

# Beyond the sand and surf

## Family-friendly adventures abound in Palm Beach

MHAIRRI WOODHALL  
POSTMEDIA NEWS

Arriving into Palm Beach, we could hardly wait to feel the warm, powder-perfect sand beneath our toes.

I envisioned leisurely morning beachcombing sessions, followed by afternoons frolicking in the gentle waves.

Pictures of oceanfront picnics, sandcastles and ice-cream cones on the beach would flood our social feeds.

Although south Florida's weather and coastline were flawless for the duration of our trip, the pesky Atlantic just would not cooperate.

So, what does one do on a beach vacation, if the ocean is too rough for swimming? The answer: explore every family-friendly, dry-land adventure possible. Which we did, with gusto.

### Flagler Museum Tour & Tea

Our five-year old loved touring the opulent 100,000-sq.-ft. Whitehall mansion, which was built in 1902 by oil tycoon Henry Flagler as a wedding present for his wife. Each of the 75-rooms in this Palm Beach landmark has been restored to reflect the home's original Gilded Age extravagance. The museum provides families with a fabulous self-guided activity book that encourages children to seek



The Aldabra tortoise encounter at the West Palm Beach Zoo is an experience for the whole family.

out unique artifacts, furnishings and design elements. It was only the lure of an elegant afternoon tea, complete with canapés, finger sandwiches, scones and berry lemonade, in the museum's Café des Beaux-Arts that convinced our kiddo to end the tour.

### Palm Beach Zoo

Plan to spend a full day at the Palm Beach Zoo. This family-friendly haunt features educational shows, talks and animal feedings every half hour between 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

A parade of pink feathered, long-legged birds strutting their stuff at

the 12:30 p.m. Flamingo Walk is just one of the highlights.

In addition to enjoying free programming, guests can register for paid behind-the-scenes animal experiences, including sloth, giant anteater and koala encounters.

Feeding sweet potatoes to the zoo's three Aldabra tortoises was a magical moment for our family. After snack-time, we pampered the gentle giants with a bath and neck rub. It's hard to say who enjoyed our time together more.

For lunch, the menu at the zoo's Tropics Café is a delicious surprise. If you like a bit of spice, try the blackened fish soft tacos, topped with coconut, pineapple coleslaw and Siracha mayo.

Another zoo-must for kids is the interactive fountain.

### Loggerhead Marinelife Center

Head to Juno Beach for a cool, up-close turtle encounter at the Loggerhead Marinelife Center (LMC) – a non-profit ocean conservation and turtle research and rehabilitation facility.

Inside, you'll find exhibits showcasing the sea turtle species and coastal creatures native to south Florida.

After learning all about leatherback, loggerhead, green, hawksbill and Kemp's Ridley turtles, we ventured outside to meet the patients. Each year, the LMC names, treats and rehabilitates between 50 and 60 sea turtles.

The centre also offers a series of unique children's activities, like the Hatchling Tales story time and Jr. Veterinarian Lab.

Our daughter was thrilled to don a white lab coat and weigh, measure, assess and treat her very own green sea turtle replica. Most of the programming is included with your admission by donation.

If you're visiting around lunch or dinnertime, plan ahead and book a table at Guanabanas Restaurant in Jupiter Beach, located just 10-minutes from the LMC. With its tropical open-air concept, complete with woven tiki huts, live music and beautifully lit banyan trees, it's the perfect al fresco dining spot.

### Downtown at the Gardens

For a kid-friendly shopping trip that won't break the bank, spend the evening at Downtown at the Gardens. My daughter – and husband – went crazy for the stores.

IT'SUGAR is like Disneyland for candy fans. That said, we enjoyed many belly laughs posing with ridiculously giant cereal boxes and Rice Krispies treats.

Sloan's, a West Palm Beach ice cream shop, is another dreamy and decadent discovery. For dinner, grab an outside table at Grimaldi's Pizzeria. The brick-oven thin crust pizzas are exceptional – even though the owner has banned pineapple from the menu.

