

# Bird's Eye View

A vibrant yellow and black bird, likely a Goldfinch, is perched on a tall, slender stem of purple flowers. The bird is facing right, looking towards the top of the stem. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a garden or natural habitat. The overall scene is bright and colorful, with the purple of the flowers and the yellow of the bird's body standing out against the green background.

All Seasons Wild Bird Store

Volume 18 Issue 2 June 2010

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# Chirps

with father/son owners  
Al and Dave Netten

The spring migration is complete and I'm sure you're seeing a lot of new fledglings visiting your feeding stations. I find it's a great reminder of the cycle of life and enjoy sharing that excitement with my kids. It seems that the more they get to observe and learn, the better stewards they want to become of our yard and its micro-environment. I can only believe that this is an opportunity for more children to get more interested in the outdoors and the workings of our environment.

As such, one of our goals as a business this year is to share the wonder and excitement of bird feeding with several local elementary classrooms by sponsoring their participation in Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch this winter.

Through this sponsorship, 100-150 children will take home a bird feeder, the necessary seed and simple identification materials so that they can participate in the science of bird feeding. They will essentially be setting up a home bird feeding lab and then reporting their results and hypotheses back to their classrooms.

We're extremely excited about this opportunity to support the wildlife education of our local school children and it wouldn't be possible without your continued support and especially your participation in our Annual Feeder Swap which concluded in May. It will be those "swapped feeders" that will be travelling home with students this winter.

At the end of May, we also concluded our Minnesota Audubon Lights Out fund-raising campaign. A huge thanks to all of you who made donations. We were able to collect just over \$2,000, which we matched: presenting a total donation of \$4,094 to Minnesota Audubon. These funds go directly to the Lights Out program that we feel is one of the most important wild bird conservation

initiatives happening in Minnesota right now. The data overwhelmingly suggests that man-made structures, especially windows, kill more wild birds than any other threat. Our dollars will make a real difference in saving local birds lives.

Thank you again for shopping with our family-owned business. Your support directly translates into ongoing support for local birds.

## New Cardinal Mix!

You and your cardinals have something to be excited about: We've added NutraSaff to our Mahtomedi Cardinal Mix!

It has always been heavy on the sunflower and safflower, two favorites of the Northern Cardinal, and adding golden safflower to it just makes the mix even more nutritious.

Golden safflower has all the great attributes of the white safflower and then some. Safflower is known for its high oil and protein content and has become a backyard favorite. Golden safflower has an even higher oil and protein content as well as a softer shell, making it easier for a wider range of songbirds to consume it.

And don't think Mahtomedi Cardinal Mix is only for cardinals. Chickadees, finches, nuthatches, jays, grosbeaks and even woodpeckers will find it's a great meal.

### ON THE COVER

Providing native food sources is part of offering a healthy habitat for your backyard birds. Goldfinches, chickadees, migratory sparrows, waxwings and others are just some examples of birds who will appreciate having native seeds and fruits.

Remember that many birds consume insects, too - even hummingbirds, so reduce pesticides and leave your garden wild.

# Summer Bird Tips

by Minnetonka Manager Carol Chenault



by Minnetonka customer Don Curle

Orioles love mealworms, especially while raising their young. Place live mealworms in a smooth, one-inch high dish or soak freeze dried mealworms in nectar and serve. Bird Berry Jelly, oranges and nectar are also

oriole favorites. Change the nectar every 2-3 days and use a bleach/water solution (9:1) to clean feeders. Rinse well.

Your hummingbird feeders should also be cleaned every third day. To avoid ants and bees use an ant trap above the feeder and spritz nectar ports with cooking spray. Do not use flavored drink mixes, honey or artificial sweeteners in feeders. We have ready-to-use nectar powder or liquid that you can keep on hand for quick, easy refills.

Avian parents will feed their nestlings suet. Make it easier for cardinals to use suet by serving the suet pellets-made from vegetable oil.

Add a native fruit-bearing tree or bush to your yard. See more on gardening for birds on page 5.

Goldfinches nest later than other backyard birds. Watch them gather nesting material from the Best Nester in July. Add a Nyjer feeder to your yard to keep finches year-round.

During warm weather, scrub your bird bath with 9 parts water to 1 part bleach every week. Rinse well. Use Bird Bath Protector to maintain a safe and healthy bird bath. Add a Water Wiggler to attract more birds with moving water.

Deter grackles and starlings by using NutraSaff (golden safflower). Cardinals, chickadees, House Finches and other favorites love this high-protein seed.

