



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Volume 26 Issue 6 | November/December 2019

**ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE**

Backyard bird adaptations:

Weathering Winter

Holiday Treats for Birds

November/December Seasonal Notes

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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
952.473.4283

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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.

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT

Bird Lovers' Wish list



1. DECK-MOUNTED HEATED BIRDBATH

Provide water year-round and see birds up close with this heated birdbath! It's a 60 watt, thermostatically controlled dish, nested in a clamp-mount black wire ring.

2. SQUIRREL BUSTER PLUS FEEDER WITH WEATHER GUARD

When a squirrel or large bird climbs onto this sturdy feeder, its weight automatically forces a shroud down, closing the seed ports. Add the UV-protected polycarbonate Weather Guard to your gift (sold separately) to shelter songbirds from the rain!

3. QUICK CLEAN MESH NYJER

This feeder offers unlimited potential for attracting finches, siskins and redpolls.

4. NEW! SQUIRREL BUSTER SUET FEEDER

This suet feeder is squirrel proof and chew proof! It holds two 5-inch suet cakes and has a weight-adjustable mechanism to help control unwanted squirrels and larger birds.

5. BIRDS OF MINNESOTA, 3RD ED.

This newly released third edition includes 14 new species of Minnesota birds, updated photographs and range maps, and a "compare" section for

often-confused birds. Local author Stan Tekiela is an internationally known naturalist and writer.

6. WOODLINK HOPPER FEEDER DIY CRAFT KIT

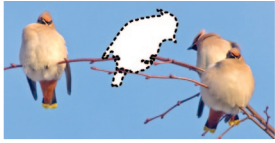
The rugged wood cedar feeder from Woodlink takes only a Phillips screwdriver to assemble, and attracts a variety of birds when completed!

Gift cards available, too!



Bird Population in Peril

As many of you are probably aware, there was a recent report published in the journal *Science* about the rapidly declining bird populations since 1970. The report shows that the overall bird population in North America has declined by 29%—just over 1 in 4 birds—since 1970. This caught a lot of scientists by surprise, as it was well known that some species were struggling, but it was not commonly thought that the majority of bird species would be in such rapid decline. The exception has been waterfowl (ducks and geese) and large raptors (eagles, falcons and hawks), whose numbers are fortunately on the rise.



Most speculation surrounding the causes of decline focus on habitat issues: deforestation, modern agricultural practices and development. Other factors could be pesticide use, cats, window collisions and global warming.

The news isn't all bad, as the birds that are doing well are species that have been previously identified as threatened and measures have been taken to address the habitat and pesticide problems causing their demise. *Ducks Unlimited* works hard at raising money geared towards conservation to improve waterfowl populations and DDT was a pesticide that was outlawed that was shown to impact the breeding ability of Bald Eagles.

If we know the causes, we seem to be able to respond and have an impact. Here are a few things we can all do in our own yards and neighborhoods that can help:

1. **Make windows safer to reduce bird collisions**
2. **Keep cats indoors**
3. **Avoid using pesticides**
4. **Reduce manicured lawn areas and increase native plantings**
5. **Provide supplemental food**

Happy Holidays and bird feeding, from our family to yours,

Al and Dave Netten

Join the Conversation!

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Holiday Treats for Birds

Our Picks

1. FLAMING HOT SEED BELL

This 100% seed bell will feed the birds while keeping the squirrels away. What makes this product special is the formula: sunflower hearts, peanuts, golden safflower, mealworms—and it's extra spicy.

Hang on the hanger or mount on the Mr.Bird's Seed Bell Hanger. No waste, no mess, never melt.



2. LITTLE STAR

These cute little seed and nut stars are solid seed. They contain black oil sunflower, pecans, peanuts and millet, which make them desirable to birds. Each one features a red raffia hanger. They are individually wrapped.

A delightful treat for your favorite backyard birds and a thoughtful gift for any bird lover. The ingredients in these little hearts make them a must visit for birds. Unaffected by extremes of heat or cold, suitable for year-round bird feeding. No mess, no waste, never melt.



3. MR. BIRD FLAMING HOT WREATH

This beautiful 9" solid seed, nut and hot pepper oil wreath is decorated with red raffia ribbon and comes with a mesh hanging net. Birds love it, squirrels don't!



4. MR. BIRD FRUIT BALL ORNAMENTS

Solid seed balls decorated with fruit and berries. Packaged individually. Hang from the jute hanger.



5. MR BIRD RUSTIC WREN HOUSE

This hand decorated bird house is accented with pumpkin seeds and colorful corn.



How birds adapt to **WINTER WEATHER**

While we simply get out our heavy coats, hats, gloves and boots for the winter, our backyard birds go through some amazing changes to make it through the cold and snow.

Behavioral Changes

We can all notice some of the behavioral changes birds make during the winter months. Some birds migrate. The other birds that stay tend to congregate in larger flocks and cover larger territory. These large flocks help them all identify food sources and spot danger quicker than individual birds.

Anatomical Changes

FEATHERS

Birds also go through some amazing anatomical changes to make it through our harsh winters. After breeding season, and before the cold, most birds molt. Birds need fresh feathers for the winter, including additional insulating feathers. Often the color of their feathers change. For example, the male American Goldfinch goes from his bright yellow breeding plumage to a more subdued olive-green color.



American Goldfinch in summer (left) and winter (right) plumage

SEXUAL ORGANS

Birds' sexual organs actually shrink after breeding season and before the cold months. Sex organs in both sexes are enlarged and functional only during breeding season. During the winter season the organs shrink to make room for extra fat storage to get birds through the harsh weather. Come spring, when the day length increases, hormones are released to enlarge the sexual organs for the upcoming breeding season.

