



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Volume 29 Issue 5 | September/October 2022

ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE

Bird Wings

Chirps
+
Seasonal Notes

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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.

FEATURE ARTICLE

By Guest Contributor **KATRINA HASE**

Autumn Birds

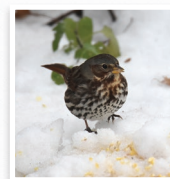
Autumn ushers in shorter days, crisp evening air, glowing tree canopies and gathering flocks of migratory birds. It also brings an abundance and variety of birds to our backyards and beyond.

Orioles and Catbirds

In the first days of September, I may get one last burst of activity at my jelly feeders from Baltimore Orioles before they abruptly take their leave for warmer climates. Gray Catbirds also visit, lingering a bit longer into September to dine on local berries before they head south.

Hummingbirds

Hummingbirds begin a parade of visits to my nectar feeders in September: first are the adults and their young that resided nearby all summer. As they leave, a mix of adults and young from northern Minnesota arrive. The parade continues into October; I make sure to keep multiple nectar feeders full and clean for their visits. A **Ruby Sipper window feeder** provides for some gorgeous close-up photographs of these delicate birds!



A Fox Sparrow enjoyed cracked corn in 2020's late October snow

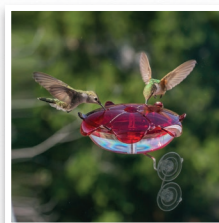
Sparrows

Throughout September and into October, migrating Fox Sparrows, Chipping Sparrows, Song Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows and the occasional Harris's Sparrows kick around the yard and forage under feeders for food; I scatter

cracked corn and **white millet** to help them fuel up for their flights. My *Peterson Field Guide* takes up residence by the kitchen window to aid in identification.

Warblers

Warblers dart around in tree canopies and shrubs around my home at this time as well, occasionally dipping in for a visit to my birdbath. The confounding mix of males, females and juveniles can make identification difficult, but they're fun to observe nevertheless!



Ruby Sipper window hummingbird feeder

Continued on page 2...

Golden Safflower is Back!

Golden Safflower is back in stock. After a span of not being able to procure our most popular seed offering, we have now been promised a steady supply of Golden Safflower.

We know many of you have been missing your golden and have been asking regularly if it's back in stock and we are thrilled to be able to finally say "yes".

We want to thank you all for your patience and patronage. We hear about so many supply chain issues these days, but this outage was caused by crop failure due to severe drought in Montana, which is the only place Golden Safflower is grown.

Things are looking much better this year and we are hoping for a bountiful fall harvest in October. Fall migration is getting into full swing and our avian friends passing through will appreciate being able to feast on these easy-to-crack, oil-rich seeds once again.

Dave Netten



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Share your photos for our in-store displays and social posts! Send digital files and credit info to: carol@wildbirdstore.net

AUTUMN BIRDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

More Sparrows!

In late September and into October, White-throated Sparrows begin to arrive. I smile as I hear their whistling, rambling song drift in through my open windows. Their sparrow cousins, the Dark-eyed Juncos, also arrive. Both species are appreciative of the **Finches' Choice** I've scattered for them.



This Dark-eyed Junco arrived mid-October in 2017



White-throated Sparrows may continue to linger into winter



Encourage Blue Jays to hang around by offering in-shell peanuts and peanut pickouts

Blue Jays

This time of year is also when I tend to see larger flocks of foraging Blue Jays pass through. I encourage them to stick around by serving peanut pick-outs and in-shell peanuts, a high-energy source. It's fun to watch them busily cache the peanuts throughout the yard!

Cedar Waxwings

Like Blue Jays, Cedar Waxwings travel to where food supplies are in abundance. In a typical autumn, I'll see several flocks come through my yard, intermittently feasting on the fruit of my chokecherry tree and the juniper shrubs that line my yard. I keep my **heated birdbath** clean and full (turned on once the frost comes), to entice them close to my window for better viewing.



Woodpeckers

Pileated, Downy, Hairy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers also make frequent visits in the fall. I make sure to swap my no-melt suet dough for regular suet cakes. I've noticed they give preference to **Mealworm + Peanut Suet**

(shown right) from Pacific Bird and Supply Co. when I put it in a double suet feeder with a plain suet cake. Typically I swap my tail prop-style feeder with an **upside-down suet feeder** (shown left) in September to discourage ravenous grackles and blackbirds.



