



# BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Volume 22 Issue 3 | May/June 2015

ALL SEASONS  
WILD BIRD  
STORE

## Healthy Habitats

+ Optimizing Your Backyard for Wildlife  
Summer Seasonal Tips

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#### BLOOMINGTON

816 West 98th St.  
(Clover Center)  
Bloomington, MN 55420  
**952.884.4103**

#### EAGAN

2143 Cliff Rd.  
(Cedar Cliff Shopping Center)  
Eagan, MN 55122  
**651.459.0084**

#### MINNETONKA

4759 County Rd. 101  
(Westwind Plaza)  
Minnetonka, MN 55345  
**952.935.5892**

#### WHITE BEAR LAKE

2703 East Cty. Hwy. E.  
(Cty. Rd. E. and Hwy. 120)  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
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#### WAYZATA & WILD BIRD DELIVERS

15710 Wayzata Blvd.  
(394 Frontage Rd.)  
Wayzata, MN 55391  
**952.473.4283**

#### WILDBIRDSTORE.COM

*Bird's-Eye View* is published to share the joy of backyard birds with All Seasons Wild Bird Store's customers and friends.

#### ORANGE & BLACK BEAUTIES

By Eagan Store Manager LINDA GORR

## Monarch Butterflies

People of many cultures and ages all recognize this delicate, bold-colored creature. What many people may not know is just how important the monarch butterflies are to us. They play an important role in pollinating our perennial flowers, plants and trees, annuals and even vegetables. Unfortunately, faltering under extreme weather conditions and vanishing habitats, the yearly winter migration of monarch butterflies has drastically dwindled since December 2013, continuing what scientists had said was an already increasingly alarming decline.

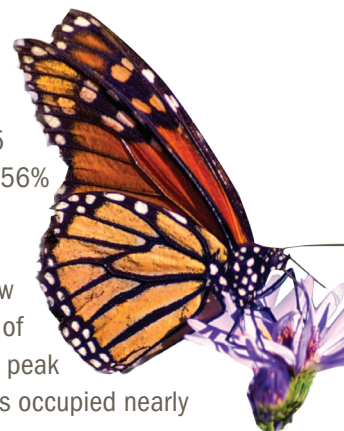
### The Great Migration

Monarchs migrate using an internal compass, which guides them each fall to a small cluster of mountains where ideal temperatures and humidity allow them to rest, clinging to trees by the millions until they begin their northward return each March. As of 2014, the Mexican government and the World Wildlife Fund said the span of forest inhabited by overwintering monarchs

shrank to a mere 1.65 acres, which was just 56% of the previous record low of the previous year's total. This is now the third straight year of steep decline. At their peak in 1996, the monarchs occupied nearly 45 acres of forest.

### Extreme Climates

The number of monarchs surviving the 2,500-mile journey has varied from year to year, but the decrease in size of the migration in the past ten years has been steep and steady. The latest decline has been blamed on a two-year stretch of bad weather, and that combined with the long-term problem of habitat loss has been devastating to the population. In 2012, months of near-record heat sapped their endurance and skewed their migratory patterns in ways that limited their ability to reproduce. In 2013, unusual springtime cold in Texas delayed their northward migration, causing late arrival to areas where they would normally have bred weeks earlier. *(continued on page 4...)*



## Feeder Swap Success

### Thank You for Donating 375 Feeders During This Year's Campaign!

We just completed our annual Feeder Swap promotion and I'm happy to report that approximately 375 feeders were "swapped" for new models.

Many of those will be refurbished, cleaned and then donated to local schools, nature centers and other educational organizations. Our staff spends a lot of time getting all of those feeders ready to be donated and they will certainly be busy over the next few months making that happen. Thank you for participating in another successful event! Events like these allow us to continue to give back to our local communities and help educate children and other nature lovers about the joys and benefits of feeding wild birds. I'm sure many of you will agree, there are many other valuable lessons that can be learned by connecting with the nature that surrounds us everyday.

~Dave Netten



### 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.**



twitter

### Join the Conversation!

Like us on **Facebook.com/WildBirdStore** to post photos, ask questions and be the first to know about upcoming sales and events. Or follow us on **Twitter: @ASWildBirdStore**.

