MOVING WATER PRODUCTS

Make a Splash!

By Wayzata Manager MELISSA BLOCK

Want to make your yard irresistible to birds? Try adding motion and sound to your birdbath! Motion on the water’s surface or the sound of falling water is like a magnet to birds because they instinctively equate moving water with natural water sources that are cleaner and healthier than stagnant water. The sound of moving water also lures birds that otherwise wouldn’t frequent your feeders—like warblers, Cedar Waxwings and American Robins—to drop in for a visit. Intrigued? Here are a few ways to get your birdbath water moving.

Water Wiggler™

The Water Wiggler™ does just as its name promises: it agitates two small floaters on the surface of the water, creating ripples in your birdbath. The classic, battery-powered model wiggles continuously for months on two D batteries and is also available in a model that plays sounds of a gently babbling brook. Or, skip the batteries and select a solar-powered model of the Wiggler. Not only will Water Wigglers™ make your birdbath irresistible, but they’ll also help prevent mosquitoes from laying their eggs.

Misters and Dippers

Misters and drippers are another way to get your water moving. They require no electricity; just hook ’em up to an outside water source and regulate the flow of water by adjusting a small valve.

Dippers are just that: they drip into a birdbath, providing the sound and water movement that birds love.

Misters spray fine droplets of water into the air. They’re a big attraction for hummingbirds, which love to fly through fine mist! Attach the mister to a tree branch or vine or hang it over a shepherd’s hook and aim it towards a shrub or tree. (continued, page 2 . . . )
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Tips for Using Dippers and Misters

✦ Don’t worry about water that spills over onto the ground around baths with drippers and misters—birds often bathe in the small puddles and use the mud to build their nests. Butterflies enjoy these mud puddles too.

✦ It’s a good idea to place your mister in an area with lots of cover so birds feel safe while bathing.

✦ You can use a faucet timer from a garden center or hardware store to program when to turn misters and drippers on and off.

✦ Try placing your mister in a location where the water will collect on nearby leaves and drip down to a birdbath underneath. Then you’ll have a mister/dripper combination!
You know its summertime in Minnesota when the northbound freeways are jammed with campers, boats and loaded pickups at 3:00 pm on a Friday afternoon. Everyone is going to the cabin! Luckily, we can enjoy a whole new backyard birding experience up north.

Because of the distinctive geographic zones found in our state, as we go farther north we find coniferous forests, prairie grasslands, and lakes with nearby wetlands. These areas are prime bird habitats and many folks are fortunate to have cabins that straddle one or more of these areas.

**Feeding Tips for the Cabin**

If you choose to feed birds at your cabin, Black-capped Chickadees, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks will probably be your most frequent northern visitors. You may even see Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Grosbeaks, if you’re near a thick forest. Small, familiar feeder birds like finches and sparrows will come as well. All of these seed-eaters will enjoy our Cabin Mix because of the high proportion of black oilers and peanuts.

Be sure to place your feeder thoughtfully and use a baffle to deter gray squirrels, chipmunks, red squirrels and even flying squirrels. Remember that most squirrels can jump ten feet horizontally and five feet vertically, so a tall pole is a necessity—one that may also help deter deer.

While you’re up north, be sure to put up a hummingbird feeder! Hummers are numerous near coniferous forests. Provide fresh nectar every 4–6 days when temperatures are moderate and every 2–3 days when temps soar into the 90s. If the nectar looks cloudy, it’s time to make a fresh batch. If the birds are aggressive and dive bomb each other, a second feeder at least 10 feet away may ease congestion.

Bears may pester feeding stations up north, trampling feeders and bending feeder poles like toothpicks. If you have a resident bear, install hardware that is sturdy and tall and take your feeders in at night. You can also try stringing feeders on a sturdy wire between trees—a method that’s proved to be successful for some of our customers. Take feeders down and store them safely when you’re not at the cabin. Store seed in a large metal container with a tight-fitting lid—just as you would here—and add a bungee cord for additional security. Never store seed in your cabin, it sends an unwelcome invitation to visitors of all kinds!

