



ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE

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BIRD'S-EYE *View*

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Birds of a Blue Hue **Sharing Outdoor Spaces** *Seasonal Notes*

FEATURE ARTICLE

By Minnetonka Manager **CAROL CHENAULT**

Sharing Outdoor *Living Spaces*

Some everyday activities can be a threat to birds or scare them from your yard. With a little thought and care you can share your outdoor living spaces, yard and gardens with the birds.

Remove Threats

- Separate bird-friendly areas from children's play areas. This will encourage bird activity while teaching young children about sharing space with wildlife.
- Be sure to use a squirrel baffle on bird house poles and feeding stations to prevent predators from disturbing birds.
- Manage your pets. Pet activity in the yard may cause birds to flee. They will return when the coast is clear.
- Statues, garden spinners and pinwheels, hanging art chains, rain chains, windsocks and garden flags can frighten

birds. Large bird figures and garden stakes may appear to be predators or competition and keep birds away. Use these items in other parts of the yard, well away from feeding stations and bird houses.

- Unexpected noises like wind chimes, leaf blowers, and noise



Moving garden decorations can startle birds.

from road or house construction can spook birds. Birds use their keen hearing to listen for threats, warnings from other birds sounding the alarm about a predator in the area, and other communication. The air conditioning unit turning on suddenly or music from the open windows may frighten them. Some of these disturbances can be minimized by feeder and bird house locales. We had very little bird activity in our yard the summer there was an extensive road work project nearby. The rumble and hum of large vehicles was not welcoming to the birds.

(continued on page 2)

Community and Connection

As co-owner of All Seasons Wild Bird Store, I am proud to highlight our dedication to fostering a connection with nature within our communities.

Our recent collaborations with local scouting groups and nature centers, through all your generous Feeder Swap donations, aim to instill a deep-seated appreciation for wildlife among our youth. These efforts complement our exciting kid-centered community kit-building events coming up this summer in Eagan and Minnetonka, designed not only as educational tools but also as gateways for families to engage with the natural world.

These initiatives are at the heart of our mission to bring the joy and wonder of nature closer to children and families. In an era where digital distractions are rampant,

encouraging outdoor activities and a connection with our environment is crucial for the well-being and holistic development of children. By involving them in activities like bird feeder kit building, we're laying the groundwork for a lifelong appreciation of nature and wildlife conservation.

I extend my thanks to you, our customers, for your continued support, which makes these community outreach efforts possible. Your patronage not only fuels our passion for wildlife but also amplifies our impact in the community, inspiring a new generation to cherish and protect the natural world.



Earth Day clean-up draws crowd in Orono

BY TROY ABLE
The All Seasons Wild Bird Store provided about 50 refurbished birdfeeders, seed, and an informational poster on Avian Flu. The store was the only one in the area who volunteered his time, expertise, and labor for the event. The store also provided the "All Seasons Wild Bird Store" sign for the event. The store also provided the "All Seasons Wild Bird Store" sign for the event. The store also provided the "All Seasons Wild Bird Store" sign for the event.

Previously run article about donations made possible by your Feeder Swap contributions.

On another note, I hope you'll enjoy the debut of our refreshed Bird's-Eye View newsletter! Expect the same wild bird and seasonal content, just with an updated look.

Dave Netten
Co-owner, All Seasons Wild Bird Store

Birds & Wellness Listening to bird song has healing benefits: stress reduction, mood enhancement, cognitive restoration, and a connection to nature. Read more here: <https://shorturl.at/ekz56>

FEATURE ARTICLE (continued from page 1)

- Backyard lighting can disturb nocturnal birds like owls, as well as birds who roost in trees and nest boxes at night. A brightly lit yard is also a distraction for migrating birds and can cause disorientation leading to window strikes or exhaustion from excessive flight.

Consider Birds' Environmental Needs



- Using weed barriers like landscaping cloth or plastics makes it difficult for ground-feeding birds to search for seeds and insects. Robins, thrashers, mourning doves and native sparrows, like the Chipping Sparrow, will be more active in your yard without these barriers.

- Most birds feed their young insects, caterpillars, bugs or worms. Overuse of insecticides will reduce these food sources as well as the variety and number of birds you see in your yard. Herbicides kill off the clover, dandelions and other weeds that are great spring food sources for bees and later, seed sources for birds.
- Take care when pruning trees and bushes. Leaving V-shaped branches in the bushes can encourage birds, like robins, to use that structure as the start of their nest. Leaving dead branches or snags encourages woodpeckers to make housing for themselves and other birds in which to reside and raise young.
- Keeping your birdbaths and feeders clean is vital to hosting birds. Seed that has been in the feeders for six weeks or more is likely too dry to be enticing. Use **Bird Bath Protector** in your birdbath and change the water daily. Clean out bird houses after the young fledge and you may host two to three broods a year in your bluebird

- or wren houses! (Chickadees only nest once—in early spring.) Nectar and jelly should be kept fresh. I use **Naturally Fresh Hummingbird Nectar Concentrate with Nectar Defender** in both my hummingbird and oriole nectar feeders. The micronutrient copper—a nutrient that hummingbirds naturally consume—deters the growth of contaminants and keeps the nectar fresh for up to 14 days.
- Consider adding native trees, bushes and flowers to your yard to invite birds and pollinators to share the space with you. Hackberry trees, white pine, red-osier dogwood, cardinal flower and butterfly weed are some favorites. They grace the landscape and feed the wildlife as we enjoy the space together. ■



Kind of *Blue*

A look at some of Minnesota's common sky-hued backyard birds.

