



ALL SEASONS
WILD BIRD
STORE

Volume 32
Issue 2
Mar/Apr
2025

BLOOMINGTON
Clover Center
816 West 98th St.
Bloomington 55420
(952) 884-4103

EAGAN
Cedar Cliff
Shopping Center
2143 Cliff Rd.
Eagan 55122
(651) 459-0084

**MINNETONKA-
RIDGE SQUARE**
Ridge Square North
Shopping Center
12981 Ridgedale Dr.
Ste. 103
Minnetonka 55305
(952) 473-4283

**MINNETONKA-
WESTWIND PLAZA**
4759 Co. Rd. 101
Minnetonka 55345
(952) 935-5892

NORTH OAKS
Village Shopping
Center
121 Village Cntr Dr.
North Oaks 55127
(651) 482-1033

WHITE BEAR LAKE
2703 E. Co. Rd. E
White Bear Lake
55110
(651) 653-8705

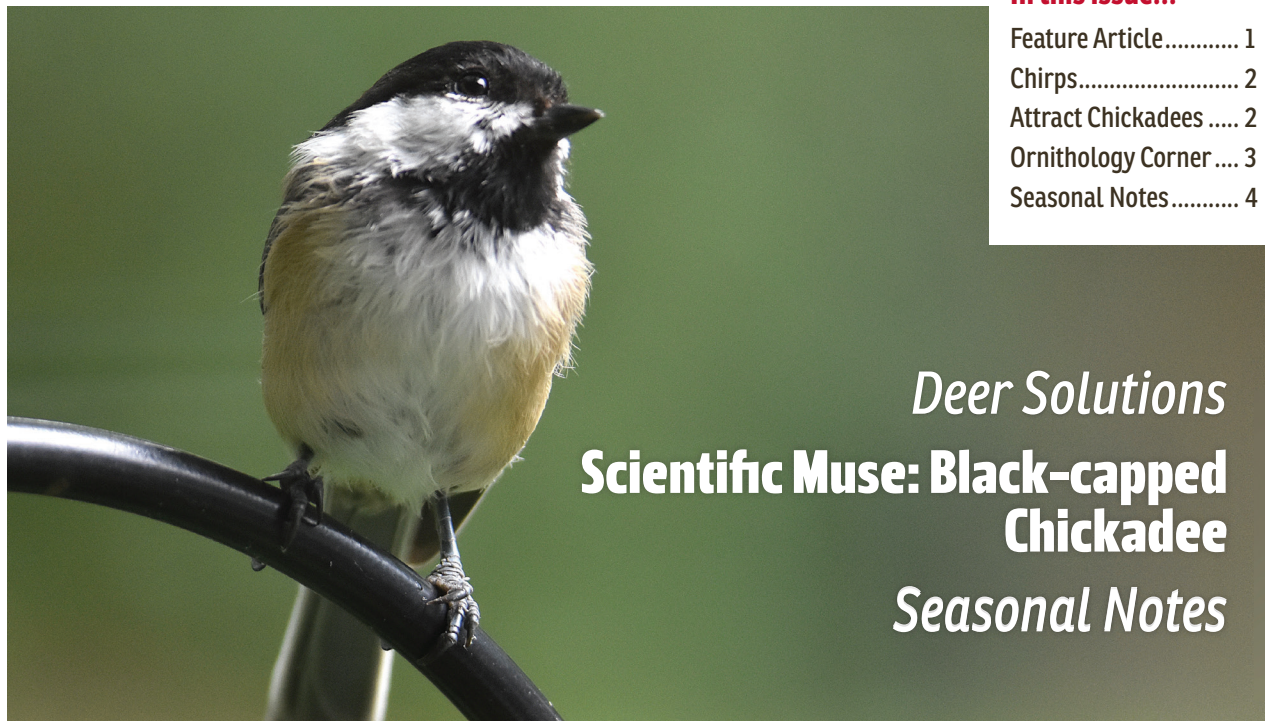
DELIVERY SERVICES
(952) 473-4283

wildbirdstore.com

BIRD'S-EYE *View*

In this issue...