**Birding Up North**

If you’re enjoying a day out on a lake, keep your eyes peeled for Common Loons and mergansers on the water. Look above the waves to see Osprey and Bald Eagles hunting fish and perching in tall trees on the shore. Keep an eye out for Purple Martins that take up residence in birdhouses that bird-loving lake dwellers erect. In the evening, Tree, Cliff and Barn Swallows—as well as Chimney Swifts—will be darting through the sky feasting on the mosquitoes... yeah!

Nearby wetlands are goldmines for birding hikes! Look for game birds like Roughed Grouse and Ring-necked Pheasants. Least Flycatchers and a variety of warblers inhabit the edges of wetlands, too. Look for Nashville, Yellow and Common Yellowthroat Warblers when you see quick flashes of yellow in the summer.

Forest hikers may see Wild Turkeys; Red-eyed, Yellow-throated or Warbling Vireos; Pine Siskins and Common Redpolls. Forest warblers include the American Redstart, the Black-and-white, and the Chestnut-sided. Listen for owls at night: species up north include Great Gray, Screech, Great Horned and Barred Owls. Tiny Saw-whet Owls live in the area of the Gunflint Trail, which is also the only place to see the Black-backed Woodpecker in the state.

Minnesotans are blessed with abundant natural areas for recreation. So the next time you go to the cabin, try taking a feeder and some seed to attract wildlife in for a closer look, or pack your binoculars at the very least! You’ll be amazed at the variety you may see.■
**BIRDBATH ACCESSORIES**

**Birdbath Dripper**

From Birds’ Choice™

The subtle trickle of a dripper is a visual magnet to any bird. When they see the ripples across the surface of your birdbath, they are drawn to it and stay a while! The Birds’ Choice™ Stainless Steel Pedestal Dripper comes with a custom dripper valve that regulates the flow of water from your outdoor faucet. Consider a water timer to turn the dripper on and off automatically. The kit includes a black mounting stake, stainless steel tubing, 50 feet of ¼” tubing, regulating valve, faucet fitting and a Y-valve.

**Bird Mister**

Be the Coolest Yard on the Block!

The Songbird Essentials Spa Easy Mister attaches to the garden hose and hangs by an “S” hook from a tree limb or shepherd’s hook. Mist the leaves of a bush or tree and chickadees will take a leaf bath. Hummingbirds, cardinals and others will enjoy flying through the mist.

**SUMMER MUST: NO-MELT SUET**

Holds Up in High Heat

As warmer summer temperatures arrive, you need not give up on feeding suet to your birds for fear it’ll melt. Simply choose a no-melt variety of suet. Our stores carry a variety of flavors of no-melt suet cakes and suet plugs, the most popular of which are peanut and orange. No-melt varieties are formulated to be drier with a more crumbly texture than regular suet cakes and plugs. This texture allows the cake or plug to stand up to summer heat without dripping. Your birds, especially the woodpeckers, will be happy to find your suet feeder is still a convenient source of food, despite the heat.

**WHO KNEW?**

Fat-free summers? No way. Contrary to what many believe, approximately 30% more suet is purchased in the summer months than in the winter months.

**FEATURING PRODUCT**

**Ring Pull™ Feeders**

Clean feeders mean healthy birds. Now it’s easier than ever to give songbirds just what they need—fresh food from a clean, hygienic feeder. Droll Yankees® Ring Pull™ Feeders are constructed with Microban™ antimicrobial technology to fight the growth of damaging bacteria, mold and mildew. And the feeders are a cinch to clean: simply lift the cap, then pull the metal rod to remove the ports and base and your feeder is disassembled down to a few easy-to-clean parts in just seconds. It’s worth mentioning, too, that this feeder is made in the U.S.A.!

**CUSTOMER PHOTO**

White Bear Lake customer Tony Hase snapped this photo of a Red-bellied Woodpecker that came to snack on suet from one of our upside-down suet feeders. The feeder design discourages grackles, who find it difficult to perch upside down. Submit your photo by emailing us at info@wildbirdstore.net!

**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.