

A GLIMPSE OF COLOUR

-submitted by Cheryl Morris-Putman for MVFN

On **Thursday, November 17 at 7:30 pm.**, the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists (MVFN) will host the third presentation of the season, which reflects the theme “**Wild Creature Close-Ups**”. This event will take place in the Social Hall of Almonte United Church, 106 Elgin St., Almonte, Ontario.

For those who have imagined creating a backyard sanctuary for birds, or for the fortunate folks who already share their space with these beautiful feathered beings, our creativity and the necessary knowledge needed for such a project will be enhanced by an expert on the subject, **Cliff Bennett**. He has entitled his presentation “**Birds In Your Backyard.**” Cliff is one of the founding members of MVFN and the past-president of our organization. Among the many contributions that he has made and continues to make to the community, Cliff is the author of a birding column for the Lanark Era. He has entitled his presentation “**Birds In Your Backyard**”.

Imagine for a moment the peace and contentment to be enjoyed within a quiet backyard or balcony space that you have designed to attract and shelter the birds native to your area. Perhaps you will welcome an occasional feathered visitor from other parts, who has stopped to rest awhile and share your outdoor haven. In the still of a warm summer morning, you step outside onto your sheltered patio to listen to the first calls of a song sparrow who sits on the branch of a tree on the other side of the garden. The steam from your coffee rises into the air and you breathe in the fragrance of the trees and flowers that surround you, which you have chosen because they provide food and shelter for your feathered friends. You are enchanted by the gentle rustling sounds of birds as they weave amongst the foliage on the ground, seeking seeds or insects to whet their appetites. Months later, in the winter garden, white with a dusting of fresh snow, you watch flashes of colour dart to and from the feeders laden with fresh seeds. And suddenly, you are in awe as a dazzling, red cardinal alights on the feeder, his brilliant colour in stark contrast to the snowflakes that silently fall from the dull, gray sky. You pause for awhile, contented and energized by an awareness of life in this little piece of wilderness you have built.

Cliff Bennett is an expert birder, and with his vast knowledge and experience, will expand upon a wide array of topics concerning birds, with a focus on the bird life to be found in our backyards. He will explain how to set up and maintain an active bird sanctuary. He will describe the types of seed and feeders that are available and will advise us on when it is timely to set up feeders for our winter friends. Cliff will also describe backyard pests and hazards that we could encounter within our backyard habitats. As well, he will outline proper practices for record keeping. The presentation will be backed up by a visual show and a feature quiz on bird identification.

Please join us for this very interesting and informative presentation. A discussion will follow the talk and refreshments will be offered before and after. There is a non-member fee of \$5. There is no charge for MVFN members and youth 18 years and under. For further information, please contact MVFN's Program Chair, Gretta Bradley at gbradley@icloud.com.