



Like so many others in Calgary, you may have noticed the absence of Blue jays in your backyard. During breeding/nesting season, Blue jays tend to be very private and may shy away from areas they normally frequent.

The Blue jay's scientific name is derived from Greek and Latin words and means, in reverse order, "crested, blue chattering bird."

Although not as talented as a Northern mockingbird or a Gray catbird, a Blue jay can produce a convincing imitation of a Red-shouldered hawk or a Red-tailed hawk, confusing many a bird watcher. Blue jays are known to imitate a variety of other bird species, including Bald eagles and Eastern screech owls. This noisy bird also utters a wide variety of squeaks, rattles and croaks.

Blue jays carry food in their throat and upper esophagus—an area often called a "gular pouch." They may store 2-3 acorns in the pouch, another one in their mouth, and one more in the tip of the bill. In this way they can carry off 5 acorns at a time to store for later feeding. Six birds with radio transmitters each cached 3,000 to 5,000 acorns one autumn.

Although we do not have acorns (or Oak trees in Alberta) their fondness for acorns and their accuracy in selecting and burying acorns that have not been infested with weevils are credited with spreading Oak trees after the last glacial period.

The Blue jay's vivid cobalt or azure-blue tail and wing feathers make an exotic contrast against the brown leaves or green grass. However, these feathers are not truly blue. Blue pigment is unknown in birds. The Blue jay's feather colour results from refraction, or distortion, of light by a peculiar inner structure of the feather substance. If the feather is crushed, the blue colour disappears. Shed feathers may often be seen in late summer, since adults go through a complete change of plumage between June and September.

During this moulting or feather-shedding period, Blue jays may be seen anting, a term referring to a bird using ants or materials that the ants expel from their bodies for preening or tidying their feathers. Excited anting birds often trip over their tails in frantic efforts to apply ants with their bill to the underside of their wings. A recent theory suggests that this peculiar behaviour results from skin irritation caused by new feather growth. Possibly ant excretions have a soothing effect on the bird's skin. Birds have been known to use a wide variety of substitute materials such as fruits, tobacco, mustard, and vinegar for anting.

Blue jay "anting"



Blue jay moulting



# 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

THE WILD BIRD STORE PROUDLY PRESENTS A  
RETURN OF OUR IN PERSON SPEAKER SERIES

Saturday, October 1, 2022

## Backyard Birds—Beyond the Basics



Myrna Pearman Biologist, enthusiastic writer and photographer

Saturday, October 1, 2022 10:30am to 12:30pm

Ticket price: \$20.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca) and are non-refundable

### Beauty Everywhere: The Sequel

Join Myrna Pearman - author, retired biologist, wildlife photographer and enthusiastic nature writer – for a presentation about the beauty and wonders of our natural world. She will be sharing new insights, new photographs and new stories about the intricacies and marvels of nature.



Dr. David Bird Ornithologist and Professor Emeritus at McGill University

Saturday, October 1, 2022 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Ticket price: \$20.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through [Eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca) and are non-refundable

### Backyard Birds: Beyond the Basics

The number of folks deriving pleasure from the birds in their yards is increasing exponentially and they want to know more about these incredible creatures. For example, where do birds sleep at night? How do they deal with extreme cold? Why do blue jays eat paint and mortar? And it is also fair to say that not all interactions with birds are positive. How does one stop birds from hitting windows or discourage woodpeckers from damaging one's home? And while there does exist a large number of informational books and web sites focused on how to attract birds to the backyard, this fun hobby can create new questions. Should one provide bath water in the winter? What does one do when finding a baby bird? How does one deal with hawks? Should one offer peanut butter and what things can one safely add to suet? With at least three decades of experience in teaching ornithology, feeding birds, and writing and talking about backyard bird biology and challenges, enjoy a visual presentation by Dr. Bird as he attempts to provide answers to these questions and many more. Not everything is black and white.



**When:** Wednesday, August 3, 2022. Registration at 6:00pm; Activities begin at 6:30pm

**Where:** Weaselhead Park, Calgary

**What:** Grab your FREE pair of Nature Kids binoculars to go birding with the Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society and participate in family activities to learn all about our feathered friends with nature Calgary

What's In A  
Name?  
∞



# Killdeer

Killdeer are very small birds, so they obviously don't kill deer as said in their name. So just like Chickadees they are named after the sound of their call. If you listen to their call, it sounds a little like; kill-deer kill-deer.

Killdeer are part of the *Charadriidae* family which includes species like Plovers and Lapwings.

Go to <http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Killdeer/sounds> to hear their call. I promise, once you familiarize yourself with their call, you will always be able to find Killdeer.