If woodpeckers are pecking on your house, stop in and pick up our new flier about woodpeckers and how to coexist with them. That flier, along with other information on woodpeckers, is available in the FAQ section of our Web site at:

[http://www.wildbirdstore.com/Bird\\_Feeding\\_FAQs.aspx#woodpeckers](http://www.wildbirdstore.com/Bird_Feeding_FAQs.aspx#woodpeckers).

Prevent meal moth infestations. Store seed in the garage, shed or on the deck in a metal critter-resistant container. Freezing seed for 72 hours may help prevent moth hatchings. Storing seed in the freezer is also an option. Hang moth traps near seed containers.

Summer is a great time to learn bird calls as birds sing more during nesting season. Check out the Identifier or Identifier wand online or in some of our stores.

Use Window Alerts to prevent bird strikes. Break up the bird's reflection at the window sill with the Cardinal Alert to stop birds from attacking your windows. Hang flash tape (scare tape) from suction cups on the outside of the windows to repel birds. If they're attacking their images in your car mirrors, just cover the mirrors with cloth bags when parked.

Fledglings leave the nest approximately 5-7 days before they can fly. Enjoy watching them in your yard as they learn to fly and come to the feeders with their parents. Young nestlings, that do not yet have feathers, should be placed back into their nest or, if that's not possible, taken to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota ([www.wrcmn.org](http://www.wrcmn.org)).



Bird's Eye View is published to share the joy of backyard birds with All Seasons Wild Bird Store's customers. Frequent Feeder Members receive a 10% discount on purchases throughout the year. Photos and articles may be submitted to All Seasons c/o Tami Vogel, PR Director, 816 W. 98th St., Bloomington, MN 55420 or emailed to [tvogel@wildbirdstore.net](mailto:tvogel@wildbirdstore.net). All Seasons is a family-owned business that is All Things Birds for All Seasons.

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# Keeping a Healthy Habitat

for your birds

## Food

Offering a wide variety of foods in various locations attracts the most birds. Make sure your seed is fresh, not moldy, and prevent your feeders from becoming moldy by cleaning them monthly with a water/bleach solution (9:1).

To prevent mold in your seed tube feeders, use Feeder Fresh. The little silica beads wick up extra moisture and are simply discarded by the birds.

By keeping no more than a 3-4 week supply of seed on hand you'll know your seed is fresh and the chances of meal moths developing are reduced.

See our Seasonal Tips for more information on controlling these pesky moths.

Healthy birds consume a variety of foods: seeds, insects and fruit. Nearly all birds in our region have these three items in their diets. Seed eating birds turn to insects while rearing their young so offering mealworms during the spring and summer months will help your birds

feed their hungry nestlings. Orioles, Chipping Sparrows and cardinals are just a few species that will flock to mealworm feeders during the summer.



by Minnetonka customer Don Curle

## Water

A year-round supply of fresh water is a must for any bird habitat. Use a heating element or a heated bath in the winter and keep your bath clean year-round by scrubbing it with a 9:1 part water/bleach solution.

Offering your bath within a few feet, but not right up against, a shrub or bush provides your birds with a place to preen after bathing, but doesn't provide too near of a hiding place for predators.

## Protection

Birds seek protection from predators and the elements. Leaving a brush pile provides them with cover from both and, during the summer months, a nesting spot for low, ground-nesting birds.

They need protection from man-made elements, too.



Birds need to be able to reach their food, too. This means keeping it out of the paws of squirrels. Use baffles to provide a safe feeding station.

Keeping your feeders full consistently allows your birds to create patterns and will attract more birds year-round than by only offering food at certain times of the year.

# Gardening for birds

by Wayzata Manager Melissa Block

Birds look for a habitat that offers them food, water, shelter from the weather and from predators, and a place to raise their young. The plants that you choose to grow in your garden can offer the birds what they need.

First and foremost, plant native species whenever and wherever you can. They are adapted for our native soil and for our climate. Native plants and our wildlife have co-evolved over time. Our native bird, butterfly and plant species need each other to survive. The native plants provide the appropriate food and shelter. The birds and butterflies help pollinate and disperse seeds.

Annuals and perennials provide seeds and nectar. For instance, Purple Coneflower and Zinnias provide nectar for hummingbirds and butterflies, while providing seeds for finches and other birds. Native grasses provide food and nesting materials. Conifers, such as Junipers, provide both food and shelter all year long. Native deciduous trees, like Bur Oak, provide food and nesting sites in the spring and summer.

Provide plants that offer food and shelter for birds in all seasons. Offering an assortment of plants that produce berries or seeds at different times of the year help the birds year round. Mountain Ash and Dogwoods produce fall berries. Bittersweet, Sumacs and Snowberry offer winter food. Evergreens provide shelter year round.

