

## **RANDOM REFLECTIONS: Robins Returning!**

**By Kathryn Wishlow**

This has been a peculiar winter. I have only the spent entire winter in the Bancroft area about twenty-five years now, and this last season was definitely different. We experienced much fewer wickedly cold spells, much more actual rain, and quite a bit less snow. According to my friends that farm, so much less water in the ground does not bode well for this year's crops.

There were not as many snowmobilers this winter, and that would make it tough on our local businesses that depend on that revenue to squeak through this last winter. The dependable fellow who takes care of plowing my parking lot and driveway, and also clears off my car to ensure I can always get out, was rarely here.

Nevertheless, it sure seems like spring is coming early this year. My sister who lives south of Barrie, told me last week (end of February) that "the robins are back" and busy trying to put their nest over the neighbour's front porch again. They tried to discourage the rebuild every year so that people coming to the front door did not disturb the nesting robin. Or, so they said! But, we know they actually hated

visitors being attacked by the swooping mother bird, and the white splatters all around their front entrance.

When I was at a baby shower with my daughter last weekend, a young woman up from Peterborough was mentioning how delighted she was to see her first robin already. Another girl piped up that robins had already been in the Ajax area for a while. I admit I was envious.

Those of us in the north are always encouraged to hope that winter must be nearly over if the robins are returning. I always worry about how they will find anything to eat if we get one last massive, end of season snowstorm. Usually by the middle of March though, the sun is so hot everything melts in a few days.

A friend west of Coehill texted me at the beginning of the week, to let me know that the recent night temperatures being so well above freezing, had erased the last of their snow. Along with the spring mud issues on the road into their rural property, they also saw a small flock of robins. They could not remember seeing them on the lawn searching for worms this early.

Yesterday, when I left to drive a someone home, I was sure I heard a robin. There is no mistaking their cheery call. I was excited to catch my first glimpse, as I do have ones that nest as close to my back door as they can get. One year, they even nested in my hanging flower basket. So, I now know they have returned ... and any day now I will see my first one.

Even though this winter has not been too hard to handle, I eagerly await any signs of spring. Yesterday I saw a hornet, so they are waking up. Then I can certainly do without! For me, not only the longer days with more light, but also the returning robins will always cheer me up.

*(Kathryn Wishlow belongs to White Pine Writers Inc., a local group of like-minded authors who encourage and support all facets of writing and publishing literary efforts. Their collection of short stories "The Art of ... RePurposing Yourself!" is available from their website*

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