

# Conservation Corner - Christmas for the birds

'Tis the season to deck the halls, trim the tree, eat, drink and be merry! Trimming outdoor trees with edible ornaments for winter birds and wildlife is a kid-pleasing, fun holiday tradition.

The birds' antics and bright plumage will add a splash of colour on the winter-white landscape and delight you as they share in the Holiday feast!

Many birds that feed on seeds, nuts and insects tough out the cold, dark winter with us. Food is critical. A chickadee weighs only as much as a handful of paper clips and needs to eat 10% of their body-weight every day! Winter food is so important, even their brains seasonally enlarge to help them remember where they hid their food caches. Help them keep warm with these treats:

**Garlands:** String unsalted peanuts, popcorn, raisins and cranberries on colourful yarn. Make some short, 3

items long pieces for a portable feast. Avoid knotting the end, so the goodies are easy to slide off.

**Fruity Ornaments:** Slice and hang apples, pears and oranges on ribbons or wire. Cookie cutters can be used to shape the apple and pears into stars and other festive designs. Waxwings, towhees and mockingbirds adore these fruity treats.

**Peanut Butter Pinecones:** Cover pinecones with peanut butter or suet, then roll in birdseed, to make a yummy high energy treat for nuthatches, chickadees, and woodpeckers.

**Bird Pudding:** Mix a pound of melted lard (or leftover cooking fat), one cup hot water, two cups oatmeal, one cup flour, and four cups birdseed. Let harden and hang in onion bag or suet-cage.

**Feeders:** Make a feeder with clean pop-bottles, milk cartons, jugs and wood. Feeders make it easy to

attract birds all winter long. Different seeds attract different types of birds; try a mix high in sunflower seeds to start.

**Trees, Shrubs & Flowers:** Plant berries, nuts and nectar producing plants to attract birds all year long.

**Items to Avoid:** Some foods can harm birds and wildlife. Save your chocolate for friends and family; it contains theobromine which is toxic to birds. Make sure seeds are fresh and feeders dry. Moldy seeds contain toxins.

Don't have existing trees to decorate? Recycle an old Christmas tree. A birding guide and binoculars can help you identify your winter guests. Add your own recipes and make your tree a gourmet bird restaurant!

Love bird watching? Want to help scientists track how bird populations are doing? Bird Studies Canada aims "to advance the understanding, appreciation and

conservation of wild birds and their habitats." Environmental changes from shifting land-use and climate can affect many species. Bird populations are indicators of environmental health. Long-term monitoring of bird populations around the world helps detect population declines, increases and tracks introduced species.

**Christmas Bird Count:** Three French hens, two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree! People just love counting birds.

The 107th Christmas Bird Count is a holiday tradition for over 50,000 birders across Canada, the United States and Latin America. Counts occur December 14-January 5.

To find a count near you, visit Bird Studies Canada at [www.bsc-eoc.org/cbc/counters.jsp](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/cbc/counters.jsp).

**Project Feeder Watch:** Report the birds you see at your feeder this winter. Watch birds from November

through March, keep track of the kinds and numbers and record the data online. There is a classroom version of the project. To find out more visit Bird Studies Canada at [www.bsc-eoc.org/national/pfw.html](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/national/pfw.html).

"Conservation Corner" is a monthly column that looks at the theory, practices, technology and benefits of land & water stewardship.

The NVCA is your public agency dedicated to the preservation of a healthy environment. As your partner, the NVCA provides the expertise to help protect our water, our land and our future.

For comments or suggestions about this column or the Healthy Waters program, contact Shannon Stephens at the NVCA at (705) 424-1479 ext 239 or e-mail us at [sstephens@nvca.on.ca](mailto:sstephens@nvca.on.ca) or visit our website at [www.nvca.on.ca](http://www.nvca.on.ca).

## Local tab for health unit to drop in 2007

Local taxpayers will benefit from a drop of more than \$2-million in the 2007 municipal levy to the health unit, preliminary estimates show.

With the provincial share of public health budgets reaching 75% next year, and for following years, the municipal taxpayer will be covering an estimated \$6.2-million of a budget expected to be just under \$25 million.

By 2008, though, the three-year financial plan and related projections forecast a slight increase in the municipal levy and possibly again in 2009. Budget projections are created based on population growth, cost of living increases and community needs.

## Bid Euchre

On Wednesday, December 20th, bid euchre will start at 7:30 pm at the Newton Robinson United Church Building. It is \$3 per person and all are welcome.

# COMMUNITY EVENTS

## A directory of what is happening in your community

The community event calendar is provided as a free public service to non-profit organizations to announce upcoming events. Deadlines are no later than Monday for that week's issue to

**COMMUNITY EVENTS,**  
P.O. Box 310, Beeton, Ontario L0G 1A0

Submissions by mail, fax or e-mail and will not be received by telephone.

