Jim Clark Trees and Birds

Long before events were written down, the Creator sent birds to carry the seeds of life to all four, sacred directions of the Earth. Then the Creator placed the swimming creatures in the water, gave life to the plant and insect world, and placed the crawling and four-legged things on the land.

Finally, the Creator took all four parts of the Earth and blew into them using a sacred shell, and man was made to live in harmony with everything around him.

The natural world continues to be very important to the Ojibwe Anishinaabe. So in this column, I want to share with you our names for some familiar birds and trees.

Birds:

Brown Thrush – Gaakaaskane Jii

Black Bird – Asiginaak

Humming Bird – Nenooskaa Siins

House Wren – Anaami Sagaa Najii

Robin – Opichi

Swallow – Biipii Giwisensag

Woodpecker – Baapaase

Cedar Waxwing – Ozegibwa Nwaanizhii

Purple Martin – Zhashaa Wanibiisens

Bluejay – Diindiisi

Trees:

Cedar – Gii Zhik

Basswood – Wiigo Bimizh

Hemlock – Gagaagi Wanzh

Jack Pine – Okikaan Dag

Aspen (Popple) – Azaadi

White Birch – Wiigwaas

Red Pine (Norway) – Bapakwana Gemag

Hard Maple – Ininaa Tig

Soft Maple – Zhiishii Gimewanzh

Elm – Aniib

Balsam – Zhingoob

Spruce – Zesegaan Dag