Feature Article.....	1
Chirps.....	2
Attract Chickadees	2
Ornithology Corner	3
Seasonal Notes.....	4



Deer Solutions

Scientific Muse: Black-capped Chickadee

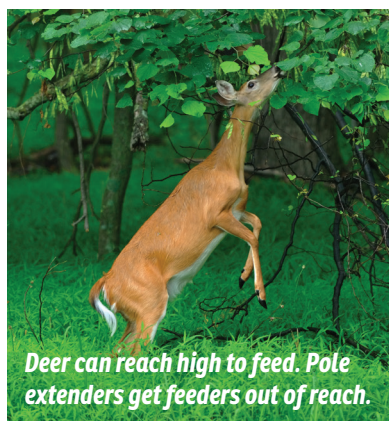
Seasonal Notes

FEATURE ARTICLE

By Minnetonka–Westwind Plaza Store Manager **CAROL CHENAULT**

Deer Solutions

Feeding birds is a pleasure, but visiting deer can be pesky. But don't worry—we've got solutions!



Deer can reach high to feed. Pole extenders get feeders out of reach.

Tip 1: Keep feeders out of reach.

The 80-inch-tall, one-inch-diameter Erva pole with a 28-inch extension will put the feeders high up and out of reach of deer.

Our Erva poles have almost twice the wall thickness found on mass market poles!

Attach a High-Reach Hanger (shown) to the end of a broom handle to easily lift and lower the feeders for filling.



Tip 2: Use compressed seed cylinders.

For locations like lower-level windows, where that height won't work for viewing, consider hanging a compressed seed cylinder.

Deer lick loose seed from tube or hopper feeders or bump them with their heads, dislodging food onto the ground.

Compressed seed cylinders are held together with gelatin, preventing seed from being knocked to the ground.

Hang an EZ feeder with a cylinder from a step-in shepherd's pole or an Erva 60-inch or 72-inch pole with a two-arm top.

Tip 3: Serve seed mixed with hot pepper.

Deer have pain receptors that respond to hot peppers, making any of our hot pepper products a good option for discouraging deer. We recommend a Flaming Hot Feast cylinder (shown) to combine the benefits of compressed seed and hot pepper.



Stop by any of our neighborhood stores, and we'll help you create a deer-resistant feeding station! ■

The Benefits of American-Grown Bird Food

The Core Ingredients of Bird Food Are Grown in the USA

The most popular bird seed ingredients—including black oil sunflower, safflower, and peanuts—are all grown and processed in the U.S. Let's explore where these key ingredients come from and why their origins matter.

1) Black Oil Sunflower

Black oil sunflower seed, a staple in bird seed blends, is loved by cardinals, chickadees, finches, and other backyard favorites. This nutritious, high-energy seed is primarily grown in North and South Dakota, Minnesota, and Kansas—with the Dakotas leading the nation in sunflower production.

Sunflowers are harvested in the fall, and their seeds are processed domestically to remove any debris before being packaged for bird feeding. Because black oil sunflower is widely grown in the U.S., bird lovers can rely on a steady supply without concerns over foreign tariffs or trade restrictions.

2) Safflower

White and golden safflower seeds are a favorite among cardinals and can help discourage species such as grackles and starlings. The majority of safflower used for bird seed in the U.S. is grown in the high plains of Colorado, Montana, Idaho, and North Dakota where the drier climate is ideal for cultivation.

Like sunflower seeds, safflower is harvested and processed within the U.S., ensuring high-quality standards and minimal risk of price fluctuations due to international trade disputes.

3) Peanuts

Peanuts are a favorite of Blue Jays, woodpeckers, and nuthatches, offering high levels of protein and fat for energy. The U.S. is one of the world's largest peanut producers, with crops primarily grown in the southeastern states, including Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and Texas.

