



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Volume 22 Issue 1 | January/February 2015

ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE

Awakening

To Bird Feeding & Benefits,
Plus Early Signs of Spring



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(Cty. Rd. E. and Hwy. 120)
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
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WAYZATA & WILD BIRD DELIVERS

15710 Wayzata Blvd.
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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.

CHIRPS

Benefits of Bird Feeding

The State of the Bird Feeding Industry

Our business is actively involved in a multi-national trade association called the Wild Bird Feeding Industry (WBF). The WBF represents the "little guys" like us as well as global businesses that process and package wild bird feed and feeders en masse.

In November I attended the WBF annual meeting and am fortunate to be elected to my second term as president and continuing member of the board of directors. Being part of such a diverse organization that is dedicated to businesses that participate in wild bird feeding gives us valuable information about the state of the overall industry as well as how our particular niche compares to the rest.

Bird Feeding is Growing in Popularity

I left the recent meeting feeling very positive about the overall state of the wild bird feeding industry. I believe that the hobby is maturing to rival gardening and pet owning as one of America's most popular at-home activities.

Bird Feeding is Good For Wild Birds

Through recent research, we are now able to definitively state that providing supplemental

food to wild birds benefits the overall health of those birds in ways that we've never understood before. Bird feeding is good for birds.

How is Bird Feeding Good for People?

What I believe is missing in the State of Wild Bird Feeding story is the "people" element: Does it lower stress levels or provide other measurable health benefits? Is it a habit that started early in life that we just continued later on? What drives people to continue to fill their feeders when it's freezing outside? Those kinds of questions are what gnaw at me as I think about the State of Wild Bird Feeding.

I'd Love Your Feedback!

I'd be interested in hearing your feedback on *why* you feed birds at your house. If you're interested in sharing, you can email me directly at dave@wildbirdstore.com.



Al and Dave Netten

~ Dave Netten

JAN.
&
FEB.*Mid Winter*

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT



- ☐ **Serve high-energy, high-fat foods to quickly refuel birds.**
- ☐ Provide a clean water source with a heated birdbath.
- ☐ Scatter **Critter Crunch** on the ground or on a tree stump or place it in a screened bottom ground feeder for overwintering Mourning Doves, Blue Jays, cardinals, pheasants and Wild Turkeys.

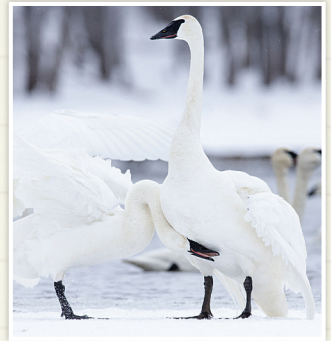
- ☐ Stock feeders for goldfinches and visiting finches with **Nyjer™ and Chips**. Nomadic, mixed foraging flocks will be abundant one day and scarce the next.

- ☐ **Note if your yard has overwintering robins; they eat crabapples and hackberry tree fruits throughout the winter so you may want to consider planting a tree next year (be sure to research the appropriate tree for your space).**



- ☐ Learn more about your backyard birds with **Peterson Field Guides: The New Birder's Guide to Birds of North America**.
- ☐ Call the Wayzata store to arrange **Vacation Feed-and-Fill Service** to keep your feeders stocked while you are out of town.
- ☐ Sign up for **Bird Bytes** at **wildbirdstore.com** to receive coupons and the newsletter by email.

- ☐ Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count February 13–16, 2015. More information at birdssource.org/gbbc.
- ☐ **Plan a birding day trip to The National Eagle Center in Wabasha or to Monticello to see Trumpeter Swans.**

