

## American Robin



# FACTS

If you have ever seen a Robin laying its eggs, one thing might have left you puzzled. Why do red Robins lay blue eggs? The reason is due to “biliverdin”, a pigment deposited on the eggshell when the female lays the eggs. There is some evidence that higher biliverdin levels indicate a healthier female and brighter blue eggs. Eggs laid by a healthier female seemed to encourage males to take more interest in the young.

Robins use unwary ants and millipedes as a kind of insecticide. Seized in the bird’s bill, the hapless invertebrate unleashes its defensive chemical weapons. The Robin then rubs these compounds all over its feathers to get rid of parasites like mites and ticks.

Forklore is always interesting, and one of those myths shows its bravery and how it got its red breast. During the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the Robin observed a thorn in Christ’s eyebrow. Robin felt the misery of Jesus and took a flight towards him. It pulled the thorn out of Jesus Christ’s brow and his blood fell upon its breast. It is also believed that the courageous bird was wounded during this act.

Now, urbanization, and its associated light and noise pollution are affecting these birds. Bright lights are making city Robins sing their morning songs much before the crack of dawn, and their songs are becoming more high-pitched to overcome the din of traffic.

As with many birds, the wintering range of American robins is affected by weather and natural food supply, but as long as food is available, these birds are able to do well for themselves by staying up north. One reason why they seem to disappear every winter is that their behaviour changes. In winter Robins form nomadic flocks, which can consist of hundreds to thousands of birds. Usually these flocks appear where there are plentiful fruits on trees and shrubs, such as crabapples, hawthorns, holly, and juniper. When spring rolls around, these flocks split up. Suddenly we start seeing American robins yanking worms out of our yards again, and it’s easy to assume they’ve “returned” from migration. But what we’re seeing is the switch from being non-territorial in the winter time to aggressively defending a territory in advance of courting and raising chicks. This behavioural switch is quite common in birds.



# Why Are Birds Attacking My Windows?

Each year, as the warm weather rolls around, migratory birds like American robins stake out their territories in our neighbourhoods. These nesting sites will be where they find mates and make babies, which means that location and security are of vital importance. A good mate-to-be will guard its territory against any unfamiliar bird face—even when that face is their own.

When a Robin notices its reflection in a window or mirror within its territory, it gets agitated, raises the feathers on its head, and assumes a dominant posture. Normally that is enough to make other Robins leave immediately. But, the Robin in the reflection, appears to be in a dominant posture, agitated, and unwilling to leave.

Often, the Robin just leaves rather than pursue the reflection. A male may simply go to his favourite song perch and start singing. When he doesn't hear a responding song, he's more certain that his territory is safe. A female often goes back to her daily activities and stays alert for other females.

However, some Robins become increasingly agitated—and then so do their reflections! In a vicious cycle, the Robin repeatedly flies in to chase away the perceived rival and hits the glass. Still the reflected Robin remains, and the territorial bird becomes more and more determined to drive away the upstart.

During the nesting season, a Robin's territorial urge is more powerful than the urge to eat or sleep. By defending a territory a Robin ensures there will be enough food for its young.



To you—safe, if irritated, inside your home—your windows appear transparent. But to belligerent birds in bright daylight, you may as well have tiled the exterior with mirrors. A Robin looking at your house sees another Robin looking back at him. And then, of course, they fight (Turkey attack clean, shiny cars for the same reason. No bird attacks a dirty car.

Window attacks are different from bird strikes, the violent collisions that occur when a bird thinks your house is the sky and flies straight into it. Strikes are dangerous and often deadly for the birds involved. Territorial attacks are mostly just annoying for everyone, including the bird.

If you tend to find your home beset by angry birds, the only way to prevent this behavior is to make sure the Robin does not see its reflection. The simplest way, if it's a small window or mirror, is to tape some paper or cardboard over the outside of the window. Usually the paper needs to be up for three to four days until the Robin gets busy with nesting duties and babies and forgets about its window rival. If it's a big patio window, it's harder to cover the whole thing. One technique that sometimes works is to paper over the area where the Robin has been actually hitting. Press 'n seal wrap is a quick and easy way to prevent Robins from seeing their reflections. It's simple to adhere to the surface of windows or mirrors and simple to remove, too.

Unfortunately, covering one window may simply push your problem a few feet away. American robins in particular have been known to attack as many as 15 windows in a single house. A territorial bird can be very persistent and the best course of action is to be patient and wait for the breeding season to end.



