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WILD BIRD
STORE

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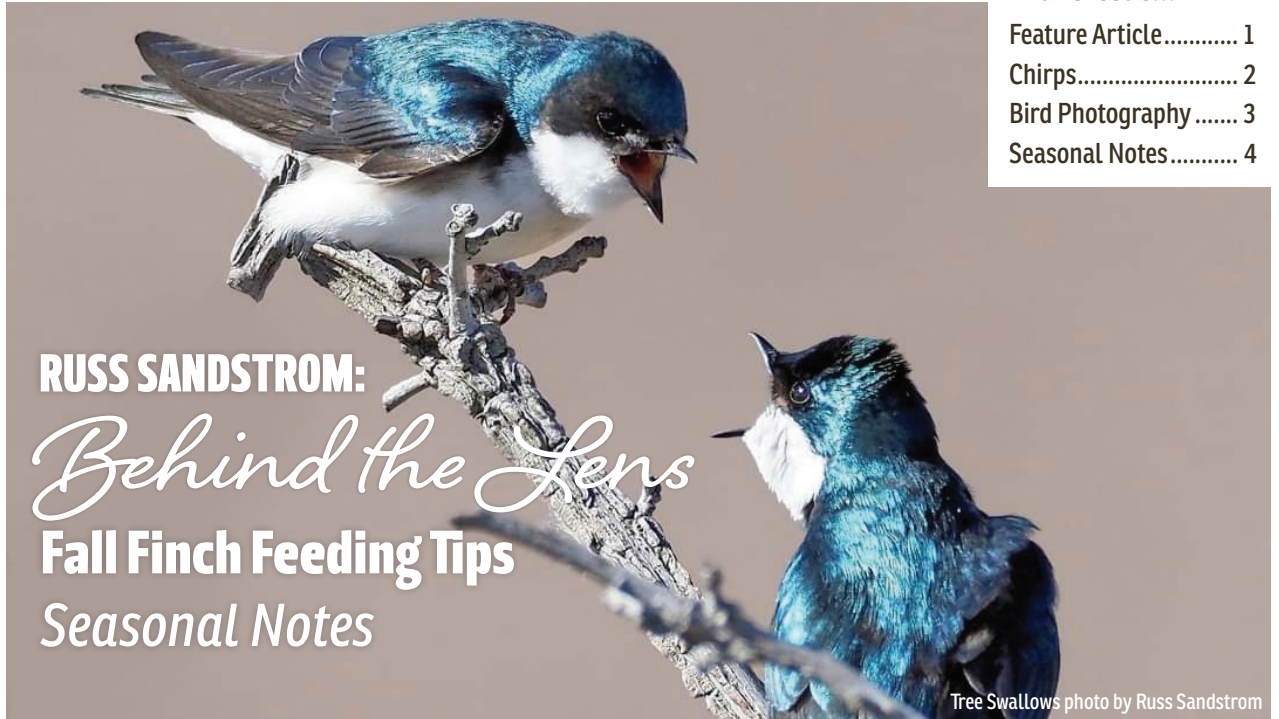
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BIRD'S-EYE *View*

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Tree Swallows photo by Russ Sandstrom

RUSS SANDSTROM:

Behind the Lens

Fall Finch Feeding Tips

Seasonal Notes

FEATURE ARTICLE

By Minnetonka Manager **CAROL CHENAULT**

Expert tips for **Fall Finch Feeding**

Autumn is an active time for finches, especially for late-nesting American Goldfinches. Here are some tips for attracting and feeding finches this autumn.

Expert tip: During nesting season (July and August) and throughout September, goldfinches are particularly drawn to Nyjer® and Nyjer® mixes as they feed young and teach them how to forage.



Nyjer® and Nyjer® mixes are best served in a mesh, pouch, or a tube-style feeder that has very small slits. One advantage to using feeders especially designed for Nyjer® is that the

smaller feeding openings exclude larger birds with bulkier bills. House Finches, Indigo Buntings, Pine Siskins, Common Redpolls and Black-capped Chickadees will also feed from these feeders.

Goldfinches are primarily seed eaters. One of their favorite foods is Nyjer® (shown), which is imported and heat-treated so it will not germinate. It's a highly nutritious, oily, energy-packed food.



Goldfinches time their nesting to coincide with the ripening of the Canadian thistle seeds. Nyjer® seed (*Guizotia abyssinica*) resembles the seed of the native Canadian thistle plant—the actual plant does not—

which may explain their affinity for Nyjer®.

Goldfinches come to feeders year round. You may not recognize them in their autumn plumage, when adult males trade their bright yellow feathers for dull brown.

Expert Tip: Any Nyjer® or Nyjer® mix left in your feeder for more than six weeks will likely be too dry and unappealing to finches.

Because Nyjer® is imported and heat treated, it does dry out faster in a feeder exposed to the weather. Goldfinches especially need the oil in the seed to easily swallow and digest, as well as for the nutrient (Continued on page 2 . . .)

A Heartfelt Thank You

To our cherished customers and valued employees.

