



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

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ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE



Migration Season

+ Migration Myths
+ Autumn Preparations

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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.

FACT OR FICTION?

Fall Migration Myths

By Guest Contributor MELISSA BLOCK

The annual exodus of our summer birds inspires both awe and misinformation. Here we clear up some common myths about the autumn migration.

Myth: You should take down your hummingbird feeders in the fall because they keep hummingbirds from migrating.



Fact: Birds migrate in response to genetic and environmental forces. Keeping the hummingbird feeders up as long as possible actually helps migrating hummingbirds that are traveling from farther away and any stragglers.

Myth: Hummingbirds migrate by riding on the backs of geese.

Fact: Hummingbirds make the long trek to Mexico or South America all on their own.

Myth: Birds always migrate north in the summer and south in the winter.

Fact: Some birds may migrate to higher elevations in the summer and lower elevations for the winter.

Myth: All birds migrate in flocks.

Fact: While many birds migrate in flocks, many do not. The hummingbird is an example of a species that migrates alone. How a juvenile hummingbird migrates for the first time and knows when and where to go is still being studied.

Myth: American Robins always fly south for the winter.

Fact: If robins find enough food, they will stay where they are. Here in the Twin Cities, we are seeing more and more robins staying through the winter.



▲ An over-wintering American Robin.

(FACT OR FICTION? continued on page 4)

Thank you for Rounding Up for Birds!

Together we're helping to reduce bird window strikes during migration.

Thank you to all who donated during our *Round Up for Birds* Campaign in June to support Minnesota Audubon's Project Lights Out.

RoundUP
for birds

We collected \$1,329.62 in donations and as promised, we matched that amount for a total contribution of \$2,559.24. These funds will be used to support Minnesota Audubon's efforts to reduce bird window strikes during fall and spring migration. It's been estimated that these window collisions kill more birds each year than any other threat and it's very avoidable with some simple actions by home and building owners. Simply turning out unnecessary lights at night can reduce bird mortality from window collisions by 80% or more. Other things we can do as homeowners are: close the blinds or turn out your lights at night when leaving a room, use motion-activated security lights for your exterior and use shielded light fixtures for your other exterior or landscape lighting. The peak migration months are April and May in the spring and late August through October in the fall. Thanks again for your support of this worthy project.

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.

It's Prime Time to Plant Trees!

Fall is a great time to plant trees and shrubs. The fall moisture helps trees and shrubs establish their root system and are therefore better equipped to deal with the heat and drought in the summer.

Keep the birds in mind when you're shopping for fall plantings. Some trees recommended for fall planting that will benefit the birds include the following:

Maple

Birds and small animals love the seeds within the winged samaras of maples. The leaves also make these trees attractive to butterflies and moths.



Spruce and Pine

These evergreens can offer birds shelter in the winter and summer. The birds will also love the seed-bearing cones and these trees can provide nest sites. Evergreen needles are also a good source of insects in early spring.



Crabapple

Fruit-eating birds love the small berries and the miniature apples. The spring buds and flowers attract insects for birds to feed on. Crabapples can attract robins, bluebirds, cardinals, waxwings, grosbeaks, and finches.



Dogwood

These beautiful shrubs provide fruit with high fat content for the birds. Dogwoods can attract robins, bluebirds, catbirds, vireos, warblers and cardinals.

By Guest Contributor MELISSA BLOCK

Transition Season

Minnetonka Manager Carol Chenault shares how she readies her backyard for the change in seasons.

Addressing Nectar Feeders

As I bid the Baltimore Orioles farewell the first week of September, the transition to fall backyard bird feeding begins. Taking down the oriole feeders, washing them well with soap and water and disinfecting them with either bleach (1:10 ratio of bleach to water) or white vinegar (50:50 vinegar to water) is an autumn routine. However, I keep my hummingbird feeders full of fresh nectar. Though male Ruby-throated Hummingbirds leave in early September, some females and juveniles remain until late October.

Cleaning, Rearranging

I do like to rearrange things (just ask the staff at the Minnetonka store), so the departure of the orioles leads to feeder cleaning and rearranging of the feeding stations. It's a good time to disassemble, soak and scrub feeders and clean out birdhouses. Leaving some birdhouses out for the winter may provide shelter as a winter roost for chickadees and nuthatches. I replace the oriole feeders with feeders for suet and Peanut Pick-Outs to entice Red-breasted Nuthatches, woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches and Black-capped Chickadees. Though disguised in their dull olive-yellow winter plumage, we do have American Goldfinches in the yard all winter. Adding a feeder filled with Nyjer™ & Chips will provide more feeding volume just in case it's a winter that brings redpolls and Pine Siskins here in numbers. I also sprinkle some Nyjer™ & Chips on the ground for the Dark-eyed Juncos that return in September.

