



ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Volume 23 Issue 5 | September/October 2016

Red-Bellied vs. Red-Headed

Woodpeckers

+ Raising Monarchs
Early Autumn Seasonal Checklist



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EAGAN

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(Cedar Cliff Shopping Center)
Eagan, MN 55122
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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.
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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.

RAISING BUTTERFLIES

Monarchs Update

By Guest Contributor KATRINA HASE

For almost 10 years, the Eagan location of All Seasons Wild Store has been leading their own small conservation effort by raising and releasing hundreds of monarch butterflies between the months of June and September. Store manager Linda Gorr answers questions about the project.

Q. What is the goal of the project?

A. Our primary goal is to directly increase the monarch population by raising monarch eggs in an environment that's protected from predators—like bugs and birds—and from storms, then to release them safely back into the environment.

Q. Are there other benefits to raising monarchs in the store?

A. Well, the customers love it! They come in to see the progression of the eggs to caterpillar, chrysalis and finally butterfly. It's a real attraction! Raising monarchs also helps to bring awareness to the problem of declining monarch populations.

Q. How can customers get involved with raising monarchs or monarch conservation?

A. We've got monarch kits that people can purchase for \$25 that provide what they need. Besides the kit, all they need are monarch eggs and a readily available supply of milkweed. It's pretty easy—there's just one step in the morning and then you're done.

We've also got free information sheets from All Seasons Wild Bird Store and from Monarch Joint Venture (monarchjointventure.org) that detail how to raise monarch eggs, how to garden for monarch butterflies and give general information about monarch conservation. (For a step-by-step video of how to use the monarch kit, visit wildbirdstore.com/2015/05/take-monarch-conservation-to-your-backyard).



▲ A monarch emerges from a chrysalis at the Eagan store

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More Than Just a Tagline!

"Your local backyard birding experts" is how we promote our business; it's our "tagline," if you want to use marketing lingo. It's not a claim we take lightly and in my opinion, this issue of Bird's-Eye View is further confirmation of our expertise. This issue is information rich, delving into woodpecker names and biographies and some non-traditional bird foods and related feeders; it also provides a really great checklist of the things you can be doing to make your yard an avian haven as we prepare for winter.

Most of this information can't be found in books or many if any places on the Internet. It comes from our extremely knowledgeable, and yes I'll say "expert," staff and our 25-plus years of hands-on experience in this great business.

I encourage you to use this information in your own yards—it will make your experience better.

If you discover something new, I would love for you to take time to share it with us. Maybe you noticed a new behavior, are trying a new idea that seems to work or have a great new tip. If so, please tell us by emailing us at info@wildbirdstore.com.

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.

SEPT.
&
OCT.

Early Autumn

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT

- ☐ **Use seed cakes or cylinders in a fly-through or tray feeder to avoid ground clean-up. The compressed cake *Bugs, Nuts and Fruit* prevents birds from casting seed by bill sweeping, and the no-waste/no-mess cake will not leave shell debris.**



- ☐ Prepare to say "bon voyage" to orioles. They leave Minnesota the first week of September and winter in the neotropics.
- ☐ Close up Purple Martin houses.
- ☐ Take time to clean out or take down other birdhouses. If you leave houses up over winter, open the side/bottom of the birdhouse to prevent mice from nesting. Use our **Birdhouse and Feeder Cleaner**.
- ☐ Update or add to your feeding station and especially add poles for birdhouses now before the ground freezes. It's easier and safer to get these tasks done early.
- ☐ Add a birdbath to your deck or garden to attract robins and waxwings—they're feeding on berry trees like mountain ash, viburnums and dogwoods.
- ☐ Keep hummingbird feeders up until they have been absent for ten days. Migrating hummingbirds will continue to visit your feeders into October.

- ☐ If your yard is full of grackles, switch to **golden safflower** feed until November. It is less appealing to grackles, starlings and gray squirrels.

- ☐ Continue to attract goldfinches with **Nyjer™ and Chips**. Minnesota has goldfinches year-round. The males in their winter coloring are dull olive green, similar to the females.

- ☐ Offer **peanut pick-outs** and **suet** for the arriving Red-breasted Nuthatches. They roll into Minnesota in the fall and will be looking for a feast.

- ☐ **Juncos are coming! Scatter some *Finches' Choice* on the ground or in a ground feeder for these winter visitors. White-throated Sparrows, White-Crowned Sparrows and Mourning Doves are also ground feeders that will enjoy this treat.**



- ☐ Clean your bird feeders before winter with **Bird Feeder Cleaner** or **Birdhouse and Feeder Cleaner**, found in our stores. Feeders should be cleaned inside and out, including all feeding ports, perches, lids and platforms. We offer a bird feeder cleaning service if you'd rather have us do it.

- ☐ Prevent unwanted guests in your bird seed by storing your seed in tins on the deck, in the garage or in the shed. For easy access, store smaller quantities in the freezer. Install moth traps in the garage or shed. Indian meal moths are very active in September.

- ☐ **Don't cut seed heads from your perennials. Birds will eat these seed heads into the winter. Particularly valuable are purple coneflower, black-eyed Susan, sunflowers and hollyhock.**



- ☐ Celebrate the migration season! September is the main month for the southward migration of warblers, vireos, grosbeaks and sparrows. Blue Jays migrate in flocks across Minnesota. Early September is the peak time for monarch migration. Learn more about migration patterns at Learner.org/jnorth or visit **Hawk Ridge** in Duluth to witness major migration of Sharp-shinned and Broad-winged Hawks, among others.

Mistaken Identities

Red-Bellied or Red-Headed Woodpecker?