As we approach the end of a truly remarkable spring and summer, we wanted to take a moment to express our deep gratitude to you, our cherished customers. Since taking over the North Oaks location in March, we've been overwhelmed by the warm welcome and support you've shown us. Your enthusiasm and passion for birding have made our transition smoother than we could have ever imagined.

This year, nature has been especially generous, with a vibrant migration season, flourishing growing conditions, and favorable weather patterns, bringing an abundance of wildlife to our backyards. It's been a joy to

witness these beautiful moments with you, whether through shared stories in our stores or through the sights and sounds we've all experienced firsthand. We are grateful to play a part in these moments, offering a place of respite and connection with nature during times when the world seems to pull us in so many different directions.

We are also incredibly thankful for our dedicated and experienced family of staff members, whose knowledge and commitment help make our stores more than just a place to shop—they make them a place of community. Their passion for what they do inspires us every day, and we know it inspires

you as well.

Most of all, we are grateful that you continue to choose All Seasons Wild Bird Store for all your birding needs. Your trust in us to provide quality products and knowledgeable service means the world to us. Thank you for supporting our small business and for being a part of our birding family. We look forward to many more seasons of shared wonder and discovery with you.

—
Dave Netten, Co-owner,
All Seasons Wild Bird Store



FEATURE ARTICLE (continued from page 1)

value, so it's important to make an effort to keep the seed fresh.

Expert Tip: When refilling a tube feeder, rotate the seed, check to be sure the drainage holes are clear, and remove any seed stuck to the inside of the feeder.

The Aspects Quick Clean feeders with an easy-to-remove base are a real asset here. First, empty the feeder into a paper bag. Fill the feeder part way with fresh seed, then pour in the seed from the paper bag. Goldfinches tend to fly in to the top perches or mesh of the feeder, driving the other birds down lower. Therefore, rotating the seed causes the older seed to get eaten first from the top of the feeders.

Golden Safflower and Select Hearts of sunflower are also great for attracting

Golden Safflower attracts goldfinches and more.



goldfinches. These seeds can be used in regular tube feeders with larger feeding ports, hopper feeders, window feeders and hanging trays. These foods and feeders are not exclusive to finches and smaller birds. Serving Golden Safflower and sunflower out of the shell will attract a wider variety of birds to the feeders, including: cardinals, sparrows, nuthatches, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Blue Jays and others. You can attract goldfinches but attract fewer grackles, Red-winged Blackbirds and starlings by using only Golden Safflower in feeders. Goldfinches love it!

Expert Tip: During the cold-weather months, the nutrient-dense seeds of Golden Safflower and shelled sunflower offer a bigger meat. The birds get more reward for less work, which is a huge benefit when there are fewer daylight hours in which to eat.

In addition to using feeders and birdbaths to attract goldfinches, add some of their favorite plants to your yard. Sunflowers,



Cup plant seeds attract goldfinches and the leaves collect water.

black-eyed Susans, purple coneflower and the native perennial cup plant are excellent choices.

Expert Tip: The cup plant produces a lot of seeds and if left standing, will feed the goldfinches into the fall and winter.

The leaves of the cup plant grow bilaterally on the thick stem creating a cup that collects water from which the goldfinches drink—hence its name.

Providing plants, feeders and birdbaths will make your yard a sanctuary for finches throughout the year. ■

Behind *the* Lens

Local photography contributor Russ Sandstrom shares tips for capturing captivating bird photos.

Russ Sandstrom grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota and learned to love the outdoors from going on fishing trips with his dad and uncle. A city kid who loved the country, he'd become interested in birds as an adult, both from feeding birds in his backyard and from joining his wife on bird banding excursions at Lowry Nature Center. But it wasn't until he retired that he discovered the joy of combining birding with photography. A good photo, he found, captures a bird's beauty and aids in identification. Here, Sandstrom shares some tips for those who are getting started with bird photography.

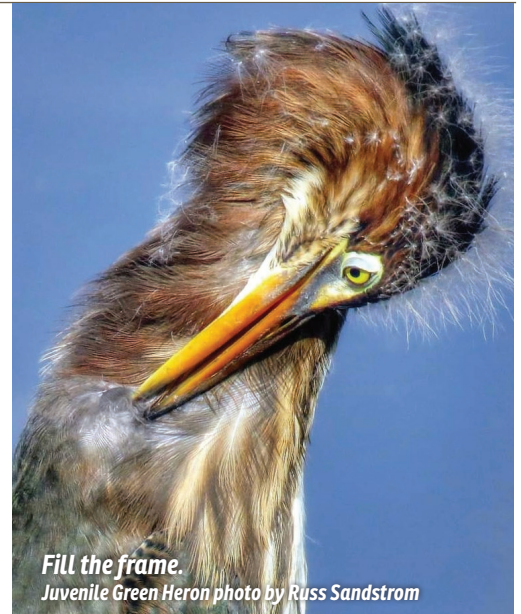
- 1. Time of day:** Go in the first 3 hours or last 3 hours of the day. That's when the birds are most active, and you get the best lighting—the golden hour.
- 2. Point of view:** Get down on the bird's level as much as possible. This is especially relevant when shooting shorebirds or waterfowl (egrets, herons, etc). It just looks more natural than shooting them from above.