Swans and Sandhills

From October and into November, flocks of Trumpeter Swans and Sandhill Cranes (shown) will begin to form. No fall is complete for me until I venture out to Crex Meadows in Grantsburg, Wisconsin—it's absolutely magnificent to see so many of these elegant birds in one place! ■



Bird Wings: WONDERS OF ENGINEERING

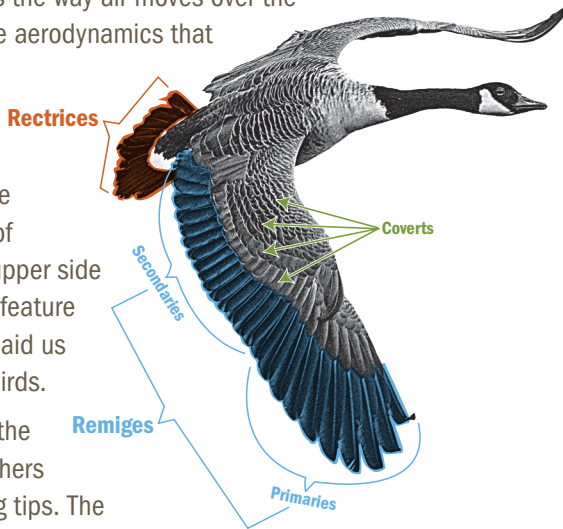
Wings are unique to birds and are one of the most dominant features of a bird's anatomy. The feathers that form wings provide many functions: they insulate, form patterns and color for camouflage, and are instrumental in mating displays. Most importantly, they allow for the miracle of flight.

Aerodynamics

The leading edge of the wing cuts through the wind allowing the air to flow on both sides of the wing causing lift. The airfoil shape of bird's wings is extremely streamlined. The flight feathers consist of those of the wing, called *remiges*, and those of the tail, called *rectrices*. Their shape determines the way air moves over the wings creating the aerodynamics that enable flight.

Wing Anatomy

- **Coverts** include multiple rows of feathers. The upper side feathers often feature wing bars that aid us in identifying birds.
- **Primaries** are the long outer feathers nearer the wing tips. The primaries attach to the bones of the outer wing and correspond to the location of the human hand on the arm. They propel the bird forward and help it steer.
- **Secondaries** are the inner flight feathers located closer to the bird's body at the bottom of the wing. The secondaries are attached to the ulna, the "forearm" of the wing. They help with lift and soaring.
- Tail feathers are used for lift, steering, balancing and braking. Tail feathers are connected to the *pygostyle*, a bone at the base of the spine.



Being aware of the shape of a bird's wings in flight and the way it flies—flapping, gliding, undulating flight pattern, diving, hovering etc will aid you in identifying birds in flight.



Four Basic Wing Shapes

The shape and structure of a bird's wings determine its function and allow for different types of flight.

- 1) **Elliptical wings** are round, compact wings common to songbirds. Such wings are specialized for quick take-offs, short bursts of speed and tight maneuvering—excellent for avoiding predators.
- 2) **Passive soaring wings** have long primary and secondary feathers used for slow, easy gliding. The stiff wing tips of the long primary feathers spread out, creating gaps to catch the thermals—vertical columns of hot air—and help the bird to rise higher. Eagles and hawks have passive soaring wings. Long, broad wings have a large wing area which deflects more air downward making it easier to create lift with even minor movements of air.
- 3) **Active soaring wings** are long, narrow wings for catching breezes and riding the wind, enabling birds to fly without flapping their wings for long periods of time. However, these birds—like gulls and seabirds—are more dependent on wind currents than passive soaring birds.
- 4) **High-speed wings** are long and thin and are shorter than those of active soarers. These birds are incredibly fast and can maintain their speed longer than birds with elliptical wings. Included in this group are ducks, falcons, swifts, terns and sandpipers.

Hovering

Hummingbirds are the only birds that truly hover. Their nerves and muscles are especially adapted for mind-boggling speed of movement. Hovering in flight as hummingbirds do uses the most energy of all types of bird flight. Hummingbirds must create lift by the movement of their wings alone; they aren't able to take advantage of the lift created by the movement of air as a function of flapping or gliding type wings.