Using plants and trees of differing heights is also beneficial to our birds. Some birds like to feed and nest close to the ground. Some like the tree tops. Offering different layers of plantings will draw a wider variety of bird species to your yard.

So this year, when choosing plants, shrubs, or trees, think of the birds.



# Summer Seed Mixes

come out of their shell

by Bloomington Associate Manager Bob Ellis

We're often asked, "What type of bird seed should I change to now that it is summer?"

There are many ways to answer this question, let's find the one that best works for you.

If your birds are enjoying your current offerings, you may simply want to stick with what works. If you see a dramatic change in the mix of birds using your feeders (more finches or doves, or fewer woodpeckers for example) you might think about changing your seed and feeders seasonally.

We've learned over the years that folks want a mix that they can feed their birds during the summer months while still enjoying a tidy backyard or garden area.

After all, here in Minnesota we use our outdoor living areas more in the summer than any other time of year.

If you're interested in keeping seed shells and sprouts to a minimum, we have a few seed suggestions to

keep your outdoor areas cleaner while still attracting the variety of birds you enjoy year-round.

Songbird Delight is a popular mix throughout the year, especially when offered in tube and hopper feeders. Much of the sunflower is already hulled so your feeding area will accumulate empty hulls at a slower pace. Songbird Delight contains premium sunflower hearts, premium black oil sunflower, safflower and peanuts.

If you have a popular Nyjer feeder and want to cut down on those tiny empty shells, we offer a Nyjer and Chips mix. This is fifty-fifty Nyjer and fine ground sunflower hearts, and is just as appealing to the finches as straight Nyjer.

However, two notes of caution regarding Nyjer and chips: First, Goldfinches are notoriously picky birds and sometimes do not take to changes in their feeding stations as readily as other birds.

Second, while squirrels typically ignore the tiny Nyjer seed they

have a wonderful sense of smell. Even though the sunflower is finely ground it still smells like sunflower to them, and boy are they (and you!) disappointed when they chew your previously unmolested finch feeder open to check it out. Be sure to use a baffle if you switch over to Nyjer and Chips.

We also offer straight sunflower hearts, both medium chips and the aforementioned fine chips. No hulls whatsoever to pile up under you feeder. The biggest benefit of hull-less birdseed is that it will not sprout. No shell, no growth. Period. No more cultivating a sunflower plant here and there.

I've saved the best for last. Kracker Jax is our finest "no-mess" birdseed mix. Premium hearts mixed with cracked corn, hulled millet and peanuts make this a great all-around choice. Because everything is hulled you get no shells on the ground and absolutely no unwanted sprouts.

Kracker Jax is especially popular in birdfeeders near gardens or over landscaped areas, and also works great in window feeders placed above patios or walkways. Use it wherever you want birds without the mess!

Do you have more questions about our many specialty seed mixes? Just ask our staff next time you're in one of our stores.

And, if you've not registered for our emails, you'll want to do so. We typically offer free samples of various seeds throughout the year. You may do so in our stores or on our site: [www.WildBirdStore.com](http://www.WildBirdStore.com).



by Minnetonka customer Don Curle

## The Big 3 in squirrel busting



**Squirrel Buster Classic** is still a leader in squirrel-proof technology. Brome's patented cage system allows songbirds to reach the feeding ports, but not squirrels.



**Brome's Squirrel Buster Plus** uses a weight-activated slide to shut off feeding ports when a heavy bird, squirrel or even a raccoon lands on it. The rotating bottom spins squirrels off and the rechargeable battery is good for several weeks (even longer once your squirrels stop attempting to raid the feeder!).



**Droll Yankees' Flipper** is still tops in not only preventing squirrels from stealing seed, but also in entertainment. The rotating bottom spins squirrels off and the rechargeable battery is good for several weeks (even longer once your squirrels stop attempting to raid the feeder!).

### Looking for a Father's Day Gift?

Combine one of the squirrel-proof feeders above with our specialty no-mess, no growth seed, Kracker Jax.

Dad will appreciate the lack of squirrels and weeds under his feeders!

# Heading out on vacation? Don't forget your birds!

We'll keep your feeders and bird baths full while you're away at the cabin. We'll use your seed supply if accessible, or we'll bring along the seed you order: whatever's easiest for you!

Cost is just \$7.50/15 minutes, plus a flat \$8.95 trip fee (most yards can be done in 15 minutes - we're efficient!). Number of visits will be determined when you call in your request.

Call our Wayzata store:  
952.473.4283



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