# 10% DISCOUNT



## ONE DAY ONLY Friday May 5, 2023

**ALL Bird baths, waterers and bath accessories**

**For photos and description of all bird baths and bird bath accessories included in this one day sale, please visit our website at [www.wildbirdstore.ca](http://www.wildbirdstore.ca)**



Rain Chains

Discount applies to in-store purchases only—  
Sorry! No phone orders.

Cannot be combined with any other discounts  
however, you will be able to redeem and earn  
loyalty dollars

A graphic banner with a red background and white text that says "EXCITING NEWS!". The banner is surrounded by colorful, abstract shapes in blue, yellow, and black, resembling a stylized explosion or a burst of energy.

## EXCITING NEWS!

## NEW service now being offered!

The Wild Bird Store in partnership with Andrew Barnes, now providing at home wild bird consulting service.

Specializing in helping you and your property become Wild Bird friendly for maximum results.

Services offered will include:

### **Bird feeder(s) recommendations for species focus and seed types**

- Type(s) of seed and for which species it will be best suited
- Preferred location for maximum results
- Bird feeder accessories
- Hummingbird feeders and accessories

### **Nesting**

- Nest box selection for native species—including all cavity nesting and platform species for Alberta
- Preferred location for nest boxes
- Maintenance tips
- Advice on how to deter invasive species (House sparrows and European starlings)

### **Watering needs**

- Bird baths
- Heaters and heated baths
- Accessories including drippers and bubblers
- Location dos and donts
- Maintenance tips

### **Bat Houses/Chambers**

- Location requirements
- Housing styles—including single vs multiple chambers

**After each visit all discussion points and recommendations will be provided along with a 10% OFF coupon to be used at the Wild Bird Store on your next purchase.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** 10% coupon is only valid for a one-time purchase and must be presented at time of purchase. In-store ONLY (excludes online)

For further information, pricing and scheduling, please contact

Andrew Barnes cell # (403) 923-8121 (call or text)

Email: [birdsbeesyyc@gmail.com](mailto:birdsbeesyyc@gmail.com)



## 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 May 6, 2023 Griffith Woods Park (Discover Ridge)

(9:00am meet at Discovery Ridge S.W.)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2023 WBS bird walks

### Saturday May 20, 2023 Frank Lake (Day trip please bring water & lunch)

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

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

Tickets must be purchased through Eventbrite.ca—2023 WBS bird walks

**Jim will be away for the month of June which may extend into July. Please stay tuned for a update on when Saturday morning bird walks with Jim will return.**

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During the last ice age, the prairie landscape was scoured by glaciers, leaving thousand of shallow potholes which fill with water as the winter snows melt. This area, stretching from Alberta through Southern Saskatchewan and into North Dakota, is often referred to as the Duck Factory of North America. Through this range, the farming landscape is bisected by Township roads every two miles north and south, and Range roads every mile east and west. A few hours touring around these back roads in the spring will find that every pothole contains waterfowl busily getting about the business of courting, breeding and raising young. Ducks, Grebes, Geese, Loons (divers), Gulls, Terns, Coots and Teal are every where you look, all dressed in their courtin' clothes!





**QUESTION: I just bought a brand-new red Ford Explorer which is now sitting in my driveway and I am seeing little songbirds perching on my side view mirrors and worse, popping on them. They never bothered with my old silver Yukon. Why would they be doing that with my new vehicle? And what can I do about it?**

**RESPONSE: Whenever I hear the words “mirror” and “birds” together in the same sentence, I can only think of one thing—the birds are somehow seeing their reflections in the mirror surface and they are treating them as intruders into their breeding territory. And so, they are hanging around your side-mirrors to drive off that intruding bird from the area. During that action, they are leaving little white souvenirs on your vehicle. Every spring I can count on getting emails about birds fluttering for hours at picture windows and for the same reason. The birds are fooled by their reflections. You see, it is all driven by hormones raging in their blood stream. Once those hormones subside in two or three weeks, the behavior stops. The really bad news is that they are not only wasting time and energy on a fool’s errand, but they are also opening themselves to having real intruders enter other parts of their territory and worse, not paying attention to potential predators sneaking up on them. What can you do about it? Well, what I would do is cover the mirrors with something like plastic bags until the hormones subside. The reason they never bothered your silver Yukon is perhaps due to the fact that it might have been harder to detect their reflection in the side view mirrors or that they only discovered them when you got the new vehicle.**