Other birds "hover" by remaining motionless as they fly into the wind with a velocity equal to that of the wind, while adjusting the angle of their tail and wings. Using this skill, birds like kestrels, Belted Kingfishers and harriers can hover for short periods of time. ■

Seasonal Notes

By Minnetonka Manager CAROL CHENAULT

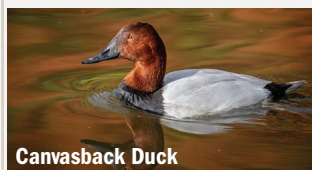
September: WEEK BY WEEK

| Week 1 | 2nd Week | 3rd Week | 4th Week |
|--|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ September 1 is the first day of meteorological fall. It's typically drier and less humid with brilliant blue skies. The sun is 20% less intense by the end of the month. ✓ Migrating hummingbirds continue to visit nectar feeders into October. ✓ American Robins, American Crows, Wood Ducks, Wild Turkeys and others eat wild grapes. ✓ Crows gather in communal groups. ✓ Warbler migration continues: look for Chestnut-sided and Magnolia Warblers. <p><i>Tip:</i> Switch to White or Golden Safflower while grackles and red-wings are flocking in migration. It is less appealing to them.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Now is peak bird migration over Hawk Ridge in Duluth. Clear skies and a NW wind provide the best conditions for viewing the fall migration. ✓ Zinnias provide seeds for goldfinches and monarch butterflies and bees visit wild asters and Autumn Joy sedum. ✓ Grasshoppers, crickets and katydids replace bird songs with their chorus of sounds. ✓ The first common milkweed pods burst open and silky hairs carry the seeds on the wind. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Some Blue Jays migrate south out of MN but others from Canada will be here all winter. In-shell peanuts are a favorite food for their winter caches. ✓ The first Dark-eyed Juncos arrive. ✓ Squirrels are making nests of leafy branches in the trees. <p><i>Tip:</i> Sprinkle Finches' Choice on the ground for juncos and returning native sparrows.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ First Snow Buntings return. ✓ Birdbaths may ice over at night. ✓ Watch for the arrival of White-throated Sparrows as they feed on the ground under feeding stations. ✓ Groups of Common Loons gather on area lakes in preparation for migration to the Gulf Coast or Atlantic Seaboard. <p><i>Tip:</i> Keep Nyjer feeders full and fresh for goldfinches, our latest nesting songbirds.</p> |



October: WEEK BY WEEK

| Week 1 | 2nd Week | 3rd Week | 4th Week |
|--|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Late-migrating hummingbirds visit nectar feeders. They usually fly by day but can travel long distances at night. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds winter from South Texas to Costa Rica. ✓ A larger influx of Dark-eyed Juncos appear in backyards. American Coots gather on lakes. ✓ Large flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds and grackles migrate overhead. ✓ Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets appear in woodlands as they migrate. The last Yellow-rumped Warblers, Palm Warblers, vireos, and flycatchers leave MN for the winter. <p><i>Tip:</i> Take time to clean out or take down your birdhouses. If you leave the houses up over the winter, open the side/bottom of the bird house to prevent mice from winter nesting.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Late-season butterflies like clouded sulfurs, red admirals, painted ladies and a few monarchs occasionally land on New England asters and Mexican sunflowers. <p><i>Tip:</i> Give your feeders a good cleaning before winter. Use a solution of one part bleach to 10 parts hot water or a mild solution of dish detergent. Clean feeders inside and out, including all feeding ports, perches, lids and platforms. Rinse the feeders with clear water for at least 10 seconds and make sure that it's completely dry before refilling. We offer a bird feeder cleaning service if you'd rather have us do it!</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Toads dig down a foot or more to stay below the frost line. ✓ Common Loon migration peaks in mid-October. ✓ Fox Sparrows and White-throated Sparrows join Dark-eyed Juncos feeding on Finches' Choice on the ground under bird feeders. ✓ Waterfowl migration is in full swing: Redheads, Canvasbacks, Lesser Scaup and Northern Shovelers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Most chipmunks now enter burrows for hibernation. ✓ Though most deciduous trees are bare, the dark red and brown leaves of red oaks, pin oaks and white oaks persist. ✓ Bald and Golden Eagles, Rough-legged Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Northern Goshawks and Merlins migrate over Duluth's Hawk Ridge. ✓ Listen for the Tundra Swans migrating high overhead. <p><i>Tips:</i> It's time for heated birdbaths. Fill your heated bird bath with white vinegar and let it soak overnight in the house. Scrub it out to remove lime deposits and rinse before returning it outdoors.</p> |



Canvasback Duck