- 3. Focus:** Really focus on the eye of the bird. This helps the focus and makes the bird come alive in the photo. If the eye and the head is in focus and the body isn't as sharp, it's still a really good photo.
- 4. Burst mode:** Shoot in continuous or burst mode to help you catch the bird's many different poses in a short period of time. Often, you'll find one where the bird cocks its head a bit that looks more

interesting than straight on.

- 5. Framing:** Try to fill the frame of the picture with the bird as much as possible. The exception is if the background is particularly scenic (like a flowering tree).
- 6. Positioning:** Change your position relative to the bird. Sometimes if you step 2-3 steps to the left or right you get a better background (ie. one that's less busy), the light may be better, or the angle of the bird in the frame looks better. Get the shot, move carefully, then get another shot. You can also take a shot, move slightly closer, then take another shot. Most songbirds have a tolerance that you learn to predict for stepping closer before they fly off. Shorebirds, in particular, tend to have more tolerance for you getting closer.



- 7. Location:** In general, Sandstrom looks for a place that has a variety of habitats, like water and woods. If you can find a place with water, woods and prairie, you'll get the most variety of birds. Some of his favorite places include:

- **Bass Ponds in Bloomington.** Warblers like to hang around the water. There are shore and water birds, plus woodpeckers in the woods.
- **Crow-Hassan.** It's in the northern metro. It has all 3 habitats. You see some horseback riders there, too.
- **Veteran's Park in Richfield.** Mostly a good place to go during migration.
- **Carver Park.** It has all 3 habitats and is one of the largest preserves in Hennepin County. ■

Find more photos and information from this interview at wildbirdstore.com/blog.

September & October

Find tips and seasonal updates online!

instagram: @allseasonswildbirdstore
 facebook.com/allseasonswildbirdstore
 youtube.com/@allseasonswildbirdstore

September 1st is the first day of meteorological fall.

Monarchs migrate south visiting Autumn Joy sedum, goldenrod, wild asters and Mexican sunflowers as they travel to the mountain forests west of Mexico City.



Suet bites in a hanging tray with mealworms and Songbird Delight is a birdie buffet for a variety of birds from cardinals and chickadees to woodpeckers and Blue Jays.

Orioles leave Minnesota by September 7th for the neotropics but Ruby-throated Hummingbirds continue to use nectar feeders well into October in the lower half of Minnesota. These birds will winter from South Texas to Costa Rica.

September is a great time to plant perennials. Choose pollinator-friendly plants with the help of our *Landscaping for Birds: Birdscaping Basics*. Pick one up in stores or view it online at wildbirdstore.com.



Switch to Golden or white safflower until the Common Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds have migrated through. These seeds are less appealing to them than black-oil sunflower seed mixes.

By the third week of September, Dark-eyed Juncos arrive. They feast on the ground under bird feeders and will soon be joined by native sparrows such as American Tree Sparrows, Fox, White-throated and perhaps some White-crowned Sparrows. Toss some Finches' Choice on the ground for all of them.

Zinnias provide seeds for goldfinches, while bees and butterflies also visit fall-blooming plants. Leave the seed heads on the perennials in your gardens. Birds will eat from these into the winter.



Indian meal moths are very active in September. Prevent them in your house by storing bird seed in garbage cans on the deck or in the garage. To remove moths, install a sticky moth trap on the underside of the can lid. We carry traps in our stores and online.

Peak migration of Yellow-rumped Warblers occurs around the autumnal equinox, which is September 22nd.

Keep Nyjer® feeders full of fresh seed for goldfinches, our last songbirds to fledge young. By the end of October, goldfinches will be in their olive-yellow winter plumage. Goldfinches do not perform a full migration; rather, their populations may shift around a bit.

Groups of Common Loons gather on lakes in preparation for migration to the Gulf Coast or Atlantic Seaboard.

Rotate the seed in your feeders by emptying the seed into a paper bag outside. Put fresh seed in the bottom half of the feeder and fill it the rest of the way with the seed from the bag.



Use Golden Safflower or Flaming Hot Feast compressed seed cylinders or seed bells to deter squirrels. Flaming Hot Feast loose seed for tube and hopper feeders will feed birds without inviting squirrels.



Prepare your heated birdbath! Fill the birdbath bowl with a 50:50 ratio of white vinegar to water and let it soak overnight indoors. Scrub to remove the limescale and rinse before returning outdoors. Add Bird Bath Protector™ to the filled bath to prevent organic contamination.

October is a great time to clean bird houses, now that breeding season is over. Clean out the bird houses/nest boxes and remove nests and debris. Use a 50:50 solution of water to white vinegar to clean and disinfect houses.

Give your bird feeders a fall cleaning. Disassemble the feeder. Scrub with dish soap (Dawn Powerwash works well) and water. To disinfect, rinse with 1 part bleach to 9 parts water or a 50:50 solution of water to white vinegar. Let dry completely before refilling.