Seasonal recruitment of hippocampal neurons in adult free-ranging black-capped chickadees

(learning/neurogenesis/neuronal replacement)

ANAY BARNEA* AND FERNANDO NOTTEBOHM

The Rockefeller University, Field Research Center for Ecology and Ethology, Tyroni Road, Millbrook, NY 12545

Contributed by Fernando Nottebohm, July 7, 1994

A headline from the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science article about chickadee brain cell changes.

BRAIN CELLS

Before the cold really begins another fascinating change occurs. Birds—in particular, chickadees—grow new brain cells. In the adult brains of birds, neurons are replaced periodically as the demand for memory space peaks. Chickadees discard cells that hold old memories that they don't need and replace them with new cells that will allow them to store new memories. This helps them to remember where they've cached all the seeds over the summer and fall for that particular year; they don't need to remember where they stored them the previous year. The part of the brain responsible for spatial organization expands by about 30 percent over the winter months. In the spring it shrinks back to its normal size.

TORPOR

Torpor is another fascinating anatomical and behavioral change to adapt to harsh conditions. In order to conserve energy and heat, birds enter torpor. Torpor is a state of slowed body functions. Birds enter a state of torpor, lower their body temperature and slow their heart, respiration and metabolic rate. Their metabolic rate decreases, up to 95 percent. It's like a short-term hibernation. Birds will use torpor to survive long winter nights or severe storms. Their reflexes and reaction times are also stunted when they are in torpor, making them more vulnerable to predators. ■

Some birds that stay the winter tend to congregate in larger flocks.

Seasonal Notes

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT

November: WEEK BY WEEK

Week 1	2nd Week	3rd Week	4th Week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ November is typically a cloudy month in MN but the sunsets are exceptional! ✓ Look for Tundra Swans overhead and listen for the muffled musical whistles of the flock. They are migrating to their wintering grounds along the Atlantic Coast. ✓ The last flocks of migrating Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles and migrating American Robins move through. (Many robins and Eastern Bluebirds winter over in MN.) ✓ White-throated and Fox Sparrows (shown) forage the ground under bird feeding stations.  ✓ Area lakes host large rafts of American Coots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Milkweed pods open and shed dark-brown seeds on white parachutes. ✓ Cedar Waxwings visit heated birdbaths, crabapple, junipers and mountain ash. ✓ Waterfowl migration continues including American Wigeons, pintails and Canvasbacks. ✓ Flocks of Snow Buntings arrive from the Arctic and feed in roadside ditches and in farm fields. <p><i>Tip:</i> Fill heated birdbaths with cold water to reduce evaporation. Insert a Dry, Dry Birdie (shown) to allow birds to drink but not bathe. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Now is peak mating season for White-tailed Deer. ✓ Raccoons enter winter sleeping dens. They don't truly hibernate, as they will forage when temperatures are about 27°F or higher. ✓ European Starlings are in winter garb of black bills and speckled plumage. <p><i>Tip:</i> Serve suet in an upside-down feeder, (shown); switch to Golden Safflower and Nyjer seeds to discourage starlings and still feed other birds. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Watch for Brown Creepers (shown) going up and around tree trunks searching for larvae.  ✓ Northern Flickers may join other woodpeckers at suet feeders during the winter. ✓ Flying Squirrels do not hibernate and may use bird feeders at night. <p><i>Tip:</i> Blue Jays cache peanuts in preparation for colder temps. Use a peanut wreath or fly-through feeder to offer in-shell peanuts (shown). </p>

December: WEEK BY WEEK

Week 1	2nd Week	3rd Week	4th Week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Darkness exceeds 15 hours a day but the daylight hours began to extend following the winter solstice (Dec 21). ✓ Pheasants continue to feed at cornfield edges and along roadsides. <p><i>Tip:</i> Decorate your deck and yard with seed bells for the holidays! Use Flaming Hot seed bells (shown) to deter squirrels while you feed the birds. </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Northern MN bird feeders host Pine Grosbeaks (shown) and more Red-breasted Nuthatches visit feeders throughout the state.  ✓ Screech Owls roost in Wood Duck houses now. Gray Squirrels and other animals are also using these nesting boxes for winter shelter. <p><i>Tip:</i> Switch some of your feeders to out-of-the-shell seed like Medium Sunflower Chips or Kracker Jax. Birds are able to replenish faster and there is no shell mess for you to clean up.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatches, Dark-eyed Juncos and others visit feeding stations. ✓ Mature white-tailed deer bucks begin dropping their antlers throughout mid-December. ✓ Dec. 21st is the this first day of astronomical winter—the winter solstice. We receive only 25 percent of the solar intensity we had on June 21, and experience the longest shadows. <p><i>Tip:</i> Toss Finches' Choice on the ground under feeding stations to attract Dark-eyed Juncos, Mourning Doves and Northern Cardinals.</p> <p>Mix in suet pellets and dried mealworms to boost the nutrients in your feeders to help birds survive the cold winter days and nights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Each individual Downy and Hairy Woodpecker roosts at night in separate tree cavities. Downy Woodpeckers may also use a well-insulated bird house at night. ✓ Squirrels are active all winter but will stay in their leafy nests until mid-morning when temperatures climb a bit. <p><i>Tips:</i> Use a large Wild Bird Feast seed cylinder in a covered feeder (shown) to provide seed while you are out of town. Better yet, call the Wayzata store to set up Feed & Fill service! </p> <p>Scatter dried mealworms and Berry Nutty where the snow is lightest under pine trees to feed robins and cardinals.</p>