purchased through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)—2020/2021 WBS bird walks

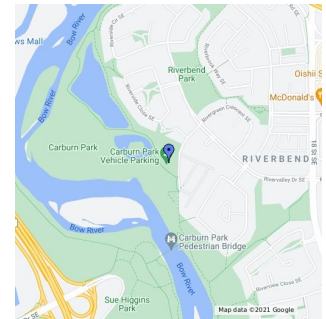


Saturday, October 2, 2021 CARBURN PARK

(9:00am meet at Carburn Park Riverview Drive S.E.)

Ticket price: \$5.00 +GST + fees

Tickets must be purchased through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)—2020/2021 WBS bird walks

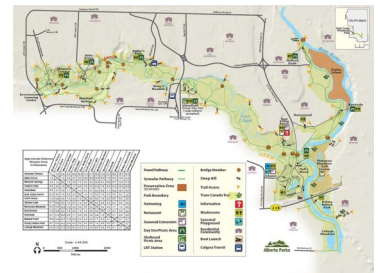


Saturday, October 16, 2021 VOTIERS FLATS—FISH CREEK PARK

(9:00am meet at Voters Flats (South end of Elbow Drive S.W.))

Ticket price: \$5.00 +GST + fees

Tickets must be purchased through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)—2020/2021 WBS bird walks

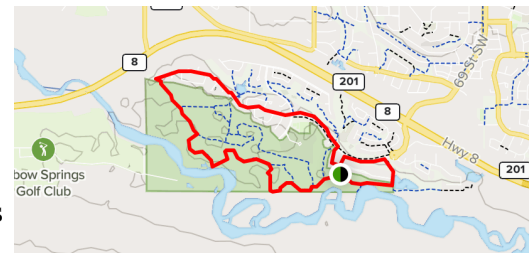


Saturday, October 30, 2021 GRIFFITHS WOODS

(9:00am meet at Griffiths Woods—Discovery Ridge Blvd. S.W.)

Ticket price: \$5.00 +GST + fees

Tickets must be purchased through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)—2020/2021 WBS bird walks



Saturday, November 13, 2021 WEASELHEAD NATURAL AREA

(9:00am meet at Weaselhead Natural Area—37th Street S.W.)

Ticket price: \$5.00 +GST + fees

Tickets must be purchased through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)—2020/2021 WBS bird walks





Autumn Birding Course Begins September 6

Register now for this 12 week course, which runs September 6 to November 28

Join the Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society this fall, for our ever-popular Birding Course! Explore the fascinating world of birds by visiting different parks throughout the city, and capture a glimpse of birds soon to be on their way to warmer places during their fall migration. Our exceptional team of skilled volunteer Instructors will guide the way, helping to find and identify the many bird species we hope you will see and sharing their wealth of knowledge with you! Fun for all ages.

This 12-week course runs every day of the week (except on Fridays), with each session being approximately 2.75 hours.

The course is offered at a discounted rate to Friends of Fish Creek members:

- Members - \$60/person
- Non-Members - \$100/person

Registration is required and space is limited.

[“register now at eventbrite.ca – search 2021 Fall Birding](#)



Explore Vancouver Island
with the Value Nature Podcast

The Bateman Foundation is proud to launch a new podcast: **Value Nature**. Produced in Victoria BC, it explores the connections between nature and culture on Vancouver Island.

Value Nature tells tales of biodiversity by highlighting local ecosystems, creative processes, and Indigenous ways of knowing. Interviews with artists, environmentalists, historians and Indigenous knowledge keepers will educate, inspire, and empower listeners to invest in our shared future and become stewards of the land.

Value Nature is available on all podcast platforms, and can also be streamed via the **Bateman Foundation website**.

SPEAKER SERIES

The Wild Bird Store has once again gathered together a group of birding/nature professionals who will treat you to a series of presentations that will be both inspiring and educating to the Calgary Birding community. Please go to [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca) where you can register for individual or all of the presentations.

Due to Covid19 restrictions still in place, these presentations will be through "Zoom" but we suggest you sign up early as there are a limited number of spots available for each presentation.

PLEASE NOTE: Ticket sales for the speaker series are going fast. There are a limited number of participants for each speaker. To avoid disappointment please register as soon as possible.



