



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Volume 19 Issue 5 | September/October 2012

**ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE**

A Time to Focus on Who's Still

Hanging Around

Transition Your Yard for Wintering Birds

An Early Autumn To-Do List

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(Cedar Cliff Shopping Center)
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Bird's-Eye View is published to share the joy of backyard birds with All Seasons Wild Bird Store's customers and friends.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Birds Prepare to Stay or Go

By Wayzata Manager MELISSA BLOCK

Some backyard birders think autumn isn't a very interesting time for birds, when in fact there's a lot going on! While year-round birds are gearing up for a long winter, migrating birds are getting ready for a long journey. Here's a closer look at the transitions that occur in autumn.

Seasonal Changes Trigger Migration

A combination of shorter days, lower temperatures and changes in food supplies triggers birds to migrate. Migrating birds cover thousands of miles, completing their journey in as little as three weeks and traveling the same course year after year with little deviation in their pathways.



▲ Songbirds collect in flocks.

Myriad species of songbirds collect in flocks and travel at night to save energy and lower the risk of predation. They stop each morning and feed throughout the day to replenish the energy stores they burned the night before. First-year birds may

migrate alone, establishing a winter home where they have never been and returning in the spring to the same area in which they were born.

Feeding Patterns Shift

For birds that overwinter in Minnesota, autumn is a time to establish winter food sources and begin to build up fat and protein reserves in order to survive the cold weather to come. *Tip: make sure to keep your feeders full now in order to insure plentiful numbers of feathered diners this winter!*

For migrating birds, autumn is a time to increase their food intake, starting about 2-3 weeks before they leave. The gut of a migrating bird increases in size tremendously in preparation for this increase, allowing the bird to consume more food and store up energy for the long flight. This adaptation, along with the smaller size of post-mating season reproductive organs, *(continued page 4...)*



▲ Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Prepare for a bountiful season!

We offer time-tested tips to help your yard transition to autumn.

This time of year brings transitions for many of us. Back to school routines begin, a child "fledgling" may be leaving the nest for the first time and fall wardrobes may need revitalizing as our backdrop shifts from radiant summer sun to the tapestry of fall color. Preparations also begin for the more extreme seasonal shift, not too many days away, when the winds of winter begin to blow.



While you're busy taking care of all these transitions, we'd like to remind you that this is also a great time to plan and prepare for the transition that is

taking place in your backyard habitat. We've dedicated this issue of Bird's-Eye View to providing many time-tested tips to help make this a bountiful season for all the beautiful creatures that visit our part of the world.

~ Al and Dave Netten



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No worries . . . ever.



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Early Autumn

by Bloomington Assistant Manager TRISH WAGLE

- Switch out your oriole feeder for a peanut or suet feeder. Try a whole peanut in-the-shell feeder for the Blue Jays.**
- Keep your humming feeder out until the first frost. Stragglers may surprise you until early October.
- With a change of season it is once again time to clean your feeders. Disassemble them and soak for an hour in hot soapy dishwater. Scrub, then air dry completely. Inspect again for wear and tear and missing or broken parts. Soak or rinse in white vinegar to disinfect and remove soap film.
- Skip the mess and **bring your feeders to any All Seasons Wild Bird Store for cleaning.** Our bird feeder cleaning service will get feeders winter-ready.
- Re-evaluate feeder and hardware needs. Determine if it's time to replace that underused feeder or add a new feeding station before the ground freezes. Look at feeder placement in terms of the best view from inside your home and the most convenient place to store seed and fill. If we get a ton of snow, will you be able to get out there to fill that feeder?
- Consider a ground feeder filled with Critter Crunch or cracked corn to feed Wild Turkeys and pheasants.**
- Prepare heated birdbaths for worry-free service by checking birdbath and heavy duty outdoor extension cords for wear and tear. Use a **Cord Connect** to make sure the connection is waterproof. Scrub with white vinegar to remove lime deposits.
- Watch for these fall migrators who leave in September and October: Fox Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings and some American Robins. Watch the evening sky for swirling Night Hawks.
- Clean out or take down birdhouses. If you leave houses up over the winter, open the side or bottom of the birdhouse to prevent mice from nesting.



Autumn Renewal

Transition Your Yard For Wintering Birds

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT

Autumn is a month of transitions

A in Minnesota. The State Fair draws to a close, school begins and the hot humid days of summer give way to milder fall weather. Here are some suggestions to help transition your backyard habitat for winter.

Bid Orioles Adieu

As the last of the Baltimore Orioles migrates south in early September, an abandoned oriole feeder may provoke a sense of wistful sadness. But this is no time to mope! Give that feeder a good scrub and store it somewhere clean and dry, then set out a peanut pick-out feeder or birch log suet feeder to treat your year-round birds. After all, orioles aren't the only birds that depart our yards—with them go greedy birds like grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds that would drain these high-energy treats just a few months ago.

Continue Offering Nectar

Female and juvenile hummingbirds remain in Minnesota longer than the males, often clear into October. Help them to feel welcome by keeping your nectar feeders clean and replenished. They'll welcome your efforts! Consider bringing hummingbird feeders in at night and putting them out first thing in the

morning so the nectar is warm for these tiny winged jewels.