Killdeer youngster "so sweet"



<https://www.meadowlarkbirding.com/>

Contact Meadowlark Birding Tours (403)519-8703

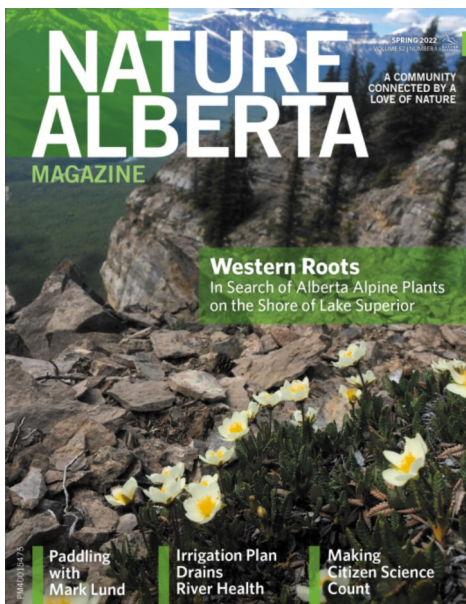
[gmckinnon-bird@gmail.com](mailto:gmckinnon-bird@gmail.com)

## Set-Date Tours

Set-date tours are scheduled many months if not years in advance to maximize enjoyment and birding opportunities. The group size for these tours can range between four and ten participants depending on logistics, focus of the tour and location. These tours can be viewed and booked anytime through our website.

## Calgary Day Trips

Calgary day trips are tailored to fit your exact needs and circumstances as well as your personal goals. Do you want to spend a day of targeting specific birds you need for your life list? Maximize the number of species? Or even just a casual stroll through a local park? All of these can be arranged to fit your preferences and schedule.



The Wild Bird Store is pleased to announce that we will be carrying the print edition of NATURE ALBERTA May 2022 in our store. This is the only place in Calgary to get a copy without a subscription. Look for it in-store May 1st.

In the Spring issue of NATURE ALBERTA magazine, Alberta's waterways will be explored with paddling expert Mark Lund. Also, Biologist Lorne Fitch examines the strain irrigation expansion plans will put on southern Alberta's river systems. And the spectacular wildlife photography of Rick Price practically flies off the page!

As always, the Nature Kids section is filled with info and activities to inspire the next generation of naturalists!



## Saturday Morning Bird Walks

### With Jim St. Laurent

Jim's years of guiding bird walks has been instrumental in teaching "birders" how to get the most out of their birding excursions. Children 12 and older are most welcome as long as accompanied by an adult and have purchased a ticket through Eventbrite.ca

All participants on any bird walk must have purchased a ticket through Eventbrite.ca and present the ticket to Jim prior to the bird walk.

The weather plays a big part in bird walks and Jim reminds participants to dress anticipating weather changes and to carry water to keep hydrated.

#### **Saturday August 6, 2022 Bebo Grove Fish Creek Park**

(9:00am meet in parking lot at south end of 24 Street SW)



Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Ticket must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2022 WBS bird walks

#### **Saturday August 20, 2022 Frank Lake—day trip, please bring lunch**

(9:00am meet at rear parking lot of Wild Bird Store)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Ticket must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2022 WBS bird walks

#### **Saturday September 3, 2022 Lafarge Meadows FCP**

(9:00am meet at boat launch parking lot south end of Bow Bottom Trail)

**PLEASE NOTE: If access to Lafarge is closed for construction, we will do Sikome Lake/Hulls Wood**

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2022 WBS bird walks

#### **Saturday September 17, 2022 Inglewood Bird Sanctuary**

(9:00am meet in parking lot at Inglewood Bird Sanctuary)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2022 WBS bird walks

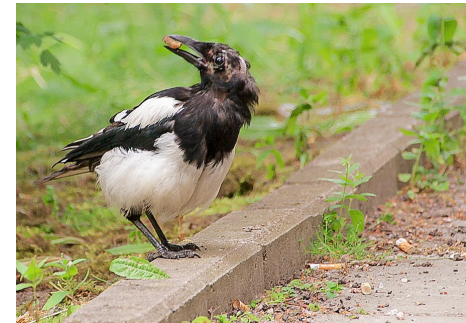


## QUESTION: Why am I seeing bald Magpies and Blue jays?

**RESPONSE:** As an aging baby boomer cognizant of my rapidly thinning hair, your question hits close to my heart. The feather loss that one sees on the head and back area of Northern cardinals, Blue jays or Magpies is most likely due to the process of molting, an annual biological phenomenon in birds whereupon they replace their worn plumages. Every late summer and fall, one often sees this characteristic in these particular bird species, depending on where one lives in Canada. It is usually because the affected birds have dropped all or most of their head feathers in one shot during the molting process. In many cases, it is mostly juvenile birds undergoing their very first molt which produces that first winter adult plumage. It is really quite normal to see, and in most cases, the head feathers grow back in a few weeks.

