



urbannatureNews

Your Local Birding & Nature Experts

Upcoming Events and More to Help Your Family Enjoy Birding!

Summer 2023

Bird Watching is the Relaxation Hobby

by Jane Paradis

Birdwatching is a good healthy hobby. People living in neighborhoods with trees, shrubs, and birds suffer less from anxiety and depression. Spending one hour each day walking in a nearby park or conservation area will lower your stress level. This will calm your mind and offer you an escape from your daily life. Spending more time indoors increases stress. Nature invites you to enter into a quieter world to enjoy the natural beauty around you. There are many health benefits associated with birdwatching. It will relax you resulting in lower blood pressure and heart rate. It also improves cardiovascular health.

Walking through green spaces and woodlots is great exercise. Your patience will also improve. Birdwatching doesn't always offer instant gratification. Your senses will also benefit by taking time to stop, listen and watch for activity in the bushes and shrubs around you. This will teach you to be more alert to your surroundings by keeping your eyes and ears open. There should be no distractions while bird watching. Put phones on silent mode and do not listen to music. Enjoy the sounds of nature. Birdwatching is not an actual form of meditation, but it's pretty close. Be silent, watch and listen.

Birdwatching is a hobby enjoyed by thousands of people around the world. Now that you have decided to be a part of this community here are a few basic tips to help you get started.

Begin your day by listening to the dawn chorus of bird songs. Some birds will begin singing before sunrise. Cool morning temperatures and less active air currents allow their songs to travel farther sounding clear and distinctive.



Panorama Bird Feeder



The Cutest Chickadee Feeder



Cedar Fly-Thru Feeder
WL-ATFLY

Even though birdwatching doesn't require a lot of equipment, you may want to invest in a pair of binoculars. This will definitely help in identifying birds at a distance, and elusive birds that prefer to flit through shrubs and bushes. When purchasing binoculars, be sure to try them out in the store to make sure you get a pair you're comfortable with. An 8x42 magnification provides a good field of view and light transmission. What does this mean? The number 8 means that the bird will be 8 times larger than what you see, and the 42 indicates the area you will see and how much light is let in. Binoculars have a wide price range varying in price from \$100 to over \$1,000. There are many prices in between to choose from, consider looking into Vortex binoculars which offer a lifetime warranty. Crossfires and Diamondbacks are a good place to start.



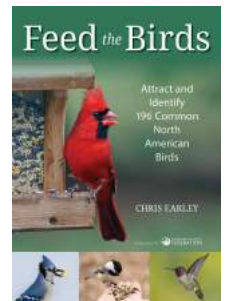
Diamondback HD 8 x 42
Binocular with GlassPak
VOR-DB-214



Crossfire HD 8x42
Binocular
VOR-CF-4311



Birds of Ontario - New
Edition 9781772130348



Feed the Birds: Attract and
Identify 196 Common
North American Birds



A good field guide to birds is the other essential item to have. Laminated guides are available and can be used while you are observing birds in neighbourhood parks or conservation areas. You can choose one that includes birds in your locale, or, if travel is in your plans, a destination guide may suit your needs. Feed the Birds, by Chris Earley is an excellent reference guide for beginners as it introduces you to attracting and feeding birds as well as bird identification. Invite children to learn along with you. There are several birding books for young people including 'Songbirds', Peterson's Field Guide for Young Naturalists, and 'Birds of Canada' by Kidsworld.

Whether choosing to explore birding in the great outdoors or being a backyard birdwatcher by setting up your own feeding station, welcome to the world of birders.

Happy Birding!



TIPS ON ATTRACTING ORIOLES AND HUMMINGBIRDS

by Jane Paradis

Orioles and hummingbirds are welcome visitors to our yards and gardens in the spring, and will be arriving soon! We can expect to see them in late April or early May. The Ruby-throated hummingbird is the only hummingbird we see in Eastern North America. Baltimore Orioles, also known as Northern Orioles, as well as Orchard Orioles are familiar guests in our region. If you are trying to attract these birds to your garden, it's important to make sure that the feeders are visible, and not hidden in trees and shrubs.



12 oz. Oriolefest Bird Feeder
BCH-NP1009



The Gem Window
Hummingbird Feeder



Ultimate Oriole Feeder
SE-905



Aspects Hummzinger HighView Excel
Feeder 16 oz.