Myrna Pearman recently retired as the Biologist and Site Services Manager at Ellis Bird Farm Ltd. (1987 to 2020) where she spearheaded many conservation, education and research initiatives. A keen photographer and writer, she has authored/ co-authored numerous books, writes nature photo essays for several magazines, and is actively involved with the Red Deer River Naturalists. She was recently named a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

Beauty Everywhere:

Finding Nature in Our Own Backyards.

Thursday, September 9, 2021 6:00pm

\$15.00 + fees and GST

www.myrnapearman.com

With travel restrictions being imposed over the past year, nature seekers and photographers have been spending more time in their own backyards and gardens, and have been exploring and appreciating local parks and natural areas. Myrna will talk about nature and the remarkable biodiversity that can be found in both the urban and rural areas of Alberta.

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JAY INGRAM Canadian science author, broadcaster and public speaker

The Future of Urban Wildlife

Thursday, September 16, 2021 6:00pm

\$15.00 + fees and GST

Two out of every three people will be city dwellers by the middle of this century. That’s about 6.5 billion people worldwide. Over the same period of time existing urban wildlife will continue to share this space, and new contenders will undoubtedly arrive. Of those, some will be accidentally brought by humans, some will be introduced deliberately and some might even make their way on their own.

The question is, how will the humans handle it. There’s good evidence that a city with plenty of parkland and diverse environments can support biodiversity - but will the cities of the future take that into account? And what about the wildlife, plants and even microbes that become urbanites - will they start to evolve into specialized urban versions of their wild cousins?

Urban wildlife, from the madness of introducing all the birds of Shakespeare to North America to that provider of

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Gavin McKinnon With a passion for birding, Gavin brings a young and enthusiastic perspective to Alberta’s birding community.

BIRDING ALBERTA

Thursday, September 23, 2021 6:00pm

\$15.00 + fees and GST

“Alberta has a diverse array of habitat, from the Rocky Mountains in the west to the Shortgrass Prairie in the east. Due to this wide range of habitats, hundreds of bird species can be found within the province. In this presentation Gavin McKinnon will provide an overview of his favorite birding hotspots as well as some tips on how to find a few of the most elusive species. Gavin will also share some of his favorite birding experiences from these regions.”

Tickets must be purchased in advance through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)

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TOM HINCE—is a former birding segment host on the Daily Planet with the Discovery Channel in Canada, and communications specialist with Parks Canada (at four different national parks). For the last two decades, he has organized and guided birding tours and safaris around the world (with his company BirdwithTom.com). Tom has guided ten trips to the Yukon and the Dempster

North to the Dempster Highway

Thursday, September 30, 2021 6:00pm

\$15.00 + fees and GST

The Dempster highway is the greatest wilderness drive on the continent. Where else can you drive for hours and not see or hear ANY signs of humans except the road you travel on? No buildings. No people except the odd passing car every hour or two. No noisy chainsaws or jet skis. Just breathtaking scenery, solitude, and the luring possibility of epic encounters with mammals and birds. Just getting to the start of the “highway” is a challenge. Our journey will take us on the Alaska highway in northern BC through the southern Yukon and onward to the Dempster. It will end (as the newly opened extension does) at Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean. And yes, there will be a few surprises like flat tires

Tickets must be purchased in advance through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)

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BRIAN KEATING —Calgary Zoo’s Honorary Conservation Advisor to their outreach projects

Former Adjunct Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the U of C

Owner of www.goingwild.org & co-produce of www.greatBIGnature.com

INSPIRED BY NATURE

Thursday, October 7, 2021 6:00pm

\$20.00 + fees and GST

Feeling overwhelmed? Feeling uptight? Feeling like the world is coming apart?

Get out. That’s right. Get out and go for a walk in nature. It’s time for a good hit of vitamin “N”.

This past year and a half has been difficult for all of us but one constant that we could all depend on was the restorative powers of nature. Birds continue to migrate, sing and reproduce. Mammals continued to walk our forests, valleys and grasslands.

Brian will take you to some local and international wild landscapes, and introduce you to some of the creatures who inhabit them. You’ll venture into places that he’s explored and learned from during the past two years.

He’ll first spend some detailed time our Western Canadian landscapes, taking a surprisingly intimate look at some of the wildlife in our backyard, before venturing overseas to explore some biologically rich places in Asia, Africa and South America.