Changing Up Food Offerings

A favorite fall activity at our house is watching the Blue Jays cache peanuts in the shell and whole corn kernels. I prefer to feed Blue Jays at their own feeding station about 20 feet from the other feeders.

This allows them to visit without disturbing the smaller birds. Blue Jays warn other birds of impending danger from predators like owls, hawks, cats and snakes. We have often heard them call the alarm and send the other birds fleeing, saving them from hawks like the



Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks during the winter months. Flocks of migrating grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds move through Minnesota until late October. Feeders filled with golden safflower seem to be less inviting to grackles, starlings and Red-wings but the Northern Cardinals, goldfinches, chickadees, House Finches and others love it. After fall migration is completed, I might switch to a no-mess seed like Medium Sunflower Chips or Kracker Jax. These have no shells, leave no mess and won't germinate in the spring. The pre-shelled seeds provide for quick energy for less effort and help birds to survive severe weather.

Gardening, Keeping Autumn Birds in Mind

Fall garden cleanup commences but I leave the stalks and seed heads standing of the rudbeckia, sunflower, bee balm, aster and coneflower. They are a fall feast for goldfinches and chickadees. When trimming shrubs, leaving V-shaped branches encourages American Robins and cardinals to nest in the spring. Creating a brush pile in the back corner of the lot provides cover for the birds and protection from predators, wind and weather.



Autumn brings Cedar Waxwings, robins and cardinals to berry-producing bushes and trees like the high bush cranberry, red osier dogwood and crabapples. Their visits to the birdbath are a delight.

Preparing the Heated Birdbath

At some point the heated birdbath will be needed. If the bath has lime deposits, I fill it with water and white vinegar (50:50), let it sit overnight and scrub it out with a birdbath brush in the morning. I hope for a long, beautiful fall with no need for the heated birdbath, but it will be cleaned and ready to go when needed. ■



Minnetonka All Seasons Wild Bird Store manager Carol Chenault has been helping our customers since 2003 and feeding birds for as long as she can remember.

Myth: You should take your birdhouses down in winter because birds don't use them.

Fact: While it's true that some small critters may make themselves at home in a birdhouse, small birds may also use them as shelter in the winter.

Myth: Birds migrate during the day so they can see where they're going.

Fact: Many of the larger birds take advantage of the thermals that develop during the day. Most land birds migrate at night, including warblers, catbirds, orioles, and blackbirds. Some birds will migrate at either time, including swans, loons, geese, ducks, hummingbirds, swifts, and swallows.

MORE MIGRATION FACTS

✧ Birds migrate in the fall as the availability of resources begins to dwindle.

✧ Long-distance migration patterns have evolved over thousands of years.

✧ Migration can be triggered by a combination of factors, including changes in day length, temperature, food supplies and genetic predisposition.

✧ How birds navigate isn't fully understood, but likely relies on a combination of senses.

✧ Scientists employ tools such as banding, satellite tracking and geolocators to study migration.

Source: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology; allaboutbirds.org/the-basics-how-why-and-where-of-bird-migration

STAFF PICKS

Suet Solutions

As migrating birds stop in your backyard for a fill-up on the way south, make sure you offer plenty of energy-rich suet to help fuel their flights. Your year-round birds appreciate the extra calories needed to stay warm on colder evenings, too.

Caged Suet Feeder Cuts Critter Raids

The **Squirrel-Proof Double Suet Feeder** deters gray squirrels and large birds from reaching suet cakes and seed cakes. Fill with suet cakes or **Bugs, Nuts and Fruit cakes**. For extra squirrel deterrence, use **golden safflower seed cakes** or **Insect and Hot Pepper suet cakes**. This feeder attracts clinging birds such as woodpeckers, nuthatches, goldfinches and chickadees. Durable metal construction has a weather-resistant finish and the bronze tone lid helps to deflect the rain and snow.



Four Cake Fly-Through Feeder For Fewer Fillings

This fly-through feeder holds four suet cakes with the option of adding a seed cylinder in the middle on the provided post. The antiqued copper roof and powder-coated metal components are durable and weather resistant. The mesh bottom allows for water drainage. Using **Insect and Hot Pepper suet**, **golden safflower seed cakes** and a **golden safflower seed cylinder** makes this feeder attractive to goldfinches, woodpeckers, chickadees and more, while making it less attractive to squirrels. ■



2-in-1 Suet/Hopper Feeder Simplifies Filling



This two-in-one feeder can hold 2 suet or seed cakes and 3 quarts of seed. The feeder is almost maintenance free since it is made of durable recycled material. The bottom of the feeder is made of rust-resistant, powder-coated metal that features small drainage holes. It is guaranteed

never to fade, crack, or split.

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.