Fruit and Jelly Oriole Feeder
SE-RUBFF

Separate feeders are available for nectar, jelly, oranges, suet, and mealworms, or you can choose the Ultimate Oriole Feeder which provides areas for nectar, grape jelly and fruit. Here are some steps you can take to get ready for their arrival:

- Ensure your feeders are out by the last week of April. You can even put them out empty as a visual attraction and fill them when they arrive.
- Oriole and hummingbird feeders need to be visible, not hidden in trees or shrubs. If you live in a windy location, you may want to consider using a heavier glass feeder to prevent spillage. A window feeder would be another option.
- Orioles and hummingbirds will go to feeders in the sun or shade. If your feeder is in a sunny location you will need to refresh it more often. During the hot summer months, feeders should be refreshed daily.
- Take time to clean the feeders every time you refill them. Clean feeders equals healthy birds. If your feeder doesn't have a built-in ant moat, they can be purchased separately and placed over the hook of the feeder. Just fill them with water to keep ants out of the nectar.
- When making homemade nectar use the ratio of one-part plain white table sugar to four parts boiling water. Stir well allowing the sugar to dissolve. DO NOT use honey, molasses, brown sugar or artificial sweeteners as this will cause a fungus to grow on hummingbirds tongues... plain white sugar only. Red food colouring is also not recommended.
- Feeders do not need to be filled to the top. The nectar will go off before they drink it all.
- Place oriole and hummingbird feeders away from seed feeders. This will make feeding more comfortable for both hummingbirds and orioles. Hummingbirds feed closer to the ground than our other songbirds. You can place their feeders on a smaller shepherd's hook in your garden or planter.
- Squirrel baffles are a good idea if you're feeding grape jelly and oranges to your orioles. Baffles are available to go on a pole or to hang above a feeder.
- Hummingbirds are very territorial. If you want to encourage more hummingbirds to your yard, make sure the feeders are out of sight of each other.



Droll Yankees Happy Eight 2
Hummingbird Feeder

Orioles will stay in our locales until late August or early September before they begin their migration south. Hummingbirds are sometimes seen as late as early October, so you will want to leave a feeder up for the hummers migrating from further north until Thanksgiving. Enjoy watching our orioles and hummingbirds this summer!

Happy Birding!

Product Of The Month

Backyard Essentials Solar Bird Bath Bubbler



Backyard Essentials Solar
Bird Bath Bubbler
BE-300

Features

- Moving water attracts 10 times as many birds and discourages mosquitoes
- No battery or electricity needed.
- Contains 4 nozzles allowing you to choose fountain water patterns



Book Of The Month

Best Places to Bird in Ontario (Author Signed)



- Outlining thirty of their personal favorite birding spots.
- With clear maps and beautiful color photos.
- Insider tips for spotting more than three hundred unique species
- Best Book for new birders



Urban Nature Store Frequently Asked Questions



Ask Paul, About Wild Birding!

Q. Last year about this time of the season, lots of Grackles took over my feeders. Any solutions to Grackle problems?

A. Yes there are several ways to discourage grackles. The easiest is to simply switch your seed to “safflower” for a few days, until the grackles depart. Due to the thickness of the safflower seed shell and the shape of their beak, grackles can’t easily eat it and as a result they normally leave after a few days. Safflower is also great at discouraging squirrels as they taste a bitter taste from the safflower shell. Another way to discourage grackles and blackbirds is to use a caged feeder. Caged feeders are designed to keep the large bully birds out, while letting the smaller birds easily enter and exit the cage openings. Urban Nature Store has a wide selection of caged feeders, as well as caged suet feeders that keep the squirrels, grackles and starlings away.



Audubon Squirrel Resistant Caged Seed Feeder - WL-NATUBE3

Q. It seems every year I have one bully that drives other Hummingbirds away. Is there anything I can do?

A. Hummingbirds are very territorial, especially the males. Once one male starts to use a feeder, he will let the girls use it, but none of the other “guys” near it, and they will jealously guard their preferred feeder. To stop this behaviour, add a second or third feeder, preferably out of the sightline of your original feeder. This will give the younger males an alternative feeding spot.



HummZinger Mini HighView Hummingbird Feeder 8oz. - ASP-430

Q. How old can the birds in my yard live to be?

A. Based on information from the Audubon Society and Wildlife Services, the maximum life span for various birds are: Hummingbirds 5 years; Bluebirds 6-8 years; White Breasted Nuthatches 6-10 years; Goldfinches 6-9 years; Robins 11 years; Tufted Titmice, Hairy Woodpeckers, Flickers, Black Capped Chickadees 12 years; and Red-Winged Blackbirds and Blue Jays 13 years. Remember this is for the survivors, unfortunately many small birds like Hummingbirds and Chickadees can have a mortality rate of almost 80% in their first year.



Black Capped Chickadee

Q. My cardinals never seem to feed in my feeder, always on the ground. Are Cardinals only ground feeding birds?

A. Cardinals are a perching bird that generally prefers to use a feeder, but they need a special perching area to feed at, otherwise they are forced to feed on the ground. Cardinals, unlike Chickadees and finches, cannot twist at the feeder and they need a perch which enables them to face directly at their food. Cardinals can’t feed at a traditional straight single perch found on many tube feeders, instead they need a curved perch which enables them to face directly at the feeder. I find a platform feeder is often the best type for cardinals, and just fill it with safflower to discourage the squirrels. Since Cardinals are a paired bird, they are also a timid bird and can be often scared off by several noisy chickadees. In my backyard I have a separate platform feeder filled with safflower reserved just for my pair of cardinals.