This is a celebration of the wild places that still exist on our beautiful planet, and is designed to inspire and enthuse, offering hope for a better tomorrow.

Tickets must be purchased in advance through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)

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CHRIS FISHER (MSc, PBIol) is perhaps best known as the author of a series of books including “Birds of Alberta” - one of the most successful made-in-Alberta books in publishing history. He is regarded as one of our leading influencer for all things nature and is a frequent voice in Alberta media on wildlife and conservation stories. He has written and hosted documentary and TV series and travelled to all seven continents guiding adventure seekers to explore wildlife and natural environments,

Birds: Our Poets of Nature

Thursday, October 14, 2021 6:00pm

\$15.00 + fees and GST

Go looking for our Alberta birds and quite often you end up finding yourself.

Join “Birds of Alberta” author Chris Fisher as he celebrates our province’s most loved birds. Their diverse beauty and ecological persistence has provided Albertans a vital, extra sense of wonder and meaning during these recent challenging times. Birds are our most accessible and authentic ties to the Natural world - and Alberta’s birds have never before been as meaningful and valued part of our lives.

Tickets must be purchased in advance through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)

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Kirsten Pearson, BSc., P. Biol., RPBio

Josh Sullivan Wildlife Biologist/Field Coordinator

Fundamentals of Migration:

The Five Ws.

Thursday, October 21, 2021 6:00pm

Tickets \$15.00 + fees and GST

Let's dive into the who, what, when, where, and whys of avian migration! We'll cover form, function, migration routes, adaptations to long haul flights, some of our most interesting migrants, and more!

Tickets must be purchased in advance through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)

DONATIONS



Located at The Wild Bird Store (near the seed bins). We collect your cash as well as “wishlist” donations and arrange to deliver them to local wildlife organizations including Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation, Alberta Institute of Conservation and Ellis Bird Farm.

We ask for your support quarterly for each of these organizations.

For July, August and September 2021 your donations will go to:

Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC)
Madden, Alberta



[Wishlist - Alberta Institute For Wildlife Conservation](#)



You just have to check this video out....

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQH4MPzQKu0&t=8936s>



Question: Can Birds See in Colour?

Answer: : If one looks at any book or field guide featuring birds, one will quickly see that there exist many brightly coloured birds out there in the world. Thus, there would be no point for birds to be adorned in such colourful plumages if they cannot, in fact, see the world in colour. But this is a very complex topic and there is no simple answer. You see, we have no way of knowing if birds see the world in colour the same way we do.

What we do know is that birds can detect light over a wider range of wavelengths in the spectrum than we humans can. And what do I mean by the spectrum? Well, as seen through a prism or a rainbow or those little coloured test papers in a retail paint store, the spectrum is a range of colours from red, orange and yellow to green, blue and violet purple. Without getting into the physics of the eyeball, birds can not only likely discern more colours within their spectrum, they can even make finer colour discriminations in some parts of their spectrum. Besides having a very complex retina with millions of individual photoreceptors in even the smallest of eyes, birds, like mammals, also have droplets of coloured oil in their cone cells in their retina, which helps them discriminate among different hues better than humans. To make things even more complex, in recent years scientists have now determined that some birds, such as gulls, ostriches, parrots, and many songbirds, can detect light in the ultraviolet part of the spectrum. This allows birds to detect patches of ultraviolet colour on other birds or even on food items that we humans cannot see. This helps birds to make choices in which mates to breed with and which foods to eat.

--- David M. Bird, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology, McGill University www.askprofessorbird.com

ABOUT DR. DAVID

David M. Bird is Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology and the former Director of the Avian Science and Conservation Centre at McGill University. As a past-president of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, a former board member with Birds Canada, a Fellow of both the American Ornithological Society and the International Ornithological Union, he has received several awards for his conservation and public education efforts. Dr. Bird is a regular columnist on birds for Bird Watcher's Digest and Canadian Wildlife magazines and is the author of several books and over 200 peer-reviewed scientific publications. He is the consultant editor for multiple editions of DK Canada's Birds of Canada, Birds of Eastern Canada, Birds of Western Canada, and Pocket Birds of Canada. To know more about him, visit www.askprofessorbird.com or email david.bird@mcgill.ca.



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