



# BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Volume 30 Issue 1 | January/February 2023

ALL SEASONS  
WILD BIRD  
STORE

## Winter Birding

+ Identify Visiting Birds  
+ 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

12981 Ridgedale Dr Ste. 103  
(Ridge Square North Shopping Center)  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
**952.473.4283**

New location—  
coming soon!

**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.

### WINTER BIRDING

By Bloomington Staff Member **DANIELLA COLLIER**

## Winter Birding Hotspots

There are many wonderful birds that you can only see by venturing out into places where the crisp air and crunchy white winter snow wait to greet us. Read on for birding hotspots in the Twin Cities and within greater Minnesota, as compiled from The Cornell Lab of Ornithology eBird project. You may be surprised at how close one may be to your own home!

### North Metro

If you live in the North Metro or happen to find yourself up there with a pair of binoculars at hand, **(1) Sucker Lake** and **Vadnais Lake** in Vadnais Heights, **(2) Tamarack Nature Center** in White Bear Township, and **(3) Tony Schmidt Regional Park** in Arden Hills are all great places to see a variety of birds throughout the winter months.

While many of our familiar backyard birds populate these locations, you can also look forward to seeing species such as: Trumpeter Swans, Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls, Red-tailed Hawks, Brown Creepers, Hermit Thrush, White-winged Crossbills, Northern Shrikes, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Merlins, Townsend's Solitaires, Common Redpolls, and many more.

### South Metro

The South Metro is home to many of the most active Twin Cities eBird hotspots including: **(4) Wood Lake Nature Center** in Richfield, **(5) Old Cedar Avenue Bridge** and **(6) Bass Ponds**

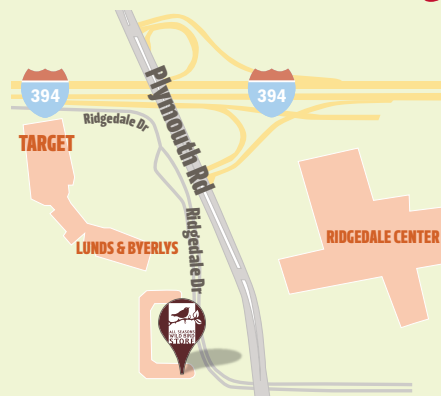


(both part of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge) in Bloomington, **(7) Lowry Nature Center** (part of Carver Park Reserve) in Victoria, and **(8) Carpenter Nature Center** in Hastings.

Similar to the North Metro, many of our usual backyard birds can be found throughout these locations along with Trumpeter Swans, Bald Eagles, Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls, Belted Kingfishers, Cooper's Hawks, Brown Creepers,

... continued on Page 2

## Wayzata Store is Moving!



Happy New Year! Many of you have probably heard the rumors or have been informed by our Wayzata in-store staff that we are moving due to redevelopment of the current property that we occupy.

We plan to be closed in our existing location on January 8 and open in the new location on January 10. Those dates are still fluid; we plan to announce finalized dates on our website, by email, and our social channels once we know for sure.

The new location is off of Plymouth Road and 394 in Minnetonka in the Ridgesquare North Mall (two doors down from *Nothing Bundt Cakes* and just south of *Lunds & Byerlys*).

We are really excited about our new home and look forward to welcoming all of our Wayzata customers there. Overall, we are approximately 2.7 miles directly east of our old location and feel it's a very convenient spot near many popular destinations that we feel will help us to continue to serve our current customers and hopefully attract a few new ones!

*~All and Dave Netten*

### Find us online!

Shop.wildbirdstore.com



@allseasonswildbirdstore



Facebook.com/WildBirdStore



bit.ly/3oOKbyT

Hermit Thrush, White-winged Crossbills, Northern Shrikes, Northern Harriers, Northern Flickers, Common Redpolls, Winter Wrens, Fox Sparrows, and many more.

Along with these hotspots, there is a winter birding gem located within the south metro and an unexpected one at that! If you are looking to add a Snowy Owl to your birding checklist, the **(9) Minneapolis Airport** (specifically the MSP Aircraft Viewing Area, Cargo Rd) has been a very reliable location for several years to see these beautiful birds. If you are extra lucky you may also see Merlins, Horned Larks, or Snow Buntings while visiting.

### Venturing Outside of the Metro

Planning on taking a trip outside of the Twin Cities during the first few months of the year? If you are heading south and have time, check out **Colvill Park** in Red Wing for great waterfowl birding and the **National Eagle Center** in Wabasha for winter Bald Eagle viewing. The National Eagle Center also does field trips and habitat tours where you can learn more about our national bird. Check out their website for more information: [nationaleaglecenter.org](http://nationaleaglecenter.org).