**DAVID M. BIRD, Ph.D**  
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www.askprofessorbird.com



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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).*



## On Location:

Crowfoot Arena (corner of John Laurie & Nosehill Drive NW)

Every Wednesday 2:00pm to 5:30pm

Calgary Horticultural Society (2725 33 Avenue SW)

Every second Friday starting April 14, 2023 1:00pm to 4:00pm

## Seasonal Event:

Okotoks Farmers Market (322041 15 Street East Dewinton)

Dates: June 16th & 30th, July 14th & 28th, August 11th & 25th and  
September 8th & 22nd 3:30pm to 6:30pm

**Please place orders the day before the truck is on location, either by emailing [orders@wildbirdstore.ca](mailto:orders@wildbirdstore.ca) or text (403) 701-4571**



# 26th Annual Songbird Festival – May 27 & 28,

This local birding festival is an annual celebration of spring migration in the boreal forest including tours of LSLBO (Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observation), nature workshops, birding hikes, children’s activities, and of course, everyone’s favourite: the early bird Pancake Breakfast.

For more information, visit <https://www.lslbo.org/education/songbird-festival>

## Frank Lake

Frank Lake is one of the best birding venues in the Calgary area

The Lake is situated about 50km southeast of Calgary. It is a shallow slough typical of the grasslands of southern Alberta. Directions below are given from the southern edge of Calgary where Highway 2 intersects with Highway 22x

To reach the lake, drive south on Highway 2 (Macleod or Deerfoot Trail south) until you reach Highway 23. At the junction of Highway 23, take the exit east towards Vulcan. At 47.3km, the Highway makes a 90 degree turn to the north. As you approach this corner, slow down and watch for a sign and large gate on the right-hand side of the road. Following this gravel path will take you to an observation blind on the north edge of the lake.



## Camrose Purple Martin Festival Sunday June 18, 2023

**MEADOWLARK BIRDING TOURS**  
[meadowlarkbirding.com](http://meadowlarkbirding.com)  
[gmckinnonbird@gmail.com](mailto:gmckinnonbird@gmail.com)  
 403-519-8703

**Upcoming Tours in 2023!**

**Point Pelee Migration**



May 9-13, 2023  
\$550/person | Leamington, ON

Point Pelee is one of the best known birding destinations in North America. In this short 5 day tour we can expect to see over 150 species, many in their stunning breeding plumage. Up to 30 species of warbler can be encountered on this tour and this total often includes Carolinian specialties such as Prothonotary, Hooded, and Cerulean Warbler. Overshoots from the south such as Kentucky, Worm-eating and Prairie Warbler are sometimes observed. However it's not just warblers; at Pelee as we can expect to see various other passerines such as vireos, thrushes and sparrows. Beyond songbirds, we will also see numerous shorebirds and waterfowl also on their migration journey. At Point Pelee the possibilities are truly endless!  
**ONLY TWO SPACES REMAINING!**

**Cold Lake Warblers**



June 1-4, 2023  
\$425/person | Cold Lake, AB

While Cold Lake is not yet widely known as a top birding destination, but this secret won't be kept for long! Located in northeastern Alberta along the Saskatchewan border, Cold Lake boasts an impressive 22 species of breeding warbler. Mouth-watering species such as Connecticut, Blackburnian, and Chestnut-sided can be found reliably. However, it is not just warblers that make Cold Lake special, tantalizing boreal species; Yellow Rail, Nelson's Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Boreal Chickadee and others are not uncommon. On this tour we do not only focus on detecting these warblers, our goal is to get extended views that provide excellent photographic opportunities.


Gavin McKinnon



*"Birding with Gavin is so incredibly rewarding, fulfilling, and fun! His enthusiasm for birding is truly authentic, and his knowledge is incredible! Gavin's ability to identify birds on the wing, his impressive recognition of vocalizations, his quick on the draw photography skills to confirm species, and his understanding of habitat and likely areas to have a variety of birds, are a few examples of what he provides. In addition, he is most willing to answer questions and help each member of the tour to not only see the birds, but to learn more about them." - Donna F. 2021*

**How to get to the  
Stoney Creek Centre**

**Address: 5320 – 39 Avenue, Camrose**



**Directions:**

1. Turn off Parkview Drive on to 39th Ave
2. Turn right at the end of 39th Ave
3. Park and you are there!

**For more information and tickets visit:  
Camrose Purple Martin Festival**





2023 Wings Over the Rockies Nature Festival

MAY 8—14, 2023

Wildlife and Landscapes—Exploring Connections

Our 26th annual festival is located in the beautiful upper Columbia River Valley centered around the mountain town of Invermere, British Columbia. Our even calendar will be published online on Thursday, March 30. Tickets will be available for purchase online on Tuesday, April 11 at 10:00am. Please plan to be an “early bird” to get your event choices! 70% of our festival tickets are purchased on the first day.

