



**For Immediate Release**  
**November 3, 2010**



## **An Estimated 14,000 Migratory Birds Die Every Day in Toronto**

Toronto – Last week in Alberta, 230 migrating ducks died en masse by mistaking a toxic tailing pond for an oasis along their migration journey. Here in Toronto, thousands of migrating birds die every day in collisions with buildings by mistaking the trees and open sky reflected in windows for their real habitat. These needless deaths draw much-needed attention to the dangerous illusions that human-built structures project to migratory birds.

“One to ten birds die per building, per year in Toronto alone,” says Michael Measure, Executive Director of FLAP. “Currently, over 940,000 registered buildings in this region pose this threat.”

FLAP is a charitable organization concerned with the safe passage of migratory birds through urban areas. Each morning, throughout the spring and fall migration periods, a small group of FLAP volunteers patrol a handful of buildings in the Toronto region in search of dead or injured birds that collided with windows. Since its inception in 1993, FLAP has recovered over 48,000 birds through this effort.

Migrating birds are attracted to the lights left on overnight in buildings that stand in the way of their instinctive migration paths. They flutter around the lights until they drop from exhaustion, or collide with the buildings which result in life-threatening, often fatal injury. During the day, migrating birds collide with buildings when they see their habitat reflected in shiny windows. Head trauma, broken beaks and shock are the leading causes of death due to bird/building collisions.

In a previous migration season, 500 birds died in 6 hours at one, notoriously fatal location monitored by FLAP volunteers. When the deaths continued, joint environmental groups launched a private prosecution in March of this year against the building’s owners. The lawsuit falls under the Environmental Protection Act and the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. The outcome is pending.

**This fall migration season has been busy for FLAP bird rescue volunteers. Among the 3,000 birds collected were 15 Canada Warblers and an Olive-sided Flycatcher – two species-at-risk under Federal legislation.** FLAP also found its first American Bittern, a large wading bird in the same family as the Great Blue Heron. The bittern, a species protected under the Migratory Bird Convention Act, died in collision with the glass extension at The Royal Conservatory of Music. The discovery of the bittern raises the number of species FLAP has encountered to 164; 45 of these species are facing serious population decline.

– 30 –

For more information:

Michael Measure, FLAP Executive Director 416-366-3527 [www.flap.org](http://www.flap.org)

**Working to Safeguard Migratory Birds in the Urban Environment through Education, Research, Rescue, and Rehabilitation.**

• Dundee Place 1 Adelaide Street East, PO Box 175 Toronto, Ontario M5C 2V9 • Tel.: 416-366-FLAP (3527) • Web: [www.FLAP.org](http://www.FLAP.org) • E-mail: [flap@FLAP.org](mailto:flap@FLAP.org) •

FLAP is a registered charitable organisation: #14074 6736 RR0001