After harvesting, peanuts are processed



American sunflower farm.

domestically to remove shells and ensure they are safe and free from aflatoxins, making them a nutritious and reliable food source for birds year-round.

We're Supporting American Farmers and Feeding Your Backyard Birds

At All Seasons Wild Bird Store, we are committed to providing the best nutrition for your backyard birds while supporting American farmers. Our high-quality seed blends are made with U.S.-grown ingredients, ensuring freshness, reliability, and sustainability.

By choosing American-grown bird seed, you're not just feeding birds—you're also supporting a stable, high-quality supply chain that benefits both wildlife and agriculture.

*Al and Dave Netten
and the All Seasons Wild Bird Store Team*

ATTRACT CHICKADEES

By Minnetonka–Westwind Plaza Store Manager **CAROL CHENAULT**

Want to observe chickadee behaviors? Here's how to attract them.

Suggestions for new and tried-and-true products.

New

- 1) Pacific Bird Pre-Filled Mealworm Sock Feeder.** Easy to use and refillable, this 7.5-ounce feeder attracts clinging birds such as chickadees, nuthatches and more. Mealworms offer a great source of protein, especially attractive to bird parents rearing their young.
- 2) Hungrybird Energy Complete Suet Bites.** Add these high-protein, high-fat, no-melt, no-waste suet bites to any tray feeder for a nutrient boost that chickadees, cardinals, finches, woodpeckers, and more will love.

Tried-and-True

- 3) Squirrel Buster® Classic Feeder.** Chickadees will readily visit this durable

and squirrel-resistant feeder that allows them to cling or perch to feed.

- 4) Joe's Mix.** Attract chickadees and many other songbirds with this blend of black oil sunflower, stripes, golden safflower, white safflower, sunflower hearts, peanuts, and white millet.
- 5) EZ Feeder with Bugs, Nuts, & Fruit Seed Cylinder.** This is a simple feeding solution—just hang it and forget about it! A blend of seeds, nuts and dried fruit offers a full buffet of tempting and nutritious options for chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers and more. Plus, compressed seed eliminates messy bill-sweeping behavior! *Photo: Terri Zuehlke.* ■



A scientific muse: **Black-capped Chickadee**

Ever-present at backyard bird feeders, the humble Black-capped Chickadee may be easy to overlook. However, this common songbird has inspired a wealth of research.

Memory and Spatial Cognition

Black-capped Chickadees are among the most proficient birds at locating hidden food, thanks to their advanced memory. A study by Sherry and Hoshoooley (2007) revealed that chickadees cache thousands of seeds and insects in different locations, often retrieving them with impressive accuracy weeks or even months later.

What enables such remarkable recall? A study by Smulders et al. (1995) demonstrated that a chickadee's brain undergoes physical changes in response to caching needs. Researchers found that the *hippocampus*—a brain region associated with memory—expands in the fall to accommodate increased food storage demands. Conversely, it shrinks in the spring when reliance on stored food decreases.

Memory performance also varies among chickadees across their range. A 2002 study by Pravosudov and Clayton found that Black-capped Chickadees from Alaska, where winters are harsher, outperformed those from Colorado in laboratory memory tests. A later study by Pravosudov and Roth confirmed a consistent pattern: chickadees from regions with harsher climates had larger hippocampi and superior memory performance.



Retrieving a cached seed?



Chickadees in harsh climates show better memory function.

Communication and Vocalization

Research has also explored the complexity of the Black-capped Chickadee's *chick-a-dee* call. Ficken et al. (1978) found that the intensity and complexity of these calls vary depending on the level of threat posed by a predator. Specifically, the number of "dee" notes at the end of the call signals the predator's size and threat level, with more "dees" indicating a higher danger.

A 1987 study by Ficken and colleagues provided further evidence that Black-capped Chickadees use a complex system of vocalizations for different situations. These calls can reflect an individual's social rank and even exhibit regional dialects.

