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Dr. Andy Jones, Curator of Ornithology at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History

"Migration All Around Us: How Birds Navigate the Americas"

A visit to Central or South America will cost several thousand dollars in airfare, hotels, food, and souvenirs. This price, as well as the time commitment, can be prohibitive and prevents many of us from taking a vacation here as often as we would like. For some five billion individual birds, an annual trip to these continents from North America is an absolute requirement, and a stunning annual accomplishment. Birds (weighing less than your pocket change) hatch in the boreal forest, eat as many insects as they can manage, and just weeks later find themselves within a tropical forest that is home to competitors and predators that they have never seen before. Many will perish during this migration.

Why do birds undertake this costly annual trip? How do they manage to find their way to a wintering ground that they have never seen before? This talk will answer these questions, as well as detail how ornithologists study the phenomenon of migration.

Dr. Andy Jones is Curator of Ornithology at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, where he holds the William A. and Nancy R. Klamm Endowed Chair of Ornithology. In 2011, he was named Director of Science, overseeing all activities in the Collections & Research Division.