**FEEDER  
SWAP**

MAY  
&  
JUNE

## Early Summer

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT

- ☐ **Hang the Best Nest Builder™**, nesting material made of cotton fibers, near feeders or from tree limbs or posts to provide all-natural nesting materials for your feathered friends.
- ☐ **Hang birdhouses.** We recommend providing at least two birdhouses, one for wrens and one for chickadees. Hang them from a pole and put a squirrel baffle on the pole 4¼ to 5 feet off the ground.
- ☐ **Keep your nectar fresh longer with liquid or powder nectar that includes Nectar Defender™.** Great for use at the cabin when larger-capacity nectar feeders will be unattended for a week or more. **Don't use Kool-Aid, honey or artificial sweeteners in nectar feeders.**
- ☐ **Keep ants out of nectar** by hanging a feeder from an ant moat filled with water or an **Antguard®** to repel ants.
- ☐ **Deter bees from feeders** by rubbing mint leaves or mint extract on the nectar ports.
- ☐ **Help parenting birds** by offering calcium-rich suet during egg-laying time, such as **Pacific Bird and Supply® suet cakes** and **Attractor™** nutritional suet plugs (in various flavors).
- ☐ **Help cardinals feed their young by serving suet pellets and dried or live mealworms in a cardinal-friendly feeder.** Cardinals have difficulty eating from a suet cage.
- ☐ **Attract orioles to your yard** with nectar (change every three days), oranges, mealworms and grape jelly. While young are in the nest, orioles are especially attracted to mealworm feeders.
- ☐ **Use Golden Safflower** to avoid attracting grackles and starlings while still attracting cardinals, goldfinches, chickadees and house finches.
- ☐ **Avoid attracting starlings while still providing a birdseed mix by providing Bye, Bye Starling. ▶**
- ☐ **Scrub birdbaths** with 9 parts water to 1 part bleach. Rinse well. For a safe and healthy birdbath, add **Bird Bath Protector™** to the just-cleaned bath.
- ☐ **Incorporate a Water Wiggler™** into your birdbath to constantly move the water, attracting birds and preventing mosquitoes from laying their eggs.
- ☐ **Store seed in the freezer or outside** the house to avoid moths. Extra credit: Hang a **moth trap**, available at our stores, near seed containers in the garage.
- ☐ **Apply Window Alerts™** to prevent just-fledged juvenile birds from hitting your windows.
- ☐ **Take action to help baby birds.** If it is sparsely feathered and not capable of hopping, walking, flitting or gripping tightly to your finger it is a *nestling*. Look for the nearby nest and put the bird back in the nest or put it on a protected branch. If the bird is feathered and capable of hopping and flitting it is a *fledgling* and should be left alone. The parents are nearby, and are still actively watching and feeding the fledgling.
- ☐ **Contact the Wildlife Rehab Center** at 651-486-9453 or [www.wrcmn.org](http://www.wrcmn.org) if you find an injured bird.



# Creating an Ideal Backyard Wildlife Habitat



## My wife's and my yard is not manicured in "normal" fashion.

No chemicals are used, and little seeding or sodding has been done. It is push-mowed. The wooded third of the property is not managed.

Given this setting, we looked at certifying our yard as a "wildlife habitat" through the National Wildlife Federation. It took just a little money, elbow grease, and a whole lot of reminding ourselves that the certification would have a positive impact. We went to the National Wildlife Federation website and found four requirements for certification: food sources, water sources, cover and breeding spaces.

### Food Sources

Although nature provides a bounty, supplementing this food supply makes for many joyous days of wildlife watching. Adding a food source for animals also helps during a hard winter, a difficult migration, or even in times of overall habitat loss. Bird feeders, both ground- and pole-based, are excellent additions to the habitat. Also consider adding gardens of native grasses, fruit-bearing plants and nectar-producing flowers to supplement what forest and grasslands naturally provide.



*A pole-based feeder among nectar-rich flowers.*



*Water features provide habitat, drinking water and a bathing place for birds.*

The combination waterfall and pond provides habitat for fish and frogs, a bathing place for birds, blooming lilies, a drinking water source for any living thing (including the family dog) and a source of sanctuary. Surrounding the water feature with native plants is advised; local nurseries are a wealth of information and assets. The contours of our yard provided a challenge to the pond designer, but working with the landscape minimized the impact.

### Water Sources

A water source can be as simple as a birdbath or small fountain. Any relatively shallow basin will work. It is also suggested to add pebbles or stones to vary the water depth.

My wife and I added something grander than first anticipated: a backyard water

No chemicals are used in maintaining the pond. We add bacteria from time to time to help maintain pond health, but all algae control is done with the use of shade, proper filtration and a little elbow grease.

If mosquitoes are a problem, a small spinning mechanism can be added to keep the water moving. To keep water open in winter, either built-in or separate heating units may be used.

### Cover

As beautiful as exposed, lush green lawns are they do not provide cover for birds or other animals. Consider planting native grasses, shrubs and trees. Only remove dead trees if deemed a safety or pest concern; otherwise, consider preserving decaying woody plants for animal habitat. Similarly, consider saving downed branches or twigs in brush piles.



