



Species Spotlight



Monarch Butterfly

Monarch Butterfly Facts

- Monarchs that appear in southern Canada are not the same individuals that migrated south the season before – they are the latter's offspring, or in some cases offspring several generations down the line.
- There are two distinct populations of monarchs in Canada: a large population found east of the Rockies, and a smaller western population found only in central BC. Their breeding range closely reflects the distribution of milkweed species.
- Adults that hatch in mid-summer in Ontario will fly 3,000 kilometres reaching the Michoacan state of central Mexico by October where they will congregate by the millions.



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Nature Canada
 75 Albert Street, Suite 300
 Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5E7
 Phone: 1-800-267-4088
 Email: info@naturecanada.ca
 Web: naturecanada.ca



A tree was planted in Robert Bateman's honour during the contest's national launch event in Ottawa, held at the Canadian Museum of Nature. Mr. Bateman's son, Alan, attended (centre right).

Youth Art Contest: Inspired by Nature

This spring, Nature Canada and Robert Bateman launched the 10th annual Get to Know Contest, Canada's largest nature art, writing and photography contest for youth, spreading the key message that caring about biodiversity begins by connecting with nature, which can often happen in our own backyard. We have been proud supporters of the Contest for several years, and the Premier Sponsor since 2009. Turning to nature to spark creativity and self-expression is a wonderful way to make lasting connections between young people and the natural world – and the art that nature inspires in these young impresarios is truly amazing! See the winning entries at www.gettoknow.ca/contest/winners.php



Nature Canada protects and conserves wildlife and habitats in Canada by engaging people and advocating on behalf of nature. With strategies based on sound science and passion for nature, Nature Canada effects change on issues of national significance, including bird conservation, wilderness protection, species at risk and national parks.

What are Important Bird Areas?

Important Bird Areas are sites that support threatened birds, large groups of birds, and birds restricted by range or by habitat. IBAs can range from tiny patches of habitat to large tracts of land or water. Using common criteria across international borders enables us to compare population trends and status of sites at global, continental, and national levels.

Already, Bird Studies Canada and Nature Canada have organized the third IBA Caretaker workshop bringing together representatives from six provinces eager to establish their own Caretaker Networks (BC, AB, SK, QC, NS, NB) or, in the case of BC, share their experiences and serve as a mentor to the others. All of these provinces are at different stages in implementing the IBA Program and, with continued donor support, we hope to gain participation from remaining provinces and territories soon.

IBA Caretakers!

Because of YOU, There are Caretakers of Important Bird Areas

Many of the birds that spend part of their lives in Canada depend on a network of sites for safe migration during the winter and breeding seasons. Collaborative efforts that span international boundaries are essential to ensure the long-term survival of bird populations. The IBA (Important Bird Areas) network represents one such effort.

Thanks to member support, Nature Canada established a small fund called IBA Communities in Action to implement critical conservation activities at high-priority IBAs across the country.

The important role of IBA Caretakers

IBA Caretakers have a very important role to play in bird conservation. These dedicated volunteers are the eyes, ears and hands on the ground at the most important sites for birds. Stewards of the IBAs, Caretakers monitor bird populations, the state of habitats, raise awareness about their site, and undertake conservation actions if needed.

Last year, Nature Canada took a big step toward realizing its dream of establishing a nation wide IBA Caretaker Network when it secured significant funding for the program from TransCanada Corporation.

"Coordinated Caretaker activity will allow us to target particularly vulnerable sites for additional conservation action, and will help us ensure that Canada's IBA habitats and birds are safeguarded," says Ted Cheskey, Manager of Bird Conservation Programs for Nature Canada. "These areas need someone to look out for them!"



For more news and commentary about nature, the environment and our conservation efforts visit the Nature Canada blog at: naturecanadablog.blogspot.com

Nature Canada and the Next Generation of Nature Lovers



Parks and People Program

Through the support of our donors – Nature Canada has connected over 75,000 children through the Parks and People program. Children have hiked, walked, camped or explored the outdoors in national, provincial or local parks across Canada in the last four years.

Canadians rank environmental issues near the top of the national agenda, yet fewer Canadians than ever have a personal connection to nature. While Canada is a country rich with natural heritage, more than 80% of Canadians live in urban centres, and children are spending more time indoors. There is an urgent need for young people to reconnect with nature and gain a greater understanding of its beauty, its gifts and its fragility. With the help of donor support, Nature Canada is addressing this need by reaching out to youth in many ways:

Nature Explorers: An Online Community for Families

Canadian children can spend up to 8 hours a day in front of TV, cellphone or computer screens. This is a problem – but it can also present an opportunity to engage youth in nature exploration. This summer, Nature Canada has launched a new online community just for young teens called Nature Explorers. Through interactive blogging, photo-sharing, tweeting and commenting, community members are taking part in real-world outdoor activities and sharing their experiences with others online. Nature Explorers also contains a wealth of ideas for parents who want their families to be more active in nature, and aren't sure where to start. Check out NatureExplorers.ca and start exploring the world of nature!

My Parks Pass: Your Ticket to Adventure

More than 400,000 Grade 8 students across Canada can experience Canada's national parks and historic sites for free this year, thanks to the launch of "My Parks Pass," an initiative between Nature Canada, Parks Canada and the Historica-Dominion Institute. Family passes were distributed to schools in May, providing free access to 27 national parks and 68 national historic sites. Creating opportunities for our youth to experience nature first-hand in our parks and national historic sites will promote healthy, active lifestyles and generate appreciation of and respect for nature. More information is available at www.myparkspass.ca



Nature Nuggets

Strange but true facts about nature



The sweat glands of a tree squirrel are located on their feet. When hot or excited a squirrel will leave wet tracks on a dry surface. This scent is also used to mark the trees in their territory.

The Peregrine Falcon is the fastest bird in the world. When in its hunting dive it can reach speeds of over 200 mph.



"She was our Grandma. She loved nature. Especially birds."

Mary Hart Gilliland lived every day with a simple philosophy: "I'll keep on helping."

Mary was active for nature in a variety of wild and wonderful ways. She gave introduction to birdwatching lessons in her community, to the delight of keen naturalists of all ages. Mary helped test the validity and consistency of breeding bird counts for over two years, rising at 3:00 a.m. to begin five-hour Breeding Bird Surveys.



I leave my children and my grandchildren and theirs."

Mary, ever the activist, took action by choosing to leave a bequest to Nature Forever in her Will. She was surprised at how easily it was accomplished – she told her lawyer, his secretary typed the document and she signed it. Just after completing her Will, Mary said, "I feel wonderful, perhaps even a little bit proud of myself for having finally committed a long-standing good intention to paper."

Mary served many vital roles with Nature Canada, including President, and led many critical conservation successes including the designation of lands to be protected for Grasslands National Park. As she finished her tenure on the Board she vowed to keep protecting Canada's spectacular wildlife and wild places.

"I've done just about anything and everything I could to further what I personally believe in – our universal need to value and preserve the natural world around us – and to convince others to join in," said Mary. "Despite it all, I see how much there is left to do. I wonder at the work

Mary continued, "Maybe there will even be a mention of me somewhere, someday and my grand-daughters will say, 'She was our Grandma. She loved nature. Especially birds.' Could I be better remembered?"

Mary's natural legacy continues on through Nature Forever and Nature Canada's ongoing work in bird conservation. A truly natural fit to her inspiring life philosophy, Mary Gilliland will keep on helping.



To leave your own lasting legacy for nature, please contact Jodi Joy at jjoy@naturecanada.ca or 1-800-267-4088 ext 239.