We plan to have over 100 events over 7 days, many new ones too! Please plan to come and join us in 2023 and make your connection with wildlife and landscapes.

#### CONTACT

Box 2633, Invermere, BC V0A 1K0

P: (250) 342-2473

TF: 1-855-342-2473

info@wingsovertherockies.org

KEYNOTE SPEAKER IS Dr. Dale Leckie

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## The Canada Goose

It is a common mistake to call the easily recognizable waterfowl, *Branta canadensis*, a Canadian Goose. It's important to know that the Canada Goose was actually named after John Canada, an ornithologist, not the country Canada. Therefore, referring to the geese as “Canadian” is incorrect.

### Cool things you should know about Canada geese.....

As goslings continue to grow and become more independent of their parents, they may group together with other young geese. These groups, called “gang broods”, can consist of up to 100 goslings.

Once a year, usually when the weather warms up, Canada geese molt their feathers. During this 6-week period, they are unable to fly, leaving them vulnerable to predators, including coyotes, foxes and raccoons. Water plays an important role in the safety of Canada geese. They will retreat into water if their warnings don't scare predators away.

As urbanization increases, Canada goose migration decreases. Expansive, manicured lawns and man-made ponds have become new favourite hangouts for these birds. Natural predators aren't very common in these spots, and constructed water areas are often heated and don't freeze during the winter. Canada geese love the large grass spaces because they can digest grass and have wide, unobstructed views to keep an eye out for anything coming toward their young. With food, water and safe places, these geese no longer need to leave during the winter.

# 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 Conversation and Ellis Bird Farm.

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

This quarter for the months of March, April and May

2023, your donations will go to:

Ellis Bird Farm

<https://www.ellisbirdfarm.ca>



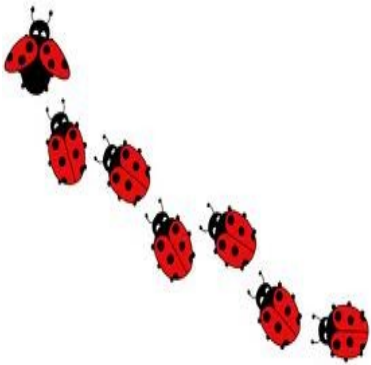
## Thank you for your support

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Wild Bird Store offers the “Book Nook” as a gathering place for your next meeting. The room is for rent for \$50.00 +GST fee which includes the

set-up of the chairs, video equipment, coffee, tea and water are available.

Please contact [info@wildbirdstore.ca](mailto:info@wildbirdstore.ca) for more information or to reserve your spot



The Wild Bird Store still has Ladybugs for sale. You can order in quantities of **1000 \$19.99+fees & GST** or **3000 \$56.99 +fees & GST** through Eventbrite. As this is a livestock item, there are no refunds.

We have a limited quantity of Ladybugs available, so place your order early to avoid disappointment.

Ladybugs will be available the 1st week of June 2023 and we will call you when they are available for pick-up. **PLEASE NOTE:** because they are livestock, once you have been called to pick-up you will have 48 hours to do so. Thank you

# OPTIONS FOR SHOPPING AT THE WILD BIRD STORE

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



**Shop in Store**



**Curbside Pick up**

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.



**Home 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.



**PLEASE NOTE: As of May 1, 2023 delivery charge will be \$10.00 within City of Calgary limits**

**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)



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Connected*



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Monday through Saturday 10:00am to 5:00pm

**CLOSED** Sundays and ALL Statutory holidays for Faith, Family & Friends

Phone: (403)640-2632

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



Monday, May 22, 2023

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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.



**DID YOU KNOW? EVERY  
Tuesday is Senior's day.  
Those who are 60+ receive  
10% off**

**Sorry! Excludes optics, books,  
cards & consignment items**

**HAPPY BIRDING!**

The Wild Bird Store

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