Entice Migrants to Drop In

If you'd love to play host to a flock of Cedar Waxwings or welcome migrating American Robins, Gray Catbirds or Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, consider filling a Vista Dome feeder or similar with a mix of our **Berry Nutty** seed blend, dried mealworms and suet pellets. Increase your odds of attracting birds that wouldn't otherwise visit backyard feeders by plugging in your heated birdbath, especially on chilly autumn mornings.

Treat Your Finches

While you may miss the "highlighter yellow" color of breeding-season male goldfinches, you'll notice these little beauties continue to visit yards in the guise of dark mustard plumage and white wing bars. House Finches and Purple Finches frequent backyards throughout the autumn and into winter too. Other small birds arrive as well: Dark-eyed Juncos and sometimes even Pine Siskins and Red Polls. Place several finch feeders in different areas of the yard to accommodate these guests: a squirrel-resistant **Nyjer™** feeder and a pair of tube feeders filled with **Finches' Choice** and **Nyjer™ and Chips**.

Be Strategic with Fall Clean-Up

Consider overwintering birds as you groom your yard this autumn. Create a brush pile in one part of your yard to provide cover for native sparrows, juncos and cardinals. Leave stalks and seed heads of black-eyed Susans, sunflowers, bee balm, asters and purple cone flowers in place to provide a food source for goldfinches and chickadees. Plant fall mums to provide a splash of color in autumn and a treat for the birds. Finally, take note of your yard in autumn and consider planting berry-producing shrubs in the spring for the birds, like high brush cranberry and service berry.

Transitioning your yard into fall and preparing for winter helps you to anticipate the visitors you'll receive in the upcoming months. Roll out the welcome mat and get ready to smile. ■



▲ Goldfinches make the switch to fall plumage.

(... from previous page)

- Consider a chickadee roosting box to provide a place for Black-capped Chickadees to gather and share body heat. Temperatures inside a well-insulated box can be 10 degrees warmer than outside.
- Provide a seed mix with dried fruit, like **Berry Nutty**, to provide a treat for migrating birds. Add some dried mealworms to any seed mix for an extra energy boost.
- Apply **WindowAlert** decals to reduce window strikes during migration. The coating does wear out depending on the amount of UV rays they absorb, so replace annually.
- Early fall is the last opportunity for the Indian Meal Moth to reproduce. Store seed outside your home in a metal container with a tight fitting lid. A garage will do nicely. Install a moth trap if you see some airborne moths. ■



Birds Prepare to Stay or Go

(... continued from page 1)

allows migrating birds to raise their body weight by as much as 100%!

Seasonal Molting Occurs

A season of mating, foraging, and raising young takes a toll on birds' feathers. Many species of birds molt in the autumn to replace damaged feathers in preparation for migration or to increase their insulation for the upcoming winter. Molting patterns vary

between and within species, from year-to-year and from feather-to-feather—making identification of molting birds tricky for many bird enthusiasts!

Special Care

Be sure to see our **Seasonal Checklist** (page 2) for a complete list of recommendations for early autumn. To track seasonal migrations, visit www.journeynorth.org. ▀

DID YOU KNOW...?

... American Robins migrate in response to food supplies rather than temperature. That's why we are seeing more and more robins overwinter in the Twin Cities.

... Hummingbirds migrate alone, not in flocks. They make a nonstop flight of up to 500 miles, taking 18-22 hours.

FEATURED PRODUCT

Brome Squirrel Buster® Plus

Our Best-Selling Squirrel Resistant Feeder

Our customers love this feeder! It features a sturdy metal shroud that's controlled by an adjustable spring mechanism. When a squirrel or large bird (i.e. grackles!) hangs from or lands on the ring at the bottom of the feeder, the shroud closes, making the 8 ports unavailable. Its large, 3-quart capacity means fewer fillings. Plus, it has a perch



that's cardinal-friendly. In fact, the Squirrel Buster® Plus feeder is the most popular feeder in many yards, feeding favorites while keeping pests away. We recommend filling it with our popular **Kracker Jax** mix, which attracts a variety of colorful backyard birds.

This feeder is a must for any backyard birder!

GREAT IDEAS

Extended Reach Deck Pole

By Erva®



Love to own a Squirrel Buster Plus, but lack the room to hang it? Your problem is solved! Erva has developed an extended reach clamp-on deck pole which partners beautifully with the Squirrel Buster Plus. This pole extends up to 62.5 inches tall with a depth of 19 inches. It is adjustable, so you can place your feeder at optimum bird watching height. Made of sturdy black wrought iron, it is stable and strong as well as attractive. Try one today for your new or existing large capacity feeder.

New Stainless Steel Bird Feeders

By Bird's Choice™



Peanut Pickout Feeder

Woodpeckers, chickadees and nuthatches love this one-quart **peanut pickout feeder**. The stainless steel tube resists damage from woodpeckers as well as from the weather. The top and bottom are die cast green.

The base removes easily for cleaning and is peaked in the center to move the peanuts toward the perimeter of the tube and within birds' easy reach.

Nyjer™ Feeder

Our one quart **stainless steel Nyjer™ feeder**

is made from weather resistant, durable stainless steel with die cast top and bottom. The base of the feeder has a central peak to flow the Nyjer™ toward the birds. This prevents mold-producing water and packed seed from accumulating in the bottom of the feeder. The bottom is removable for easy cleaning. A tray can be added to catch the husks and any dropped seed.



Have an idea for a future issue of *Birds-Eye View*? Photos and articles may be submitted by email to info@wildbirdstore.net.
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