By Wayzata Manager MELISSA BLOCK

There are two woodpeckers that look nothing alike, but their names cause confusion: The Red-bellied Woodpecker and the Red-headed Woodpecker. The confusion is that both woodpeckers have red on their heads and not much red on their bellies.

Red-bellied Woodpecker

The Red-bellied Woodpeckers have black-and-white barred backs and a red cap on their head. The patch on the males extends from their bill to the nape of the neck. Females have a smaller patch of red on the back of their heads. Their name comes from a slight blush of red on their buff-colored bellies. The amount of red blush on their bellies can vary, from just a slight blush to a patch of bright red. Most of the time we don't see the red blush on their bellies because they are usually facing a tree or feeder.



▲ female

Red-headed Woodpecker



▲ in flight

The Red-headed Woodpecker has a completely crimson red head, a snow-white body with half-white, half-inky-black wings. Red-headed Woodpeckers are a rare sight these days. Their population has declined almost 70% from 1966 to 2014 because of habitat loss and changes in their food supply. Red-headed Woodpeckers don't act like other woodpeckers. They are able to catch insects in the air and hunt for them on the ground. Red-headed Woodpeckers are also one of only

four woodpeckers that are known to hide extra nuts, acorns and sometimes grasshoppers in tree crevices, covering them to eat later.

Other Common Woodpeckers

The Downy Woodpecker and Hairy Woodpecker also cause some confusion. These two woodpeckers look almost exactly alike, except for their size. The Hairy Woodpecker measures 9-13" long; while the Downy Woodpecker measures 6-6.5" long. It's easy to see



▲ Wayzata staff member Jim Weisman snapped this photo of a Downy (left) and Hairy (right) Woodpecker on a suet log.

the difference when they are side-by-side, but when they're off in a tree, looks can be deceiving. Looking closer at these two woodpeckers will give you a few more hints. The Downy Woodpecker's bill is dainty and small, about 1/3 the size of its head. The Hairy Woodpecker's bill looks sturdy and can be almost as long as the head. The males of both species have a red patch on the back of their head. The females do not. I started remembering the differences in size by saying that the small one is the "down-sized" or "Downy." ■



Red-bellied Woodpecker

- Relatively common
- Red on back of head only
- Barred pattern on wings
- Blush of "red" on belly

Red-headed Woodpecker

- Relatively rare
- Completely red head
- No barred pattern on wings
- Hunts for insects on ground or in the air



Q. How many monarchs do you release each season?

A. Last year, we released 224 monarchs—a real bumper crop! At one time, we had 5-6 cages going at once! But this year, possibly due to storms in Mexico that damaged monarch overwintering habitat, there were fewer monarchs arriving in Minnesota to lay their eggs. Still, thanks in large part to Bloomington staff member Lisa Stanford, we've been able to raise and release 70 monarchs so far. Lisa checks the milkweed plants in her yard, often following monarchs to where they land and checking to see if they laid eggs. We've also had one customer bring in 17 eggs! ■

Witnessing the Life Cycle

The Eagan All Seasons Wild Bird Store documents their monarchs' progress.

1. An egg (see circled, below) hatches larvae (caterpillars)



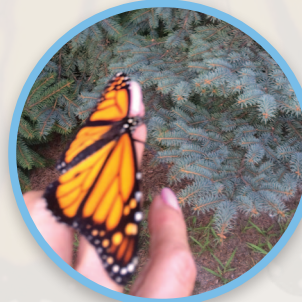
4. After drying its wings for several hours, the butterfly is ready to be released.



2. Larvae feed on milkweed, growing and shedding their skin several times. Later, they attach to a location with a silk pad and shed one last time, revealing a chrysalis.



3. An adult (butterfly) emerges from the chrysalis.



STAFF PICKS

Suet Pellets

Suet to Go Pellets Are Quick, No-Mess



Give your bird friends a quick high-energy snack to go with these pellets. **Suet to Go suet pellets** are a great high-energy food source, full of protein and fat. They are made of vegetable fat, wheat, peanut flour and mealworms. Suet pellets are an

easy, no-mess way to provide suet. Serve suet pellets alone or mixed in with your seed for bluebirds, woodpeckers, cardinals, chickadees and more.

Recycled Double Suet Feeder

Large Capacity Means Fewer Refills

Provide a comfortable space to enjoy a meal to all visitors, even the grand Pileated Woodpecker. Eleven plastic containers were reused to make this feeder. The 5/8" recycled poly lumber will not split, crack

or rot. The long "tail prop" area allows the Pileated Woodpecker and other woodpeckers space to prop their tail for balance and leverage when feeding. The vinyl-coated, welded mesh is durable and holds two suet cakes.



Peanut Pick-outs

A Favorite of Many Backyard Birds



Keep your feeder activity up all fall with these tasty **peanut pick-outs**.

Our peanut pick-outs are grown in the USA. These unsalted, roasted peanut halves and pieces are a favorite of chickadees, nuthatches, Blue Jays and woodpeckers when served in a wire-mesh peanut feeder. Cardinals and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks love peanuts as well but prefer an open tray feeder, hopper feeder or a tube feeder with a tray for easier access.

Aspects® Quick-Clean Peanut Mesh Feeder

Attract Entertaining Acrobatic Birds

The **Quick-Clean Peanut Mesh Feeder** is made of stainless steel mesh and has an easy-to-remove base for cleaning. The seed diverter at the bottom of the feeder moves the seed toward the mesh, enabling the birds to reach every seed or nut. Designed for acrobatic birds such as woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches, and finches. When filled with shelled peanuts, sunflower kernels or black-oil sunflower in the shell, this feeder is irresistible to the always-entertaining "clinging" birds. ■



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.