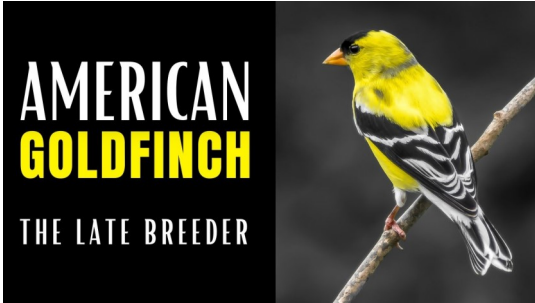




**ALBERTA**



American goldfinches feed their newborn broods a strict diet of regurgitated seeds rather than high-protein insects or a mix of seeds and insects favoured by other passerine (perching) birds. Coincidentally, this habit offers a distinct advantage against an occasional parasite, the Brown cowbird. Cowbirds are known for depositing their eggs in other birds' nest, where the large cowbird nestling often receives an unfair share of food from the unsuspecting parent, risking starvation for the other chicks. But baby cowbirds can't survive off seeds, and a cowbird hatchling in a goldfinch nest is doomed.

Vegetarianism also influences nesting time. From the earliest red-winged blackbird to the last of the common yellowthroats, migrating birds generally get right to the business of establishing territories, building nests and raising young as soon as they reach their breeding grounds. This is especially true for those that double—or—triple brood. Like other songbirds, goldfinches pair up in the spring, but they wait until the thistles, milkweeds, and other wildflowers start going to seed in summer to breed and nest. At this time, each male selects his own territory, flying in circles around an open area dense with weeds and shrubs, preferably near a water source (even a reliable roadside ditch will do). Warbling from a high perch, he defends his area by chasing other males away. His mate selects a suitable site for a nest and constructs it over four to six days while he helps by gathering material.

A goldfinch nest can be hard to find amid summer foliage, but it's easy to identify. Look for a sturdy, cup-shaped nest built into the fork of a branch in a sapling or large bush. Small twigs bark strips, and long plant fibers form the outside, which measures close to three inches across. Spider web silk acts as a glue to hold it together. The inside cup is deep, smooth, round, and firm. It is lined with catkins, bits of wool, and so much thistle and milkweed or cattail down that the pale, bluish-white eggs are almost hidden. Eventually the down becomes compacted during incubation and as the hatched chicks shift around. The nest is so tightly woven that it can fill up in a deluge of rain, sometimes drowning its inhabitants.



Unlike most birds, goldfinches do not continue to defend a territory once a family is started, and members of a flock move freely in and out of each other's areas. They are social birds, flocking together in winter and amicably sharing bird feeders at any time.

## How and What American goldfinches feed their chicks:

Like most finch species American goldfinches feed nearly exclusively on seeds and other plant materials and so do their chicks. Seeds are so important to the American goldfinch that they will actually hold off on breeding until mid to late summer in order to time the hatching of their chicks with the ripening of the seed crop. In particular, the goldfinch is waiting for the thistle seeds to ripen.

There are many varieties of thistle. Most are two to three feet tall and tend to grow in open fields, along road sides, in ditches and in farmers fields. They usually have prickles or thorns and they often grow in large groups. In general they are not well liked by many people but the American goldfinch loves them.

The American goldfinch feed their young a seed diet exclusively. Both male and female goldfinch will feed their babies. Now here is the interesting part. After feeding upon the ripened seeds the adults will return to the nest and regurgitate a mass of partially digested seeds along with a milky liquid. Stick with me for a moment while I explain why this is interesting.

A bird's digestive system has two stomachs. The first is called the gizzard and is used to grind up the food in a dry environment. Since birds don't have teeth they need this front-line stomach for grinding their food. The problem is, no real digesting occurs in the gizzard, just breaking up of the food. Digestion usually takes part in the second stomach where the stomach acids are located. So when a goldfinch regurgitates up the seeds it is assumed it comes from the first and not the second stomach. So where does this liquid mass come from? It is not known

What is known is that American goldfinch chicks grow extremely fast on the seed and liquid diet. What is more interesting is that the parents only feed their babies about once every 1 to 2 hours. Compare that to the insect feeding parents which are constantly stuffing their babies mouths with insects. Apparently the seeds and liquid diet is so nutritious the babies only need to be fed once an hour.



# 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.

## **Saturday July 8, 2023 Weaselhead North Glenmore**

(9:00am meet in 37th Street Parking Lot)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

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

## **Saturday July 22, 2023 Lafarge Meadows—Bow Bottom Trail**

(9:00am meet at South Boat Launch parking lot)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

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

## **Saturday August 5, 2023 Bebo Grove Fish Creek Park**

(9:00am meet at 24th Street parking lot)

Ticket Price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

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

## **Saturday August 19, 2023 Burnsmead Fish Creek Park**

(9:00am meet 153 Avenue SE—1st parking lot by water treatment plant)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

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

## **Saturday September 2, 2023 Frank Lake Day Trip **please bring lunch****

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

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

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

## **Saturday September 16, 2023 Elliston Park/68th Street at Wetlands**

(9:00am meet in East Elliston parking lot at 68th Street on right side before getting to the landfill)

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

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

## **Saturday September 30, 2023 Inglewood Bird Sanctuary—9th Avenue S.E.**

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

Ticket price: \$6.00 +GST +fees

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

## **Do you need help attracting birds to your backyard?**

## **Do you want advise on designing a backyard habitat for your feathered/winged friends?**

## **Do you have a problem in your backyard we can help solve?**

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 bird 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)





**QUESTION:** I am having a problem with ants getting into my hummingbird feeders. Anything I can do to stop them? I recently began adding red dye to my sugar solution and now I have ants. Is the red colour of my sugar solution somehow attracting them?

