

Dr. Roberta Bondar photography exhibit opens at Science North

SUDBURY, ON — This morning, visitors to Science North and local elementary school students were treated to a talk from celebrated Canadian astronaut Dr. Roberta Bondar along with a screening of the new IMAX documentary, *Deep Sky*. The special guest appearance marked the commencement of Dr. Bondar's latest photography exhibition featuring ground-breaking new perspectives on at-risk birds. The exhibition, *Patterns & Parallels: The Great Imperative to Survive*, is free of charge and open from 10am to 4pm seven days a week in the Science North lobby until January 7, 2024.

Prior to travelling to Science North, Patterns & Parallels was launched and exhibited in Sault Ste. Marie, Dr. Bondar's hometown. After its stay at Science North, it will then travel to other galleries, museums and science centres across Canada.

Dr. Bondar, who was Canada's first female astronaut in space, is an internationally acclaimed photographer whose foundation is dedicated to environmental education. Her latest photography exhibit combines images from land, air and space through a partnership with NASA to tell the story of the migratory patterns of the Whooping Crane, Lesser Flamingo and Piping Plover species, which are all threatened or at risk of extinction.

"The diversity and numbers of birds are declining as our changing planet tests their fragility and resilience," said Dr. Bondar, who is an advocate for the protection of migratory birds and their habitats. "People want to understand more, to reverse this alarming trend, and they need stories to bolster their commitment to the critical conservation of birds." added Dr. Bondar.

The exhibition features large, dramatic colour images taken by Dr. Bondar and selected NASA space images, as well as a video installation. QR codes at the exhibition create an interactive learning experience, allowing visitors access to digital learning opportunities including animations, audio from Dr. Bondar, and additional videos taken in the field.

A staggering three billion birds have disappeared from Canada and the United States since 1970. The exhibition is a key part of the [Roberta Bondar Foundation's Space For Birds](#) project, which uses photography as a tool to understand the biodiversity of nature and the impact of human actions and climate change on bird migration and habitat loss.

"Through these images, we enter the world of bird migration, from the Western to the Eastern Hemisphere. Their flight corridors are so large that we cannot capture them in one image from

space, whereas the aerial photographs expose secret patterns of land and water, frequented by birds. Given that many bird behaviours mimic our own, we understand that the value of life is shared, and we want to minimize our impact on their needed habitats to allow them to survive,” said Dr. Bondar.

Patterns & Parallels: The Great Imperative to Survive is presented and circulated by the Roberta Bondar Foundation; photos by Dr. Roberta L. Bondar and NASA, Earth Observation with permission.

Quotes

Whether five feet tall or five inches long, from pink to white to grey and brown, the three avian species in *Patterns & Parallels* share with us the common bond of surviving on a planet. Birds inspire us with their resilience in the face of climate change and human impact, and we are in awe of their flight skills, especially during migration to far off lands that most human beings will never see, even from space. They explore where we cannot. *Patterns & Parallels* is the avian world of energy, colour, ability, family and behaviour. We recognize their absolute dependence on habitat integrity.

Roberta L Bondar C.C. O.Ont. M.D. Ph.D. FRCP FRSC FRCGS

We are grateful to Dr. Bondar for engaging Science North to showcase this beautiful and very thoughtful exhibition. Dr. Bondar’s impact on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is remarkable. *Patterns & Parallels* is a great example of climate change education that inspires action and that is perfectly aligned with Science North’s climate initiatives. I invite the community to visit Science North to view the exhibition and experience the truly unique perspective that it provides of our planet.

Ashley Larose MSc, CEO – Science North.

The visual voices of artists are critically important as we move forward in understanding issues related to climate change. This important exhibition, with its rich textures of high-resolution photography, sheds light on the health of our planet and environmental consequences. It highlights the effects of climate change on landscapes and endangered species and plays an important role in sparking discussion and learning about issues of national importance. These pieces reflect the debates that are going on across Canada and around the world with regard to our environment, the protection of the planet and the issues of climate change. These photographs present visual realities and call us all to action to preserve our planet to sustain life.

The Honourable Patricia Bovey LL.D FRSA FCMA, Canadian art historian and former Senator for Manitoba

[About the Roberta Bondar Foundation](#)

The Roberta Bondar Foundation is a not-for-profit charitable organization that takes an inspiring approach to understanding our growing environmental challenges. The Foundation fuses environmental science and visual art through nature photography to bring people closer to nature. The Foundation's programs are designed to promote curiosity, respect for and protection of the environment while building healthier lives.

www.therobertabondarfoundation.org

[About Science North](#)

Science North is Northern Ontario's most popular tourist attraction and an educational resource for children and adults across the province. Science North maintains the second – and eighth-largest science centres in Canada. Science North's attractions include a science centre, IMAX® theatre, digital Planetarium, butterfly gallery, special exhibits hall, and Dynamic Earth: Home of the Big Nickel. Science North, in partnership with Laurentian University, offers North America's first and only comprehensive Science Communication program, a joint master's and Graduate Diploma program. As part of its mandate, Science North provides science experiences throughout Northern Ontario including outreach to schools and festivals, summer science camps and more, and has a permanent base in Thunder Bay providing outreach to the Northwest. Science North is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For more information, visit sciencenorth.ca.

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Science North is an agency of the Government of Ontario and a registered charity #10796 2979 RR0001.



"Protected"

An endangered Whooping Crane adult stretches its wing as it stands with its young colt on the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, along the edge of the Texas shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico in the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway



Dr. Roberta Bondar photographs at-risk Whooping Cranes along their North American migration route in Wood Buffalo National Park, Northwest Territories and Alberta, Canada