*Calgary Herald*

### If you go

You'll pay premium rates for accommodation November through April. Plan your trip for October or May to avoid the crowds and take advantage of temperate weather. See [www.arrivalstravel.com](http://www.arrivalstravel.com)

# Warblers true stars of spring migration



PAUL NICHOLSON  
THE WORLD OUTDOORS

For many bird watchers, it was a warbler that was the "spark" bird, the bird that drew them into the avian world. And still, even for life-long birders, it is often warblers that generate the most excitement. Whether they are at Point Pelee National Park – the self-proclaimed warbler capital of Canada – or the local natural area that you haunt each May, warblers are the tiny, colourful stars of spring migration.

If you head out for a short hike, intent on seeing yellow warblers and mindful of habitat, you will quickly find this species. Not only that, this bird nests across Southwestern Ontario so it's here all summer. The same can be said for yellowthroats and redstarts. Yellow-rumped warblers don't nest here but they fly through in great numbers so they are also easy to observe.

But the chance to see some rare warblers gets keen birders excited. Obvious rarities include the six warblers that have been declared species at risk in Ontario.

The Canada warbler and



RICHARD O'REILLY/SPECIAL TO POSTMEDIA NEWS

The beautiful cerulean warbler is a rare species. Even when it is around it is difficult to see since it usually likes to feed on insects way up in the canopy.

golden-winged warbler are listed by the province as "special concern" birds. This means they live in the wild in Ontario but they "may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats."

The cerulean warbler and Louisiana waterthrush are "threatened" species meaning that they live in the wild in Ontario but each "is likely to become endangered if steps are not taken to address factors threatening it." Ceruleans have been reported through the first weeks of May at Point Pelee National Park. This species is

listed as vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's "red list of threatened species."

The Kirtland's and prothonotary warblers are "endangered." These species are in trouble right now. Each faces imminent extinction or extirpation. Remarkably, these birds might be seen during spring migration.

A Kirtland's sighting at Rondeau last spring was my first. To have a great look at such a rare bird can be breathtaking. The total world population of the Kirtland's in the 1970s was estimated at just 400 individual birds. Although this warbler is

still at risk, conservation efforts have stopped the dire fall in population.

I was fortunate to be at Point Pelee last weekend with Londoner Tim Arthur, one of Ontario's top birders. We saw a prothonotary warbler on the park's Woodland trail. This species is nicknamed the "swamp candle" or "golden swamp warbler." If you catch this bird in the sunlight, its yolk yellow plumage looks like it is lit from the inside.

Other prothonotaries, while rare, can be seen if you know where to go. This species is being reported in Rondeau Provincial Park. The boardwalks of the Tulip Tree Trail by Rondeau's visitor centre are a good bet.

Arthur and I also had luck in seeing Kentucky and worm-eating warblers. These birds breed in the U.S. and are Ontario rarities. We also saw an interesting Lawrence's warbler. While not recognized as an official species, this hybrid of the blue-winged and golden-winged warblers always generates excitement.

### Nature notes

The yellow-breasted chat was considered a warbler species until last year. The American Ornithological Society declared

after reviewing DNA and other evidence that the bird is in the family Icteridae and not the warbler family. The chat is an endangered species in Ontario largely because of habitat loss. It prefers scrubby thickets.

While driving in the country or even along Hwy. 401, you might notice small roofs on stilts. This is new barn swallow habitat. Barn swallows, a species at risk, have historically built nests in barns. As barns deteriorate, nesting opportunities disappear. Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry works with farmers, industries, and others to replace decrepit barns with the new structures. "We're pleased to work with the MNRF on the habitat replacement program," said Wayne Harries, manager of Lafarge Canada's London operations. "It's the right thing to do."