### ISSUES & INTERESTS

**The York-Simcoe Naturalists** is a young club looking for new members. Contact: Cathryn Rees at 905-775-7021, e-mail: [wilcor@sympatico.ca](mailto:wilcor@sympatico.ca).

**South Simcoe Community Information Centre "CONTACT"** at 146 Victoria St. W. Alliston. Call (705) 435-4900, Fax 705-435-1106. Website: [www.csolve.net/~contact](http://www.csolve.net/~contact), or Email: [contact@focusdc.on.ca](mailto:contact@focusdc.on.ca).

**Be a face in the fight against cancer** The Innisfil Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society needs volunteers. Their involvement enables the Canadian Cancer Society to fund cancer research, provide information, services and to support people living with cancer. Call: 436-1060 or 726-8032.

**The Canadian Mental Health Association of Barrie-Simcoe** supports the development and continuance of self-help groups as a viable community resource for individuals experiencing difficulties. Self-Help groups can provide; support and understanding through difficult times; an opportunity to meet with others who have experienced similar difficulties; information and education; a safe and comfortable environment; suggestions regarding coping strategies that help to get through difficult times.

For further information contact the Canadian Mental Health Association, Barrie-Simcoe Branch at 705-726-5033 or 1-800-461-4319.

### MONDAYS

**Friends of the Innisfil Library.** Stroud Branch, meetings are held the third Monday of every month at 7 p.m.

**Gilford and District Horticultural Society** meets second Monday of the month from March to November at Churchill Community Centre. New members are always welcome. Call Judith Rogers at 431-9278 or Kathy Barraclough at (905)853-8785 for more info.

**Al-Anon meetings** take place every Monday at Innisfil Community Church at 8:00 p.m. If you have a problem with someone else's drink, come and join the discussion group.

### TUESDAYS

**Job Search Assistance,** help with job search, resumes, interview tips, job bank internet assistance at the Thornton Library 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. and the Alcona Library from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Services provided at no charge by The Employment Outreach Team call Marilee or Kathy at (705) 728-0897 for more information. This initiative is funded by the government of Canada.

**Cookstown Computer Club** drop-in program for elementary students, 4 to 5 p.m. at the library.

**T.O.P.S. (Take off Pounds Sensibly)** from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Library, Robert St., Thornton. For information call 739-9226.

**Stroud Seniors invite persons 55 +** to join them for an afternoon of bid and progressive euchre, refreshments and companionship. 1 to 4 p.m. at St. Paul's Anglican Church Hall, Painswick. Call 436-1628.

**St Paul's Anglican Church,** located on the corner of Mapleview and Yonge Street, has two new youth and young adult programs. From 6:30 - 8:00 pm will be informal musical jamming sessions for anyone with a voice or instrument. If you are learning to play an instrument or like to sing and would enjoy having some fun and social time with similar minded people, come and join us. For more information, please call (705) 722-7755

**St. Paul's Church,** Innisfil (corner of Mapleview and Yonge Street), Playgroup for tots, moms, dads, caregivers, and grandparents from 9:30-

11:30 am. Come for a social time, friendship, play and snacks. For information, call (705) 431-1694.

**The Beta Classes** will be held at the Innisfil Community Church starting January 9th at 1pm. Beta is a life changing program and the twelve week course will enable you to live free from fear, stress anxiety and the pain of past hurts and traumas. This program is offered at the Church from 1:00 - 2:30 pm. For more information, call Sherri McLaughlin at (705) 436-1611.

### WEDNESDAYS

**Friends of the Innisfil Library,** Lakeshore Branch, meet the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. New members are most welcome.

**Euchre, bid euchre, Scrabble and cribbage** is played at Alcona Seniors club every Wednesday at 12:30 to 3 p.m. at the ABC Hall on the 25th Sideroad below Innisfil Beach Rd. Refreshments and fun days. Bring a bag lunch.

**Euchre every 3rd** Wednesday of the month at 7:30, Newton Robinson United Church in aid of Gwen Taylor Library. Refreshments.

**Weight Loss Group.** The Alcona Chapter of TOPS meets at 7:15 at Goodfellow Public School. Call Joan Davies at 436-3197 after 6 and on weekends.

**Job Search Assistance,** help with job search, resumes, interview tips, job bank internet assistance. On Wednesdays, the mornings are alternated between the Churchill and the Cookstown Libraries from 10:00 a.m. to noon., and every Wednesday afternoon at the Stroud Branch from 1:30 - 3:30. Services provided at no charge by The Employment Outreach Team Please call marilee or Kathy at (705) 728-0897. This initiative is funded by the government of Canada.

**Euchre at St. Peter's Anglican Church.** Churchill is held every Wednesday at 1 p.m. at the parish hall. Please call Reg at 705-456-6801 for information.

**The Cookstown Co-Operative Playgroup** is at St. John's Anglican Church in Cookstown for the winter. We

will be having a special winter program that will include outings, Story Time with Sue the Librarian, visits from the Ontario Early Years representative and much more. All pre-school children and their care-givers are welcome. The hours will be the same, 9:30 to 12:30 every Wednesday & Thursday morning. For more information please call Karla at 905 778-1507 or Bryan at 458-8468. See you there!!

