



# BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

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ALL SEASONS  
WILD BIRD  
STORE

## Backyard Essentials

HOW TO:

Install a Birdhouse, Set Up a Feeding Station

Early Summer Seasonal Checklist

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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  
**651.653.8705**

#### WAYZATA & WILD BIRD DELIVERS

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

#### BIRDHOUSE BASICS

## *Nest with Success*

By Wayzata Manager MELISSA BLOCK

*"There was great anticipation as we hung the wren house under the eaves of the garage . . . like magic, the wrens showed up shortly thereafter. They began filling the nest box with twigs. As the wrens hatched their eggs and fed their young, they were a constant source of fascination for our impressionable young minds."* —Carrol L. Henderson in *Woodworking for Wildlife* (2009)

Placing a birdhouse—also called a *nest box*—in your yard is a thrilling way to enjoy birds. When planning your nest box, consider the species of bird you'd like to attract, the proper habitat, how you'll protect it from predators and how you'll maintain the box. Here are some tips for hosting two of Minnesota's most popular birdhouse inhabitants: Black-capped Chickadees and House Wrens.

#### Entry Hole and Perch

Black-capped Chickadees and House Wrens are both cavity nesters, which means they nest inside existing structures such as old woodpecker holes, natural crevices and birdhouses.

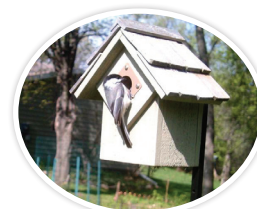
A proper birdhouse for these species should have a 1 1/8-inch to 1 1/4-inch diameter entry hole. CAUTION: an entry hole any larger than 1 1/4-inch

will allow access for nuisance House Sparrows and European Starlings, which kill or drive away native songbirds. Likewise, make sure your box DOES NOT have a perch; perches invite sparrows to try to use the box, even if they can't enter the hole.

#### Type of Mount

While wrens don't seem to mind if a nest box is suspended or attached, chickadees and other birds prefer a house that is firmly attached

to a support post or structure. Be sure to mount birdhouses away from easy access by cats, squirrels and raccoons. Use a baffle if the house is mounted on a pole or 4x4. If there's a concern



▲ Chickadees prefer stable mounts

(continued on page 3)



## Round Up For Birds

### Help Us Support Project BirdSafe

RoundUP  
for birds

We are pleased to announce that we will be partnering with

Audubon Minnesota again this year to raise funds for Project BirdSafe. Project BirdSafe works to reduce bird window collisions via the following:

✧ **Lights Out Campaign:** an effort to reduce unnecessary lighting during spring and fall migration

✧ **Research and monitoring** existing buildings and collision frequencies

✧ **Advocating** bird-safe design practices

Recent research has shown that **350 million** to **1 billion** birds die each year from window collisions. Those are astounding figures! What excites us about working with Project BirdSafe is that many of those collisions are preventable through outreach and education.

This month, we will be asking you, our loyal customers, to “round up” your purchase to the nearest dollar or contribute any amount you like. We will be matching each contribution dollar-for-dollar. The proceeds will go directly to Project BirdSafe.

*Al and 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.**



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

## Install a Feeding Station in Your Backyard

By Bloomington Assistant Manager TRISH WAGLE

Spring is the best time to install a new feeding station in your yard. Feeding stations have many advantages over hanging feeders in trees or from overhangs. For example, feeding stations provide multiple hooks to hang a variety of feeder types, each of which may hold a different food, like Nyjer™, suet, seed mixes or peanuts. Providing different foods attracts a wider variety of birds. Feeding stations also make filling feeders more convenient, since feeders are located together. Finally, squirrel-proofing a single feeding station is easier than protecting many feeders individually.



▲ Feeding stations offer variety

### Choose the Location Strategically

When planning the installation of a feeding station, the first step is to find the best spot. Consider where you spend time in your home and which windows provide the best view.



▲ Position feeders away from trees

Then, go outside and mentally draw a 12-foot circle around the proposed spot. Make sure this circle doesn't encompass any tree limbs or other perches that can be used as a jumping off point for a squirrel, including deck railings, lawn furniture, fences and air conditioners. Don't forget to look up at your roofline—squirrels are known to climb to the top of your home and attack from overhangs, wires and adjacent limbs.

Keep in mind there will have to be some give and take, since most yards don't offer a completely perfect spot. A feeding station will concentrate hulls and other debris, so it may be wise to place them over surfaces that don't promote sprouting. Consider using gravel or mulch under feeders—either is attractive, deters sprouting and makes mowing easier.