If you drive through or are near Houston Minnesota, stop by and check out the **International Owl Center**. Plan ahead if you'd like to go on one of their "Owl Prowls", as they book up quickly! You can find more information at [internationalowlcenter.org](http://internationalowlcenter.org).

### Sax-Zim Bog

One of the top places for winter birding will require a trip up north to the beautiful **Sax-Zim Bog**. Stop by the visitor center first and pick up a map and visit with fellow birders to find out what they've been seeing.

Evening Grosbeaks, Black-billed Magpies, Winter Wrens, Boreal Chickadees, Great Grey Owls, Pine Grosbeaks, Common Ravens, Purple Finches, Canada Jays, Black-backed Woodpeckers, Snow Buntings, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Ruffed Grouse, Northern Goshawks, Northern Hawk Owls, and many more amazing birds await you during the winter at the bog.

If you'd like someone else to show you the ropes for your first visit, you can also sign up for their birdwatching and raptor field trips on the Friends of Sax-Zim bog website: [saxzim.org/events](http://saxzim.org/events). ■



See additional article resources and map links at [Wildbirdstore.com/Blog](http://Wildbirdstore.com/Blog)

### NOTABLE eBIRD SIGHTINGS AT LOCAL HOTSPOTS (2020-22)

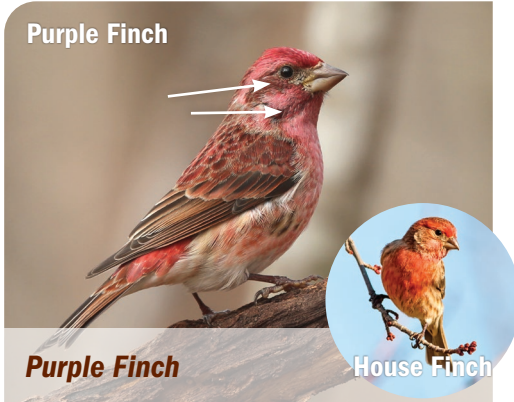
<b>Sucker Lake</b>	American Black Duck, Merlin, Sharp-shinned Hawk
<b>Vadnais Lake</b>	Common Goldeneye, Belted Kingfisher, Common Raven, Purple Finch, White-winged Crossbill, Hermit Thrush
<b>Tamarack Nature Center</b>	Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Great Horned Owl, Common Redpoll
<b>Tony Schmidt Regional Park</b>	Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Tufted Titmouse, Townsend's Solitaire, Common and Hoary Redpoll, Pine Siskin, Song Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, American Tree Sparrow
<b>Wood Lake Nature Center</b>	Great Horned Owl, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Flicker, White-winged Crossbill, Brown Creeper, Northern Shrike, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle, Wild Turkey
<b>Old Cedar Ave Bridge</b>	Virginia Rail, Rough-legged Hawk, Bald Eagles, Pileated Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Common Redpoll
<b>Bass Ponds</b>	Gadwall, American Black Duck, Common Goldeneye, Wilson's Snipe, American White Pelican, Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Winter Wren, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow
<b>Lowry Nature Center</b>	Ring-necked Pheasant, Townsend's Solitaire, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Shrike, Cedar Waxwing, Fox Sparrow, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Barred Owl



# IDENTIFY *Winter Visitors*

Minnesota hosts occasional influxes of bird species in the winter that don't usually frequent our area. Called *irruptions*, these influxes can occur in response to an increase in species' populations or a change in movement patterns based on food availability. Below are some species you may be fortunate to observe in your backyard as a result of irruptions.

Purple Finch



Purple Finch

House Finch

**LOOK FOR:**

- Medium: 6"
- Color is more raspberry-hued than House Finch's orange-red coloration
- Dark jaw stripe, dark ear patch

**ATTRACT:**

- Nyjer®, #1 Select Hearts, Finches' Choice
- Tube or tray feeder



Evening Grosbeak

**LOOK FOR:**

- Large: 8"
- Heavy, conical bill
- Short-tailed
- Large white wing patches

**ATTRACT:**

- Golden safflower, Joe's Mix
- Tray feeder



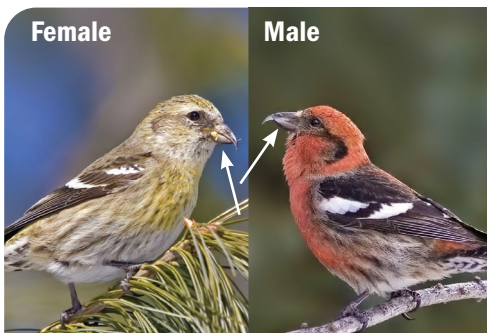
Red-breasted Nuthatch

**LOOK FOR:**

- Small: 4.5"
- Broad black line through eye
- Rusty chest and underparts

**ATTRACT:**

- Suet, Mr. Bird Bugs, Nuts & Fruit cylinder, dried mealworms, peanut pick-outs
- Seed cylinder, suet, tube or tray feeder



