



Meewasin Valley Authority
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NEWS RELEASE

for immediate release

Avian Bird Flu & Hand-feeding at Beaver Creek Conservation Area

April 22nd, 2021

Avian influenza has been detected in Saskatchewan poultry farms and wild birds in the past couple weeks. While there is no risk to humans from this disease, it can be devastating to bird populations. At the advice of the provincial wildlife authorities Meewasin is not currently permitting the hand-feeding of chickadees on the Beaver Creek Conservation Area site to prevent the spread of the avian bird flu. Meewasin also advises visitors to not hand-feed using their own seed. This situation will be monitored and Meewasin will make changes once experts declare it is safe to offer seed again.

The avian bird flu is a contagious viral infection that can affect domestic and wild birds throughout the world. Many strains occur naturally in wild birds and circulate in migratory populations. The fear is that the virus will infiltrate vulnerable and threatened species, like whooping cranes or sage grouse, whose populations may not easily recover.

Meewasin is taking the necessary steps to prevent the spread of the avian bird flu as an organization, but also as individuals. Staff members are making efforts to properly and regularly clean their own bird feeders. Follow these tips to stop the spread.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/avian-influenza-wild-birds/prevent-spread-poster.html>

For more information, contact Andrea Lafond at alafond@meewasin.com
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About Meewasin Valley Authority

The Meewasin Valley Authority exists to ensure a healthy and vibrant river valley, with a balance between human use and conservation by:

- *Providing leadership in the management of its resources;*
- *Promoting understanding, conservation and beneficial use of the Valley; and*
- *Undertaking programs and projects in river valley development and conservation,*

for the benefit of present and future generations.

There are 67 square kilometers of land and over +105km of established trail, which has seen up to 2.24 million trail visits per year, in the Meewasin Valley. The area also features sites that help people to connect to nature through experiences such as Beaver Creek Conservation Area, the Northeast Swale, Saskatoon Natural Grasslands, the River Landing Spray Area, and the Cameco Meewasin Skating Rink @Nutrien Plaza. Meewasin is a non-profit organization that relies on donations and volunteers for sustainability. To get involved or learn more visit www.meewasin.com