### Consider Protective Cover

Birds prefer to have some cover close to feeders, so plan a location that has a few shrubs in close proximity. Small trees with thin branches do the trick too, as long as they don't support the weight of a squirrel.

### Select the Pole Height

We offer three feeding station pole heights: 60 inches, 74 inches and 80 inches. Our poles have a 1-inch diameter and are made of powder-coated steel for long-lasting, rust-free service for years to come.

When selecting a pole size, keep in mind that squirrels can jump 5 feet vertically, so the bottom of your longest feeder shouldn't hang below that height. Also, take your own height and reach into consideration when selecting a pole height: will you be able to easily access the feeders?

Need something even taller? Pole extensions are available in a variety of lengths. These are ideal for raising feeders out of reach of deer. We carry a special easy-lift hanger to access extra-high feeders using a broom handle. (continued next page)



▲ Songbirds prefer some cover

## FEEDING STATION FUNDAMENTALS (CONTINUED)

(from previous page)

### Secure the Feeding Station Pole

The next decision you'll need to make is whether or not to sink the pole into the ground. If digging isn't your thing, use a patio ring—it's a large metal circle with spokes and a hole in the center to accommodate the pole. Patio rings are portable and provide a stable base on flat surfaces such as decks and patios. They can be used in a yard but should be weighted down or staked into the ground to provide stability.

If you plan to sink the feeding station pole into the ground, use either a pound-in stake or an auger mount to provide a secure foundation for which to affix the pole. Consider your soil composition to determine which of these mounts is better for you—turning a 12-inch auger into hard clay will be hard work!

### Protect from Ground Attacks

A pole-mounted baffle does an excellent job

of preventing ground attacks on your feeding station. We offer several styles and colors of baffles: some made of metal, others of clear plastic. In each case, the baffle should be mounted between 4 ½-feet and 5-feet high—a height that discourages squirrels from using the baffle as a step.

### Configuring Your Feeders

How should you top your pole? There are plenty of options! Attach a single platform or hopper feeder using a flange that slides over the top of the pole. Or consider a more versatile hook topper to provide two, three or four hangers for several types of feeders. You may even choose to layer two levels of hooks to hang feeders at different heights. The sky's the limit when it comes to possible configurations for your feeding station!

It's easy to create a completely unique station customized for your feeders and your preferences. Accessories ranging from coil-



▲ A single feeding station can house feeders that attract different types of birds.

mount jelly dishes and mealworm cups to pole-mounted bird baths and seed trays.

As the weather warms up, spend some time scouting out the perfect spot for a new feeding station in your yard. Consider installing a new feeding station to enhance your enjoyment of backyard bird feeding. Come to our stores to compare sizes and shop for unique accessories for your new feeding station. We love to help! ■

## BIRDHOUSE BASICS (CONTINUED)

(continued from page 1) about intruders on a hanging nest box, you can attach a "Bird Guardian" to the hole for protection.

### Placement

To attract Black-capped Chickadees, mount your birdhouse where it'll receive 40–60% sunlight throughout the day.

House Wrens prefer wooded, shrubby habitats. Consider a location that can maintain a temperature of 66–105°F inside the box to ensure viable eggs.

House Wrens are extremely competitive for nesting sites and may actually invade other birds' nests—including chickadee nests—then puncture and destroy the eggs and even pull out the nesting material. For this reason, it's best to locate wren and chickadee houses out of sight of one another.

Keep in mind that a nest box may be occupied right away or it may take weeks to months before a bird takes up residence. If a birdhouse is not used in a year, it may be best to move it to a different location.

### Monitor the Nests

Once a bird has taken up residence, you can check on the progress of the nest weekly by



▲ A House Wren peeks out of its nest box.

approaching the nest box from the side, gently tapping on the box to warn the female so she can leave the box first (and not hit you in the face!) Then, slowly open the clean-out door and peak inside.

Check the nest for parasites, intruders and dead baby birds. Remove any deceased birds to keep the nest clean. If there's an intruder, deal with it as best you can or seek professional advice.

Wondering what type of bird has taken up residence? Look at the nesting material they use. If the nest inside the box is made of moss, grasses and any type of fur, it's a

chickadee house. If the nest is made up of small sticks and twigs, it's a wren house.

Another way to determine the species is to peek at the eggs. Chickadees lay one brood of 1–13 eggs. The eggs are white with fine, reddish-brown speckles. The female incubates the eggs for 12–14 days. Once they hatch, chickadee nestlings stay in the nest for 12–16 days until they're on their own.