However, if you see a lot of baldness in other songbirds and even in non-songbirds, it could be caused by an abnormal molt. It is generally not in a bird's best interests to lose all of its feathers in one place at the same time. That is especially true of the wing and tail feathers, which birds need dearly to survive.

And there are other possibilities. Feather mites, lice and bacteria, or some nutritional factor, could be to blame. In these cases, one can see evidence of growths or a scab-like condition. Take a close look at those bald birds. If you see black skin, that's normal, but if it is another colour, it could mean that the bird has got a disease. And if you are seeing some baldness in Woodpeckers in the heat of summer, that's altogether different—it could be a result of the bird feeding on melting suet, causing a greasiness and a loss of feathers.



<p><b>DAVID M. BIRD, Ph.D</b> Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology McGill University</p> <p>david.bird@mcgill.ca www.askprofessorbird.com</p>			<p><b>CANADA JAY</b> <b>MÉSANGEAI DU CANADA</b></p> <p>FRIENDLY, SMART, LOYAL AND TOUGH. TRULY THE MOST CANADIAN BIRD!</p> <p>AMICAL, INTELLIGENT, FIDÈLE ET ROBUSTE. UN OISEAU VRAIMENT CANADIEN!</p> <p><b>WWW.CANADAJAY.ORG</b></p>
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## ABOUT DR. DAVID



*David M. Bird is Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology and the former Director of the Avian Science and Conservation Centre at McGill University. As a past-president of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, a former board member with Birds Canada, a Fellow of both the American Ornithological Society and the International Ornithological Union, he has received several awards for his conservation and public education efforts. Dr. Bird is a regular columnist on birds for Bird Watcher's Digest and Canadian Wildlife magazines and is the author of several books and over 200 peer-reviewed scientific publications. He is the consultant editor for multiple editions of DK Canada's Birds of Canada, Birds of Eastern Canada, Birds of Western Canada, and Pocket Birds of Canada. To know more about him, visit [www.askprofessorbird.com](http://www.askprofessorbird.com) or email [david.bird@mcgill.ca](mailto:david.bird@mcgill.ca).*

# DONATIONS

Located at The Wild Bird Store (near the seed bins). We collect your cash as well as “wishlist” donations and arrange to deliver them to local wildlife organizations including Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation, Alberta Institute of Conservation and Ellis Bird Farm.

We ask for your support quarterly for each of these organizations:

For June, July and August 2022 your donations will go to:

**Ellis Bird Farm**

**[www.ellisbirdfarm.ca](http://www.ellisbirdfarm.ca)**



## Purple Martin Papa



Recently Global news approached Andrew Barnes, known as “Purple martin papa,” who has established a Purple martin colony right here in Calgary behind his residence in New Brighton. He has put considerable research and effort into having the first successful PUMA colony in Calgary in 80 years and the most southernly one in Alberta.

Andrew approached Dave and Kris from The Wild Bird Store to be on hand during the Global interview to offer support.

If you are interested in this live interview, click on the link below:

<https://globalnews.ca/video/rd/b3d75a06-0886-11ed-9469-0242ac110005/?jwsourc=em>

Andrew encourages those interested in Purple martins to visit his established colony. As this colony is established on private property, kindly contact Andrew at:

[andrewbarnes403@gmail.com](mailto:andrewbarnes403@gmail.com)

# OPTIONS FOR SHOPPING AT THE WILD BIRD STORE

In Store or on the Seed Truck, social distancing is encouraged.



**Shop in Store**

Phone your order in and pay for it at least 30 minutes prior to arriving at The Wild Bird Store for pick up. Park in the curbside parking stall outside the phone us at (403)640-2632 when you arrive, pop your trunk or hatch and leave the rest to us.



**Curbside Pick up**

Deliveries will still be made on Thursdays ONLY. Please phone the store at (403)640-2632 any day prior to 12:00noon on the Wednesday before your delivery; place and pay for your delivery. Please phone with your order as early as possible to avoid disappointment. If you have any special instructions, please do not forget to inform us when you place your order.



**Home Delivery**



**PLEASE NOTE:** As of December 1, 2021 a \$6.00 delivery fee will be applied to all delivery orders within the City of Calgary.



# Bird Seed Truck



## CROWFOOT YMCA/ARENA

(corner of John Laurie & Nosehill Drive NW)

**Every Wednesday 2:00pm to 5:30pm**

To ensure you get you want, please have your order in by 5:00pm on Tuesday and we will set it aside for you

**Text us @ (403)701-4571 OR email us at [orders@wildbirdstore.ca](mailto:orders@wildbirdstore.ca)**

**Earn and redeem customer loyalty points on**

**Mobile Seed Truck**

## The Showroom is OPEN

To the general public with recommendations to continue social distancing when possible.

