

The Read

Feathered Frenzy

When Robert Curry describes his recent book as a labour of love, he's not talking about some casual hobby. At almost 700 pages hardcover, the encyclopedic *Birds of Hamilton* is anything but. "It's not one of those little books that says here's what you might see in your backyard," Curry jokes. That's an understatement. A compulsively detailed guide to over 385 species of birds that have ever appeared in the area, the book is an armful. Fascinating reading for nature buffs, though. You'll find seasonal graphs for each species and detailed maps of regional hot spots, plus entries from top local naturalists. Curry himself was mentored by George North, a birder doyen whose records were merged with Hamilton Naturalists' Club data to form this landmark resource. It's not thick with eye candy, but you will find colour photos from some of the top bird photographers in the province, drawings from noted bird illustrators David Beadle and Peter Burke, and a cover painted by former Lord Elgin teacher Robert Bateman. Grab a copy through local book retailers or www.hamiltonnature.org.