**Take note of these seasonal happenings in January and February.**

- ✓ Winter-visiting Pine Siskins, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Purple Finches and irruptive species like Red Polls, Great Gray and Snowy Owls
- ✓ Small populations of robins, eagles, Mourning Doves, Eastern Bluebirds overwintering in Minnesota
- ✓ American Crows gathering in large communal roosts at sunset
- ✓ American Goldfinches beginning to molt into their bright yellow feathers
- ✓ **Great Horned Owls, our earliest nesting bird, starting to nest in mid-January**
- ✓ Migrating Red-tailed Hawks returning and nest building in late February
- ✓ Bald Eagles fishing near open water of marinas and rivers. They begin nest-building in February.
- ✓ Spring calls from House Finches, Northern Cardinals ("what cheer, cheer, cheer"), Black-capped Chickadees ("fee-bee"), White-breasted Nuthatches (nasal "whi, whi, whi") and Blue Jays ("pump handle") as well as woodpeckers drumming and owls hooting and whinnying in January
- ✓ Cooing song of the Mourning Dove and "wicker" call of the Red-bellied Woodpecker; in late February the gobble of male tom turkeys as they fan their tails and loud double squawk courting call of pheasants

*Worry-Free Guarantee!*

We want our customers to have a worry-free experience with every purchase. If you're not completely satisfied with *any item* purchased from our store, simply return it to us for an exchange or refund.

No worries . . . ever!

Join the conversation online! 

Visit our Facebook page to post photos, ask questions and be the first to know about upcoming sales and events.

A White Bear Lake customer shares how she discovered riches, right in her backyard.

It Started With a Wire

In 2009, my husband and I bought a new house in White Bear Township. As I toured the backyard for the first time, I spied a wire dangling from a branch of an oak tree directly opposite the kitchen windows. There was a hook at the end of it. The previous owners must have had a bird feeder, I deduced. An idea was planted.

A week or so later, I brought home my first feeder. It was a wooden hopper feeder, just like the one my mom had when we were growing up. I filled it up, went inside then watched and waited for the birds to flock to it.

“He’s Your Bird Now.”

Weeks later, I still hadn’t seen a single bird set foot on my feeder. Frustrated, I called my mom. “Just wait, they’ll come,” she advised. “They’re just being cautious. Once the chickadees find it, the rest will follow.”

Sure enough, not much later a single, brave chickadee flitted down to the feeder and took off to a nearby branch with a safflower seed, returning a moment later for another. I called my mom to excitedly share the news. “He’s your bird now!” she declared. She was right. The chickadee returned regularly, bringing friends, and just like that, I was hooked on feeding birds.



Seasonal Jewels

These days, I have five different feeders filled with different types of seeds to attract a variety of birds (thanks to the advice of my friends at All Seasons). And five years later, I’m still delighted by

A chubby hummingbird. the activity that greets me throughout the year: goldfinches trade their yellow coats for brown ones, cardinals bring their young to the feeders for the first time, a turkey bashfully explores discarded seeds or a prehistoric-looking Pileated Woodpecker



Scarlet Tanager by Katrina Hase

soars majestically into the yard. And at least one day each spring, I spend the entire day by the window, watching for the orioles and hummingbirds to arrive.

Becoming The Girl Who Likes Birds

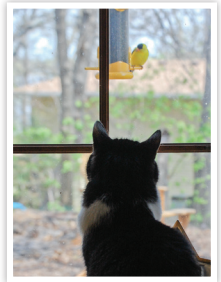
Feeding birds has opened my eyes to the diversity of birds hidden in plain sight, like a tree full of Cedar Waxwings outside the Cup-N-Cone, a group of Sandhill Cranes in a field on the way home from a grocery store or a bluebird holding sentry from the top of a stop sign. And of course, I feel compelled to share my discoveries with whoever is near!

And so my family and friends have come to know me as The Girl Who Likes Birds. But I don’t mind, because I’ve discovered that my love of birds connects me to others. Facebook friends comment on my pictures and share sightings of birds they see in their yards. My elderly aunt, who suffered from a stroke, surprised me by seeking me out at a family gathering to say, “Katrina, I sure like your bird photos on Facebook.” And my teenage son opted to go with me on his spring break this past year to see a mass of Sandhill Cranes in Nebraska.



My life is richer since I started feeding birds. Thank goodness for that wire! ■

Katrina Hase is an artist, graphic designer and regular customer at the White Bear Lake All Seasons Wild Bird Store.



The family cat enjoys watching goldfinches.

BIRD BEHAVIOR

Bird-feeding Metrics

Chickadees can visit feeders over 250 times a day!