Dorothy's Cardinal Feeder- DY-DCF



Going Green Fly Thru Platform Feeder WL-GGFLYTHRU

Q. Last year my neighbour asked me to quit using my birdbath because it could cause mosquitoes.

A. “Standing” or stagnant water can be a place that causes mosquitoes to reproduce, but there are several ways to stop that from happening: 1) Keep the birdbath clean – a good weekly change of water and rubbing with a Birdbath Brush will keep it clean and healthy 2) Moving water discourages mosquitoes. Use a Solar Birdbath Bubbler or Water Wiggler, in the birdbath, to keep the water gently moving. Not only will the generally moving water discourage mosquitoes, the movement and sound also will attract more birds.



Allied Precision Solar Water Wiggler API-8ww

Kids Corner & Fun Facts

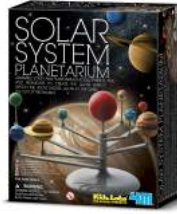
Spending time outside in the warm weather is a great way to enjoy nature and bond with family members who have a passion for bird watching and gardening. Having your own kid-sized garden tools, wheelbarrow, and sun hats can make the experience even more exciting and engaging for children. The audio books that identify backyard birds and their songs are a fantastic addition to the experience. They can help children learn about different bird species and their unique bird sounds. Come see our kits that include everything you need to make them just the way you like. Drop by to any Urban Nature Store location or shop online www.UrbanNatureStore.ca for fun outdoor and indoor toys for kids of all ages.



Audubon Bird Call
CCD-BIRDCALL



The Little Book of Woodland Bird Songs
9780228100317



4M Solar System Planetaryarium
TS-3427



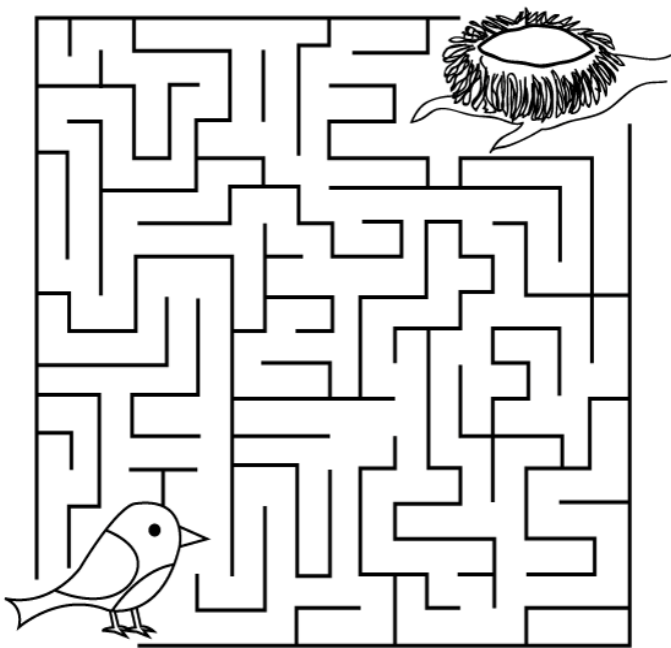
Build A Bird Buffet
TS-29545



National Geographic
8x21 Binoculars

Bird Maze

Help the bird get back to its nest.



Urban Nature Store FUN FACTS

- Songbirds help people by eating insects that harm plants and trees. Songbirds can eat as many as 300 insects in a day!
- There are about 4000 species of songbird.
- Some woodpeckers' tongues extend up to four times the length of their bill.
- If you hear 10-15 different birds singing in your garden but there's only one bird in the tree, a mockingbird might be the cause. They have an impressive range of songs: between 50 and 200 songs.
- The song sparrow, for example, sings perhaps 10 songs apiece, marsh wrens and mockingbirds have up to 200 different songs and brown thrashers sing as many as 2,000 songs.
- Songbirds build nests out of grass, yarn, mud, straw or other materials.
- In addition to insects, songbirds eat fruit, nuts and seeds.

Did you know?

The oldest known Blue Jay lived to be 17 years 6 months old. Males are slightly larger than females. These birds are omnivores, but they mainly stick to vegetation, berries, acorns and more. On an average, they fly at speeds of 20 to 25 miles per hour. Their mating season starts in mid of March and ends in the month of July.

Coloring Contest For Kids

Chance to WIN A \$50 Urban Nature Store Gift Card

3 Winners Will Be Selected...

Contest Details

1. Download the Coloring Pages from UrbanNatureStore.ca/pages/colors
2. Submit Completed Coloring Page at contest@urbannaturestore.ca
3. Entry Deadline **August 31st, 2023**, Winners will be announced on Friday **September 8th, 2023**.

For more details: visit www.UrbanNatureStore.ca/pages/colors