**RESPONSE:** First of all, it does not matter to the ants (or the hummers for that matter) whether your sugar water is clear or red. But the first thing I would check is whether your feeder has any leakages. Dripping sweet water is a real attraction to ants. Sometimes the leakages are not obvious, especially if your feeder is located in the hot sun. Hot weather causes plastic to expand which can lead to leakages, so make sure your feeder is in the shade. I am not sure what kind of hummer feeder you are using, but some designs are better than others and less prone to leakage. You might also try hanging your feeder by a thin fishing line which is hard for ants to climb down upon. And some folks apply Vaseline or some other oily liquid on the line attached to the feeder. But be careful—you do not want your birds to get this on their feathers! And you do have to keep reapplying these substances to keep them effective. If you can find out how the ants are getting up to your feeder, you might be able to head them off at the pass and install commercial ant traps or even a water moat. If they are coming up a pole, for instance, you could tie some bay leaves or mint leaves around it near the base. Ants do not like either of these kinds of leaves. You could also try moving your feeder around to different locations to put the ants off. Above all, keep your feeder clean and free of any sticky sugar water on the outside.



Ant moat available at The Wild Bird Store



**The Humm-Bug:** no nectar feeders attract hummingbirds by first attracting fruit flies. A favorite treat for the tiny fine-feathered friends. Simply open the two piece feeder, add 2 to 3 bananas and within a few days, hummingbirds will arrive to feast on the fruit flies.

Hummingbird feeders recommended at The Wild Bird Store



DAVID M. BIRD, Ph.D  
Emeritus Professor of  
Wildlife Biology  
McGill University



david.bird@mcgill.ca  
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

Wildwood Community Centre (4411 Spruce Drive SW)

Every Tuesday 3:00pm to 6:00pm

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 by 12:00noon the day before the truck is on location, either by emailing [orders@wildbirdstore.ca](mailto:orders@wildbirdstore.ca) or text (403) 701-4571**

# 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**

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



**Home Delivery**

**PLEASE NOTE:** For the summer months starting June 1st, delivery will be EVERY 2nd Thursday until September 1, 2023.

**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)





## Friends of Fish Creek Spring Fundraiser—WestJet Gift of Flight

Contest runs May 1st to July 3, 2023

The Friends of Fish Creek are offering you The Gift of Flight from WestJet. Win a round trip for 2 to anywhere WestJet flies! Pick up your tickets today and enjoy this amazing opportunity to see a new part of the world or return to a favourite place.

All funds raised will support the Friends of Fish Creek and our conservation efforts here in Fish Creek Provincial Park. As a small but far-reaching registered charity based in Fish Creek Provincial Park, we do not receive regular direct funding. For over thirty years the Friends of Fish Creek have been supported by a diverse combination of grants, sponsorships, membership fees, program fees, fundraisers, and especially donations from community members like you. Volunteers also play a key role in all of our activities and make it possible for us to continue our essential stewardship and community engagement activities.

Tickets are 1 for \$10, 5 for \$20, 25 for \$50, or go all in and get 100 tickets for \$100.

For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit:

<https://friendsoffishcreek.org/programs/flight/>



**FAMILY NATURE NIGHTS 2023**

FREE FUN FOR FAMILIES WITH KIDS AGED 4-12 BUT EVERYONE IS WELCOME

# Nature Heroes

**JULY 19, 2023**  
**REGISTRATION:**  
6:00-6:25PM  
**EVENT:**  
6:30-8:30PM

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2425 9 AVE SE, CALGARY

Will run rain or shine. In the event of extreme weather, notice of cancellation will be posted on our Facebook page, where you will also find a detailed map of our location.

We can only accommodate a limited number of families at these events, so be sure to arrive early to secure your family's spot.

This is a free event (though donations are appreciated!).

*A community connected by a love of nature.*

FOR MORE INFO:  
Facebook.com/NatureAB or  
naturekids@naturealberta.ca

[naturealberta.ca/nature-kids](https://naturealberta.ca/nature-kids)

# 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 June, July and August 2023, your donations will go to:



## Thank you for your support

Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation

<https://www.calgarywildlife.org/>



## 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**



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

Phone: (403)640-2632

Web: wildbirdstore.ca

email: info@wildbirdstore.ca



**THE WILD BIRD STORE WILL BE**

**CLOSED**

**CANADA DAY Saturday July 1, 2023**

**Sunday July 2, 2023**

**Monday July 3, 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.



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

**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!**