



Energetic crows zip to large trees in downtown Pittsburgh

## The Crows are Back in Town

**If you looked out your window at sunset in the recent months, you would probably notice a strange phenomenon – hundreds, even thousands, of crows flying from all directions towards the same place!**

### Where are the crows going?

Well, when the weather starts getting cold, crows will fly into Pittsburgh from surrounding areas to join in one communal **roost**, a large group of birds that flock together to sleep through cold nights. You may wonder why these crows have chosen a city as their roost site, but there are actually many advantages to choosing an urban roost. For one thing, cities are usually warmer than rural areas, are well-lit by night lights, and contain fewer predators. In addition, Pittsburgh has an abundance of large trees that make safe spots for a big crow slumber party!



Crows fly around University of Pittsburgh's Alumni Building

### Birds can be trash collectors?

**Corvids**, the family of birds that crows are a part of, are really smart birds.

In fact, a theme park in France has made use of corvids' talents by hiring six rooks (a cousin of the crow) to act as garbage collectors throughout the park!

### Heads up...

Now - imagine that a hundred (or even a thousand!) birds moved into your neighbor's place... what sorts of strange things might you start to notice? Crows are not known for being quiet, so don't be surprised if it gets super noisy when you're trying to sleep. Also, as you might imagine, a roost of crows poses some... sanitary issues as well. If you live in the city near a roost, look out for some lovely crow presents on your streets, sidewalks, or car.



Crow droppings cover the sidewalks under roost trees