More recently, Montenegro et al. (2021) examined how Black-capped Chickadees adjust their songs in response to human-made noise. In environments with high levels of background noise, chickadees were observed singing at higher pitches, likely to improve communication despite the interference.

Foraging Behavior

If you've observed Black-capped Chickadees in your backyard, you may have noticed that they are often the first to explore a new feeder and among the first to resume feeding after a disturbance, such as the presence of a predator. Behaviors such as these have inspired researchers to investigate the foraging strategies of chickadees.



Calls can reflect an individual's social rank.

Here are some of their findings:

- Chickadee flocks are structured by dominance hierarchies. Dominant individuals have access to the safest and most desirable food sources, while subordinate birds must take greater risks while foraging.



Black-capped Chickadee flocks are structured by dominance hierarchies.

- Chickadees show individual differences in foraging behavior in response to a predator present, suggesting a spectrum of shyness to boldness within the population.
- Chickadees can anticipate future food availability based on present foraging experiences. While this ability may seem intuitive to humans, it demonstrates a high level of cognition, as these birds use memory to predict future rewards.

In summary, the tiny chickadee has produced a mighty amount of scientific inquiries. But scientists aren't the only people who can learn from these birds. As people who feed birds, each of us are conducting our own chickadee studies each time we swap feeders, seeds and locations. What might our own citizen science observations reveal? ■

March & April

Find tips and seasonal updates online!

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

For bird watchers, the birds tell us when spring arrives! First are flocks of migrating Tundra Swans and Snow Geese. Next are Red-winged Blackbirds, migrating American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds, Canada Geese, kinglets, Eastern Phoebe and Yellow-rumped Warblers.

March 17 is typically the opening of shipping season on the Mississippi River in St. Paul. The Soo Locks—a gateway on the St. Mary's River between Lake Superior and the lower Great Lakes—opened last year on March 22. The average ice-out date for Minnetonka and White Bear Lake is April 13.



Install Wood Duck boxes. Mount one to a pole near the water's edge and add a baffle to thwart predators.

Clean out existing bird houses/nest boxes from last year. Replace damaged houses or add new ones for Black-capped Chickadees, Eastern Bluebirds and House Wrens—depending on your habitat. Review our free handout, *Nesting Notes*, for details.

Hang a Best Nest Builder to attract birds seeking nesting material.



Attract more Eastern Bluebirds with live mealworms. Stop in to see our selection of mealworm feeders!



Deter Red-winged Blackbirds, European Starlings and Common Grackles by using golden safflower and white safflower. Hang an upside-down suet feeder to discourage grackles and starlings from devouring all the suet.

April is our windiest month and ushers the return of many waterfowl, including Red-breasted Mergansers, Northern Pintails, and Blue-winged Teal. The second week typically sees the return of Great Egrets, White Pelicans and Mallards.

April 22nd is Earth Day and April 25th is Arbor Day. Plan to grow native species that support pollinators, such as butterfly weed, purple coneflower, prairie smoke, blazing star, aster, Joe Pye weed, cardinal flower, and black-eyed Susan. Adding berry-producing bushes will also help attract Cedar Waxwings and American Robins.

Install a feeding station or update an existing one. Add a 24-inch coil-mount arm that resembles a branch. Contact our Ridge Square location if you need assistance installing: (952) 473-4283.



House Wrens return around the third week of April. Welcome them with bird houses with a 1-inch entrance hole. Remember to clean out any houses from last year and hang at least two wren houses on your property. The female likes choices!

Put out hummingbird and oriole feeders the last week of April!



Backyard Nature Products
12-ounce Hummerfest

The last part of April is "The Green Wave" as box elders and willows leaf out. Woodland flowers begin to bloom: Dutchman's breeches, wild ginger, Jack-in-the-pulpit, trillium and violets. Basswoods, sugar maples and bur oaks are next to leaf out.



Kettle Moraine
Super Oriole
Feeder



Backyard Nature
Products
Oriolefest with
Weatherguard