A recent bird behavior study using radio frequency ID (RFID) tags on chickadees, performed by Dr. Jim Rivers of Oregon State University, found that an individual chickadee visited a single bird feeder over 34,000 times over a four-month period. That’s an average of 283 visits per day. Assuming the chickadee consumed one seed per visit, it ate close to 6 pounds of seed over those four months or about 0.8 ounces per day. Chickadees only weigh about 0.4 ounces, so it ate twice its body weight each day from a single feeder.



High Energy Foods

It's that time of year when the days are cold and windy and the nights are long and even colder. Your backyard birds have less time to find food and they need more energy just to stay warm. Most of the vegetation and insects they eat are gone. You may be surprised to learn what a huge difference you can make by feeding the birds right outside your door or window.

Seeds

The seeds that attract the most birds are black oil sunflower. The outer shell of the black oil sunflower is thin and easy to crack. The "meat" or inner kernel of the black oil sunflower is larger than the inner kernel of the white-striped sunflower. Black oil sunflower is nutritious and high in fat and protein. The best high-energy winter food is a mix including a large amount of sunflower seeds, hulled peanuts, white and golden safflower and millet.



Black oil sunflower

Suet

High-energy, pure fat substance is so important to our winter birds, and suet is a great way to get it to our feathered friends. Most people do not want a lot of fat in their diet, but it is essential to birds. There are a lot of different ways to offer suet to your birds. There are suet cakes, balls, plugs and pellets.

Peanuts

Shelled peanuts are another high-fat and high-protein food to offer birds. You can offer peanuts in a mix or alone in a feeder specifically made for peanuts. Woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches, jays and cardinals are among the many birds that will appreciate a serving of peanuts.



Nyjer™

Smaller birds eagerly consume Nyjer seeds, especially finches, chickadees, Pine Siskins and redpolls. Nyjer is high in protein and oil. It's a tiny little seed and should be used in feeders made especially for feeding finch food. These feeders are made of mesh or have tiny holes for the seed. The small black nyjer seeds have a meaty kernel nestled inside the outer shell. When you see a lot of what you think are Nyjer seeds on the ground underneath your feeder, they are most likely just the shell.



Providing high-energy foods during the winter helps birds survive the cold, while watching the birds helps us survive cabin fever! ■

FEATURED PRODUCTS

Staff Favorite

Katy Shannon
Shares Her Birds'
Favorite Feeder

My backyard birds' favorite restaurant is a large tray feeder—they love it, and so do I because it offers so many possibilities. Usually I offer sunflower seeds, golden safflower and peanut pickouts, the favorites of most of our Minnesota resident birds. When I drop in some peanuts in the shell, along come the Blue Jays; or, add half an orange or dish of grape jelly and watch the orioles and Red-bellied Woodpeckers dine; add mealworms in a dish and nearly everyone is anxious to check it out. There's room for everyone. Last winter, I attached a special addition—a clear roof that keeps the snow and rain off most of the entrees. Birds can dine in comfort and safety and the menu can be seen from afar. Providing a tray feeder, with a roof, has been a great way for me to enjoy a large variety of our birds up close.

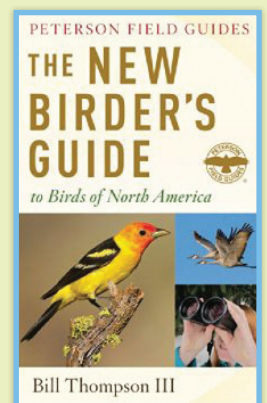


Blue Jay and Red-bellied Woodpecker on Bird's Choice tray feeder. (Photo by Katy Shannon)

Peterson's New Birder's Field Guide

Just the Right Amount
of Information!

The latest *Peterson Field Guides: The New Birder's Guide to Birds of North America*, by Bill Thompson III, includes easy-to-understand descriptions and maps, clear photos, drawings of common and interesting behaviors and fun facts for each bird. Covering 300 of the most common birds in the United States and Canada, this guide has just the right amount of information about how to identify birds, where and when to look for them, what they sound like and how they behave. Each page has sections titled "Wow!" and "Remember" that are filled with tidbits that make bird identification fun and memorable.



Have an idea for a future issue of *Birds-Eye View*? Photos and articles may be submitted by email to info@wildbirdstore.net.
Sign up for our weekly e-newsletter at WildBirdStore.com to receive information about backyard birding, store events and exclusive discounts.