White-winged Crossbill

**LOOK FOR:**

- Medium: 6.5"
- Thick, curved bill with crossed tips
- Two large white wingbars
- Short tail

**ATTRACT:**

- Nyjer®, #1 Select Hearts, Finches' Choice
- Finch or tube feeders, hopper feeders



Common Redpoll

**LOOK FOR:**

- Small: 5.25"
- Bright red forehead and black chin; male has pinkish breast
- Smaller than a House Finch

**ATTRACT:**

- Nyjer®, #1 Select Hearts, Finches' Choice
- Finch feeders or tube feeders



Pine Siskin

**LOOK FOR:**

- Small: 5"
- Touch of yellow on wings, side of tails
- Heavily streaked body
- Noticeably small and pointy beak

**ATTRACT:**

- Nyjer®, #1 Select Hearts, Finches' Choice
- Finch or tube feeders, hopper feeders



# January & February



Common Redpoll

Winter visiting birds like **Common Redpolls, Pine Siskins, Purple Finches and Dark-eyed Juncos** may join our resident **American Goldfinches and House Finches** at feeders. Nomadic, mixed foraging flocks will be abundant one day and scarce the next. Keep feeders with Nyjer and Nyjer mixes full of fresh seed. Empty any feeders that have been out

in the weather for 6 weeks onto the ground for the juncos and native sparrows. Refill with fresh seed.

**Listen for the calls of the nuthatch, Northern Cardinal, Black-capped Chickadee and the drumming of woodpeckers.**

The fee-bee call of the chickadee is interpreted as *spring-soon* by some bird watchers. Great Horned Owls are hooting to declare territory.

**Red-breasted Nuthatches**, permanent residents in the northeast and northcentral regions of Minnesota, will visit suet, peanut and seed feeders in central and eastern Minnesota during the winter.

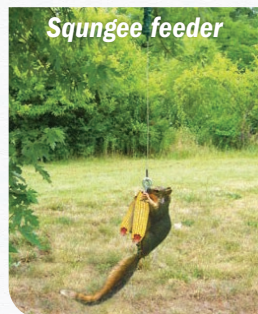
**Over-wintering American Robins eat the fruit of crabapple and hackberry trees.**

Put **dried mealworms** and **Berry Nutty** in a ground feeder or under pine trees to help them through the winter.



Berry Nutty

**Gray squirrels can eat 40 pounds of acorns in a winter.** Feed the squirrels and entertain your household with a **Squngee** or a wreath feeder filled with corn cobs and in-shell peanuts.



Squngee feeder



Seed cylinder



Dried mealworms

Use a **Mr. Bird compressed seed cylinder** to prevent birds from “bill sweeping” the seed onto the ground and deer from licking seed out of the feeder. A bonus: Northern Cardinals love these feeders!



**To deter squirrels, use Flaming Hot Feast blocks or cylinders.** Birds have few taste buds and aren't bothered by the hot pepper added to the seed.

**Birds must refuel quickly during cold weather.**

Feeders filled with a combination of dried mealworms, peanut pick-outs and #1 Select Hearts attract chickadees, nuthatches and woodpeckers galore!

**Suet is a must during the winter.**

The **recycled double suet feeder** has an extended “tail prop” which provides woodpeckers as large as the Pileated Woodpecker space to prop their stiff tail feathers against it, allowing them better leverage for pecking the suet. The **birch log suet plug feeder** is a natural-looking feeder that also accommodates woodpeckers large and small with enough length for tail propping. Fill with suet plugs—simply unwrap, microwave for 5 seconds, then pack the suet into the holes of the feeder.



Recycled double suet feeder,  
birch log suet plug feeders  
and suet plugs

**Provide a clean water source with a heated birdbath.**

Use **Bird Bath Protector** in it to keep the bath clean and fresh. Refill your heated birdbath using cold water to reduce evaporation. Over-wintering American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds are attracted to heated birdbaths, as are the American Goldfinches (in their brownish winter plumage) and many others birds as well.



**Blue Jays love peanuts in the shell**, as do Red-bellied Woodpeckers. Try the **wreath peanut feeder** and watch the fun as they pull peanuts out of the wire coil.



Wreath peanut feeder

**Signs of spring!** Horned Larks, one of our earliest returning migrants, begin to arrive.

Watch for them along roadsides in the country. Also watch for male American Goldfinches to begin changing into their bright yellow plumage. A welcome sign of the seasons changing!

**Have you participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count?**

Get more information at [gbbc.birdcount.org](http://gbbc.birdcount.org).

**Have an idea for a future issue of *Birds-Eye View*?** Photos and articles may be submitted by email to [carol@wildbirdstore.net](mailto:carol@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.