*Brush piles provide cover.*

### Breeding Spaces

Mature trees provide an excellent breeding area for animals that prefer to be off the ground; and the undisturbed areas below trees give excellent cover to animals that prefer to breed on the ground or below ground. Natural tree cavities afford a good breeding space for cavity-nesters, but if your trees don't have them you can purchase bird and bat houses of various sizes. These houses also encourage flying creatures (and squirrels) to settle in and breed.

### Conclusion

The National Wildlife Federation recognizes our property as a Certified Wildlife Habitat and an Advanced Bird-Friendly Habitat. The latter consists of nine requirements, including: providing year-round open water, installing native plants, removing invasive plants, eliminating insecticides, keeping dead trees, providing brush piles, offering food in feeders, maintaining nest boxes and reducing lawn area. With the guidance of the National Wildlife Federation programs, our much-loved yard is now shared with wildlife and achieves important conservation goals. My wife and I encourage you to create and share habitats for all creatures great and small to enjoy. ■



For more info., visit: [www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Outdoor-Activities/Garden-for-Wildlife/Certify-Your-Wildlife-Garden.aspx](http://www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Outdoor-Activities/Garden-for-Wildlife/Certify-Your-Wildlife-Garden.aspx). Adapted from an article about creating a certified National Wildlife Federation backyard habitat by Mark Newstrom and Michelle Cook.

## Vanishing Habitat

Monarchs only lay their eggs on milkweed, and large areas of the plant have rapidly disappeared over the past decade. Over this same time, growers have increasingly switched to crops that are genetically engineered to tolerate herbicides, and the increased use of herbicides has killed much of the previously abundant milkweed. As a result, monarchs must travel farther and use more energy to find places to lay their eggs. With their body fat and energy reserves depleted, the butterflies lay fewer eggs or die before they have a chance to reproduce. Milkweed is the sole food source for monarch butterfly larvae, and due to the widespread use of popular herbicides it has nearly been eliminated from farm fields across the Midwest.

## How Can You Help Monarchs?

### Plant Milkweeds

Because the Milkweed plants are being decimated in rural areas by herbicides, homeowners are being encouraged to plant Milkweed wherever they can. Milkweed seeds or balls can be purchased for a few dollars in our stores.

They're easy to plant and you can make a big difference by doing so.



*Plant native Milkweeds to help Monarchs.*

## Raise and Release Monarchs

You can also raise and release Monarchs in your own home with a kit you can purchase for under \$25. We also encourage butterfly feeding in your yard or garden with special butterfly nectar feeders.



*Raise and release a Monarch butterfly!*

## Butterfly Feeder & Nectar Combo

Attract butterflies to your garden or backyard using this Butterfly Feeder. The feeder design and color attracts butterflies, and the nectar reservoir size contains the right amount of nectar to minimize nectar spoilage. The combination of wicks and tubes mimic real flower blossoms. The small spikes can hold fresh fruit pieces. Fill the feeder with all-natural formula nectar, which is included. It's easy to assemble, fill and clean.



*Butterfly Feeder (left) and Nectar Feeder (right)*



Monarch conservation is becoming a more and more important effort and we hope you join us getting the word out about how easy it is to help this amazingly beautiful, yet faltering species. ■

For more information on all things monarchs, visit: [monarchjointventure.org](http://monarchjointventure.org).

## PRODUCT PICKS

## Water Wiggler™

### Moving Water Attracts Birds



*Water Wigglers attract birds.*

The battery-powered Water Wiggler™ creates continuous ripples in your birdbath water. Not only does the Water Wiggler attract birds,

it also prevents mosquitoes from laying eggs in your birdbath. The Water Wiggler operates on two D-cell batteries and has a very long battery life. Just turn it on and watch the birds enjoy the bath!

## Staff Picks

### Sharon Veno Shares Her Hummingbird Feeder Favorites

One of my hummingbirds' favorite feeders is the **Pinch Waist Feeder** by Perky-Pet®. Hummingbirds are attracted to the four red flower-shaped feeding stations. The perches give the hummers a place to rest, and the bee guards help to keep the nectar free of bees.

The feeder has been improved with a wide-mouth opening for easy cleaning and convenient filling. Also, it now has a built-in ant moat at the top of the feeder (to be filled with water), preventing ants from crawling down to the nectar ports. We enjoy sitting on the deck watching these winged wonders make their frequent stops at this vibrant feeder.



*Pinch-waist Hummingbird Feeder*



*Planter Box Feeder*

Another favorite feeder of my hummers is a **Planter Box Hummingbird Feeder with a Hanging Rod**, also by Perky-Pet, for use in hanging baskets, flower boxes and planters. With four of these 3-ounce feeders in planters on our deck, the activity is never-ending. The hummingbirds fly between feeders, doing their aerial acrobatics without worry of bees in their nectar (these feeders have bee guards). Both of these feeders have minimal leakage.

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