



A Mighty River  
Amos 5: 24

## Let Justice and Peace Flow

Season of Creation 2023

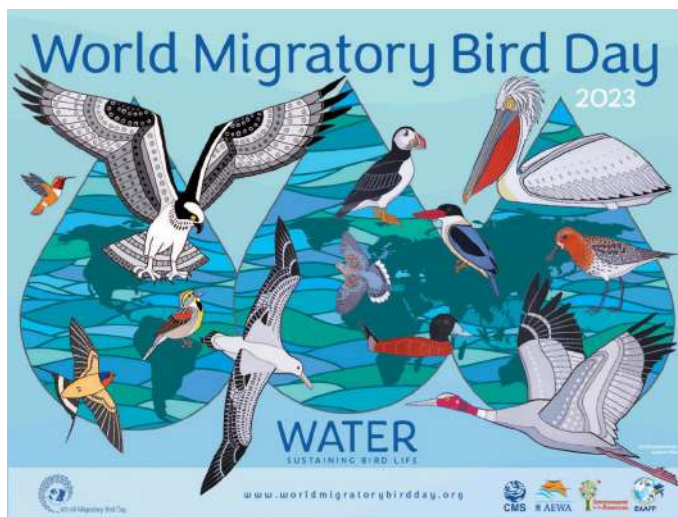
### THE JOURNEY OF THE WINGED ONES

As the Season of Creation draws to a close with the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, we are called to linger on the theme “let justice and peace flow.” This theme is particularly poignant now, during the fall migrations of birds, who cross multiple international borders to reach distant destinations like sub-Saharan Africa, Chile, New Zealand, and Antarctica.

The well-being of birds during these long voyages depends on global ecological commitment. Stopover sanctuaries along flyways are crucial refueling points, vital for survival and migration success. Migratory habitats are endangered by:

- intensive agriculture and urban expansion
- resource extraction activities (logging, mining, and oil & gas operations)
- environmental hazards (pesticides and waterway contaminants like plastics)

In Canada, only 22% of bird species are year-round residents. The majority – around 450 species – migrate here seasonally for nesting and raising their young. These migratory birds contribute significantly to the ecological health of forests, wetlands, and grasslands through pest control, pollination, and seed dispersal.



### UNITED NATIONS MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

This year, the UN spotlighted the importance of water in sustaining bird life. Bodies of water ranging from – oceans and lakes to rivers and wetlands – are indispensable for breeding grounds, migration stops, and wintering sites.

Water isn't just an ecological resource; it's a universal lifeline. In the spirit of St. Francis' teachings, safeguarding these habitats transcends ecological concern; it is a matter of justice and kinship with all beings in our common home. As St. Francis wisely said, *start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.*

## ADVOCACY & ACTION



Canada's Boreal Forest, spanning from the Yukon to Labrador is North America's "bird nursery." For more info, visit the Interactive Story Map – [birdscanada.org](http://birdscanada.org)



Night-migrating songbirds use stars for navigation. Dim lights during peak migration to help them. Learn more about the Fatal Light Awareness Program – [flap.org](http://flap.org)

## CONTEMPLATION

*We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become – St. Clare of Assisi*

Consider the individuals from your life who have served as sanctuaries or "refueling stations" of compassion, care, generosity, nurturing, or kindness. How have these experiences shaped who you are today?



*Column by: Yolande Whalen (Justice Coordinator)*