People are invited to join in a free Nature London-led birding hike along the Thames Valley Trail north of London May 16. Meet the leader at 6:30 p.m. north of Thorndale on Plover Mills Rd. east of Valleyview Rd. near the bridge. For details, check [naturelondon.com](http://naturelondon.com). [g.paul.nicholson@gmail.com](mailto:g.paul.nicholson@gmail.com) [twitter.com/NicholsonNature](https://twitter.com/NicholsonNature)

# Entire family opts out of destination wedding



AMY DICKINSON  
ASK AMY

**DEAR AMY:** I am getting married soon. We chose a destination wedding.

I asked my family and friends in advance of inviting them, and the responses ranged from "Yes!" to "maybe," to "no." I understand not everyone can afford the time or money to get away for a week's vacation and destination wedding.

When it came time to put deposits on the houses we rented for the week, my family all backed out. It really hurt my feelings. Every single person (outside of my parents and my sister) backed out. My fiancé's family is overflowing with people who want to come. I truly can't wait to become a part of that family. They are amazing!

We also are throwing a local reception. Many of the people who backed out of the destination wedding are now declining the local reception. These are people who told me that "they wouldn't miss it for the world" and they "definitely will be there!" All declined, with no explanation. I'm just stunned

and hurt. I have attended every single event to which I was invited in their lives, and I just don't feel the loyalty is being returned.

I want to write off those people and not attend future family events, unfriend them on Facebook and ignore them. But I also feel that is petty, that they must have their reasons for not attending and they aren't intentionally hurting me.

How should I approach the relationship with the family I feel abandoned me? — JILTED BRIDE

**Dear Jilted:** You are correct, asking people to spend a week's vacation in order to attend your wedding is asking a lot. You don't mention why the commitment is so lengthy, but you can assume that it was just unworkable for some of your invited guests.

All the same, I cannot imagine why family members also are declining to attend your local reception. Perhaps your mother – or another close family member – can provide some insight. You could also ask them directly: "I totally understand why you didn't come to our wedding, but why aren't you coming to our local party? I was looking forward to seeing you."

Celebrations seem easy on the

surface, but they actually are complex and reciprocal. You will never forget those people who went to a lot of trouble to attend your wedding. It is endearing and important. You will also never forget those who let you down.

You should not punish these people by behaving like them. All the same, you should rethink your social obligations toward them: attend their celebrations if you want to, but decline promptly and politely if you don't.

**DEAR AMY:** My boyfriend and I were ready to move in together, but we had trust issues we could not work out. He has told me a lot of lies in the past, and I admitted I hadn't been completely honest with him.

I told him I wasn't going to try to make this work if he wasn't 100 per cent committed, and I ended it. He begged me to reconsider. We met up and he was upset and crying. We ended up having sex. I noticed fake tan marks and lipstick marks on his bed, which didn't belong to me.

I felt weirdly suspicious, so I asked him to be 100 per cent honest with me. He came clean and told me he'd had sex with someone else the day before. He admit-

ted he didn't use a condom with her and hadn't washed before he slept with me. It killed me to think he had been with someone else. I love him so much. He's been begging me to get back together. My family and friends are telling me to move on, but I just can't. Do you have any advice? — UPSET

**Dear Upset:** Get tested for STDs. Be aware that the other woman might have gotten pregnant from this glorious one-night stand.

Listen to your friends and family. They love you more than he does.

**DEAR AMY:** "Loving and Blessed" described the challenges of having her ex-husband's wife refer to herself as the mother (not stepmother) of Loving's adult children.

When I married my husband, I insisted his ex-wife be part of all birthday celebrations and Christmas as a large family group.

I've been referring to myself as a "Bonus Mom" all along to our adult "kids," and we now share two fantastic grandchildren. Everything has gone really well. — LORI

**Dear Lori:** That's the best way to be in a family. [askamy@tribune.com](mailto:askamy@tribune.com) [Twitter @askingamy](https://twitter.com/askingamy)

### BIRTHDAYS



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