The female House Wren lays 1–2 broods per season of 3–10 eggs. The eggs are small, pinkish-white with some blotches of reddish brown. The female incubates the eggs for 9–16 days. Both male and female wrens feed the nestlings, which remain in the nest for 15–17 days after hatching.

### Care and Cleaning

At the end of the breeding season, remove the nesting material and scrub the inside of the nest box with a mild detergent and water. If the nest is soiled with fecal matter, remove the nest and clean out the birdhouse with a solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water, then rinse well.

For more information, visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's [NestWatch.org](https://nestwatch.org). ■



## SEASONAL CHECKLIST

MAY  
&  
JUNE

# Early Summer

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT



**Find a baby bird?** If it's sparsely feathered and can't hop, walk, flit or grip tightly to your finger, it's a **nestling**. Place it back in its nest and or put it on a protected branch. If the bird is feathered and can hop and flit about, it's a **fledgling**. Leave it alone, its parents are nearby.

□ Attract orioles with nectar (change every three days), oranges, mealworms and grape jelly. Keep them coming throughout the season by offering mealworms for their young.

□ Offer calcium-rich suet during egg-laying time, such as **Pacific Bird™** and **Supply suet cakes** and **Attractor™** nutritional suet plugs in various flavors.

□ Supply suet pellets and dried/live mealworms to cardinals, which have difficulty eating from a suet cage.

□ Use the NEW **Hummingbird Feeder Fresh™ Nectar Defender** to keep your nectar fresh longer. Great for use at the cabin with larger-capacity nectar feeders that are left unattended for a week.

□ DO NOT use Kool-Aid®, honey or artificial sweeteners in nectar feeders. Easy-to-use **nectar concentrate** is available for purchase in liquid or powder.

□ Hang nectar feeders from an ant moat filled with water or use an **Antguard®** to repel ants. ▶

□ Rub mint leaves or mint extract on nectar ports to deter bees.

□ Scrub birdbaths with 9 parts water to 1 part bleach and rinse well. For a safe and healthy bird bath add **Bird Bath Protector™** to the just cleaned bath.

□ Attract more birds and prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs in your birdbath by using a **Water Wiggler™** to keep water moving. ▶



□ Store seed in the freezer or outside the house to avoid moths. Hang a moth trap, available at our stores, near seed containers in the garage.

□ Use **Golden Safflower** to deter grackles and starlings while still attracting cardinals, goldfinches, chickadees and House Finches. Or, offer our improved-recipe **Bye, Bye Starling** with less-mess golden safflower and without white millet.

□ Prevent just-fledged juvenile birds from hitting your windows by applying UV-sensitive **Window Alert™** decals. Stop window pecking by breaking up birds' refectations with **Cardinal Alert™**.

□ Found an injured bird? Contact the Wildlife Rehab Center at 651-486-9453. Find them online at [www.wrcmn.org](http://www.wrcmn.org).



## FEATURED PRODUCTS

### Window Nest Box

#### Get a Close-Up View!

Watch birds build their nest, lay eggs and hatch their young from the comfort of your home. Made



▶ See a nest close-up!

from beige PVC foam and wood, this house attaches to your window with three large suction cups. The clear plastic back allows for viewing of nestlings. Included is a removable black privacy shield to place on the inside of window when needed. ■

### Dried Mealworms

#### A High-Protein Boost for Birds

Farm-raised dried mealworms provide the perfect balance of protein, fat and fiber to

promote bird health, vigor and song! Place dried mealworms in a separate dish feeder or mix with birdseed in regular feeders. Also try pouring nectar over dried mealworms in a cup feeder for your orioles. Available in an easy-pour pouch or a 14-oz. container (best value). ■



### Cedar Birdhouses

#### Long-Lasting Construction

Chickadees and wrens both use this bird house in Minnetonka manager Carol Chenault's backyard. This birdhouse is constructed with Inland Red Cedar for long-lasting use. The entrance hole is sized



▶ Cedar Birdhouses

to allow both wrens and chickadees to enter, while excluding larger birds. Constructed with proper drainage and ventilation, this house will keep the nest dry and cool. The side opens easily for cleaning. Hang or post mount. ■

### Bye-Bye Starling

#### NEW and IMPROVED mix!

We added less-mess Golden Safflower and removed the white millet from this mix to attract more goldfinches, cardinals and other favorite birds while deterring European Starlings. A starling's bill shape is not well suited to cracking the hard-shelled seeds in the mix. ■



▶ Discourage starlings from taking over your feeders

**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.