### THURSDAYS

**Euchre - Progressive and Bid,** every Thursday at 1 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion - 1017 Robinson, Bell Ewart 705-436-1144, Betty.

**Register for Book** Book a six week afterschool program for ages 6 and up from 5-6 p.m. Call Innisfil Public Library, Cookstown Branch at 458-1273.

**Job Search Assistance,** help with job search, resumes, interview tips, job bank internet assistance at the Alcona Library from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Please call Marilee or Kathy at (705) 728-0897. Services provided at no charge by The Employment Outreach Team 728-3757, this initiative is funded by the government of Canada.

**Barrie Chapter of Schizophrenia Society** of Ontario family support group meets the last Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Canadian Mental Health Association, Barrie-Simcoe Building, 39 High St., Barrie. For info contact 726-5033.

**Painswick Horticultural Society** meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at St. Paul's Anglican Church. Meeting time is 7:30 p.m. New members welcome. For info call Linda Lewer at 436-3908.

**The Parish of Churchill and Cookstown youth group** meets every Thursday from 6:30 to 8 on alternate weeks at both St. Peter's in Churchill and St. John's in Cookstown. The youth leader is Pam Gervais. If you need information on joining the youth group, please call the Parish office at 705-458-1801.

**Thornton Seniors Social Club** meets at the Lions Hall, 238 Barrie St, Thornton

at 1 p.m. Join them for euchre, uno or carpet bowling followed by lunch and social time. For more information call Norma at 458-9996.

**St Paul's Anglican Church,** located on the corner of Mapleview and Yonge Street, has two new youth and young adult programs. From 6:30 - 8:00 pm we are beginning a study comparing the gospels and learning how and why they developed. For more information, call (705) 722-7755.

### FRIDAYS

**The Cookstown United Church Community Youth Group** will begin meeting as of October 20th. They will be meeting weekly from 7:00 - 8:30 pm at the Cookstown United Church on 37 Queen Street. Come for crafts, games, movies, fellowship and fun! All are welcome. For more information, call (705) 458-9701.

### SATURDAYS

**Barrie Farmers' Market,** outside and inside Barrie City Hall. From 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Fresh produce and fruit in season. For info please call 739-4204.

### SUNDAYS

**Innisfil Pipes & Drums** meet for practice at the Legion in Bell Ewart, 1017 Robinson St. at 1 p.m. Always looking for new members. Phone Betty 436-1144

**Cookstown United Church** welcomes all young people from preschool to grade 8 to join in Sunday school at 11am. Sunday's are cool at Cookstown UC, so come and join as we grow in faith and have fun. New this year - join us in making scrapbooks celebrating God's gifts in our lives. For more information, please call Rev. Heather or Kieran Power at (705) 458-9701.

**Overeaters Anonymous** meets at the Mapleview Community Church at 7pm. Do you eat when you are not hungry? Is your weight affecting the way you live your life? It's not what you eat, it's what's eating you! For more information, call Anne at (705) 436-7921.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20TH Bid Euchre** at Gwen Taylor Community Centre. It is \$3 per person and the fun

starts at 7:30 pm. It will take place at the Newton Robinson United Church Building - all are welcome.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21ST The Prostate Cancer Support Group, Man to Man,** will meet at 7:30 pm at the Canadian Cancer Society Office located at 64 Cedar Point Drive, Unit 1406 in Barrie. The group meets on the third Thursday of every month. Ladies are welcome and will meet separately. For more information, call (705) 726-8032.

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

**The Innisfil Lions Club** will be hosting a New Year's Eve Dance. There will be live entertainment, dancing, midnight buffet, party favours and a cash bar. Tickets are \$50 per couple (\$25 per person). Tickets are available at the Innisfil Lions Hall on Monday and Thursday nights between 7-9 pm. For more information, call (705) 431-6168.

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 9TH

**The York Simcoe Naturalists Club** will be holding their meeting at 7:30 pm in the River Drive Park Community Centre, 20 Oak Avenue, in River Drive Park. Songbirds of the Boreal Forest will be the topic. Refreshments will be served - bring own mug. For more information, call (905) 898-2329 or 1-800-216-3830. All are welcome.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 14TH

**The Irish Club of Barrie** is putting on a Talent Extravaganza from 2 until 5:30 pm at the Barrie Legion on St. Vincent. There will be many acts entertaining and all the proceeds will be going towards the RVH Dialysis Clinic. Tickets are \$15 per person, children under 12 are \$5. There will be Harry the Cap, Double Toe Cloggers, Harpist Anneliese Cameron, Barbershop Quartet, Milelr School of Irish Dancing and much more. Get your tickets as there is limited seating. For tickets call Angie Chisholm (705) 456-1595, Renne Hall (705) 431-1087, Bob Cathers (705) 721-8310.