If you feel unsafe in shopping in our store, we would recommend that you take advantage of our other options for all your wild bird feeding needs such as:

### We also offer these alternatives

**CURB SIDE PICK UP:** phone, place and pay for your order at least 30 minutes prior to your arrival at The Wild Bird Store. Please pull into the curbside parking stall, pop your trunk/hatch, phone (403) 640-2632 to advise of your arrival and a team member will come out and load your vehicle with your receipts attached. Payment can be made by Visa, Mastercard or e-transfer (Sorry! No cash)

**DELIVERY:** Deliveries will still be made on Thursdays ONLY. Please phone the store at (403) 640-2632 any day prior to 12:00noon on the Wednesday before your delivery; place and pay for your delivery. Please phone with your order as early as possible to avoid disappointment. If you have any special instructions, please do not forget to inform us when you place your order.



**We offer a discount** if you return your seed bags (sorry—not the Mother Nature bags which we cannot re-use), suet ball containers, if you bring your own container to fill or use a bag from our re-cycle bin. This discount is in addition to any other discount offered.



**Write a Google review** on your experience at The Wild Bird Store, and as a thank-you, we will give you 100 customer loyalty points (\$5.00 value). To get a promo code, kindly email [info@wildbirdstore.ca](mailto:info@wildbirdstore.ca)



(Please one Google review per customer)

**Earn 200 customer** loyalty points (\$10.00 value) by referring a friend, acquaintance or fellow birder.



Please visit the store to get a promo code

**No need for a card** just give your phone number.

You earn \$1.00 for every \$20.00 spent (sorry, excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items) and can be used in-store and on Mobile Seed Truck. As a loyalty member, our monthly promotional and in-store “specials” are automatically given at the cash register.



**Combining our Seniors** 10% discount with the loyalty program (sorry—excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items.)



**Discount for membership** 10% discount for members of Fish Creek Park, AIWC, Priddis Golf Club, Nature Calgary, Sandy Cross Conservation, Springbank Garden Club and Calgary Horticultural Society. Must present valid membership card at time of purchase.



**Discount for Military Members & Veterans** 10% discount on purchases in-store or on Mobile Seed Truck (sorry—excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items)



# ALBERTA OPEN FARM DAYS

ALBERTA OPEN FARM DAYS IS A PROVINCE WIDE OPEN HOUSE

COME MEET YOUR RURAL NEIGHBOURS

August 13 & 14, 2022

PRESENTED BY  servus  
credit union

Alberta Open Farms Days is an incubator for agri-tourism and rural sustainability. We bring Albertans together through educational and experiential agricultural-based initiatives to learn about where your food comes from. As well, some of Alberta's most talented chefs and rural communities will be hosting a memorable series of farm to table culinary events that will be held around the province using Alberta farm products.

10TH ANNIVERSARY  
  
IT TAKES A HIVE

## Eastern Irrigation District (Bassano Dam Tour)



PLEASE NOTE – Booking is required for tours to the Bassano Dam please book directly through Eastern Irrigation District at 403-362-1400. LIMIT IS 20 – 25 adults per tour

Tour of the 104 year old Bassano Dam, the headworks for the Eastern Irrigation District.

Tour includes some history of the area & EID and overview of District operations.

## Prairie Spirit Alpacas –near Millarville

View alpacas, have the opportunity to see the babies and moms

Photo opportunities

Opportunity to see alpaca products

Picnic Service (on-site)

No pets/No Washrooms

For More information visit: [www.prairiespiritpacas](http://www.prairiespiritpacas)



Above is just a couple of the examples that are participating in Alberta Open Farm Days. For more information and to check out other farms/venues participating go to: <https://albertaopenfarmdays.ca/about>



5901 3rd Street S.E.,  
Calgary, AB T2H 1K3  
Phone: (403)640-2632  
days.

Monday through Saturday 10:00am to 5:00pm  
CLOSED Sundays and ALL Statutory holidays for Faith, Family & Friends  
We still offer curbside pick up every day and delivery service on Thurs-  
days.

Web: wildbirdstore.ca  
email: info@wildbirdstore.ca

**CLOSED Heritage Day Monday, August 1, 2022**

FOLLOW US ON:  
Facebook@thewildbirdstoreyyc  
Twitter@wildbirdstoreyyc

Go to YouTube, type in the search bar “The Wild Bird Store” to watch our videos and to help us become more visible.  
Be sure to click on “subscribe” before you leave the page.

**PLEASE NOTE: As of December 1, 2021 a \$6.00 delivery fee will be applied to all delivery orders within the City of Calgary.**



The Wild Bird Store  
Is the warranty & repair depot for:  
Squirrel Buster® Bird Feeders  
Aspects® Feeders  
Droll Yankee® Bird Feeders

And the warranty depot for:  
Leupold Binoculars & Spotting  
Scopes

**HAPPY BIRDING!**