Unlike red or yellow feathers, which get their colors from pigments called carotenoids, blue feathers are notable for their absence of pigments. Instead, the color we perceive as blue is due to a trick of the light as it interacts with structures within the feathers and reflects back to our eyes. Specifically, 3-dimensional patterns of keratin within the wing structure cancel out red and yellow wavelengths, while amplifying the blue wavelengths that reflect back to our eyes.

So, unlike Northern Cardinals or American Goldfinches, whose pigments derive from foods they eat, no amount of blueberries will alter the plumage of an Eastern Bluebird or Blue Jay.

Minnesota hosts a number of birds that appear predominantly blue, including: Eastern Bluebirds, Blue Jays, swallows, and Indigo Buntings. Here's a little about where to find these blue beauties and how to attract them.

Eastern Bluebirds

The 7-in. breeding male Eastern Bluebird is characterized by a rusty chest, white belly



Eastern Bluebird male

and a blue back from head to tip of tail.

Females are a duller blue. Bluebirds are common throughout Minnesota during spring, summer and fall, and may even overwinter locally

and in southern parts of the state. Look for them in areas where there are scattered trees among open spaces. To attract: offer a source of water for birds traveling through. If your yard has a significant amount of open space, consider placing a pair of bluebird houses 10–25 feet apart to attract a nesting pair. See our *Attracting Bluebirds* handout in stores for more information.

Blue Jays

A larger, 11-in. bird with an expressive crest and black necklace, this outgoing bird is blue from head to tail feathers, with grayish white underparts. A bold white stripe and spots break up the blue wings. Both male

and females display this coloration year-round. Blue Jays are happy to visit feeders serving whole or cracked corn or peanuts

(in or out of the shell). Place feeders for Blue Jays away from your songbird feeding station for best results.



Blue Jay

Swallows

Tree Swallow breeding males are mid-sized, 5.75-in. birds with an iridescent, steely blue-green back and white below. Females are a slightly duller blue. They're



Tree Swallow male

common in open fields near water. Tree Swallows will often nest in one or both nest boxes put out to attract bluebirds, but are uncommon at feeders.

Barn Swallows—male and female—are slightly larger (6.75 in.) and have iridescent



Indigo Bunting male

bluish-black backs with rusty throats and golden bellies. You'll most often find them nesting in the eaves of structures or rock ledges; look for their distinctive mud-based cup-like nests. Like Tree Swallows, Barn Swallows are uncommon at feeders.



Barn Swallow male

Indigo Buntings

The crown jewel of cerulean birds, the breeding male Indigo Bunting is a 5.5-in. bird with an entire plumage of blue, varying in hues from blue-green to true blue to royal blue, depending on the light. Indigo Buntings can be difficult to spot during the summer, as they prefer wooded and overgrown brush. Be ready with white millet in feeders and on the ground in the early spring and fall to attract them during migration. ■



Indigo Bunting male

Jim Weisman

May & June

Find tips and seasonal updates online!

instagram: @allseasonswildbirdstore

facebook.com/allseasonswildbirdstore

youtube.com/@allseasonswildbirdstore

When adorning your outdoor living space, do not place decorations such as garden spinners, chimes or flags near bird feeders and bird houses.

Early May sees the return of warblers, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and the continued return of orioles and hummingbirds.



Place bird houses/nest boxes well away from feeding stations. Put out at least two bird houses—one for chickadees and one for wrens. See our *Nest Box Basics* flyer.

Use calcium-rich suet during egg-laying season, such as: Pacific Bird and Supply suet cakes and MN-made Woodpecker Products Suet Plugs.



Discourage birds from repeatedly fighting with their reflections by covering windows with landscaping cloth or protective netting for bushes. Cover side mirrors of cars with plastic bags when not in use.



Change nectar in hummingbird and oriole feeders every three days. Or, use liquid or powder nectar with Hummingbird Feeder Fresh Nectar Defender already added to keep your nectar fresh longer.

Repel ants: hang nectar feeders from an ant moat filled with water or from an Antguard. Or, apply Nectar Fortress Natural Ant Repellent gel in a ring around the pole or hanger to create a chemical ant barrier.

Orchard Orioles return, as do Common Nighthawks, Eastern Kingbirds, and Least Flycatchers. The arrival of the Eastern Wood Pewee the last week of May means spring bird migration is coming to a close.

Wood Ducks jump from nest boxes around Memorial Day and into the first week of June. 8 a.m. is a good time to be watching nest boxes!



Meteorological summer starts June 1st, the start of the 90 warmest days of the year and the first of a three-month stretch that is historically snow-free. Astronomical summer begins June 21st.

Orioles feed nestlings in June. They feed caterpillars to their young and are especially attracted to mealworm feeders while they have nestlings.



June is a great time to serve no-melt suet, as fledgling Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers come to feeders with the adults.

Prevent just-fledged juvenile birds from hitting your windows by applying Window Alerts. Window Alerts cling to the outside of the window.

Mid-June begins firefly season. Minnesota hosts 15 species of fireflies!



Scrub birdbaths with 9 parts water/1 part bleach and rinse well. Add a capful of Bird Bath Protector to the just-cleaned bath to safely treat 1/2 to 2 gallons of water.

A Water Wiggler attracts more birds to a birdbath and prevents mosquitoes from laying their eggs by moving the water constantly.



Adult Canada Geese and Trumpeter Swans begin to shed their flight feathers the third week of June, entering their flightless stage of summer.



In late June, many birds are fledging young from the nest: Northern Cardinals, House Wrens, Song Sparrows, Blue Jays and orioles.



Store seed in the freezer or in metal cans in the garage, shed or on the deck. Hang a moth trap on the underside of the lid. See your neighborhood store for cans and moth traps.

Eastern Bluebirds will nest 2-3 times in the same nest box if you remove nesting material and debris after the young fledge the nest.



Goldfinches are our latest nesting songbird. Hang a new Best Nest Builder to provide nesting material.