



RED-HEADED WOODPECKER

Red-headed woodpeckers (RHW) were common to abundant in the nineteenth century, probably because there were more mature forests with nut crops and dead trees. They were so common that orchard owners and farmers used to pay a bounty for them, and in 1840 Audubon reported that 100 were shot from a single cherry tree in one day in the early 1900s. RHWs followed crops of beech nuts in northern beech forests that are much less extensive today. At the same time, the great chestnut blight killed virtually all American chestnut trees and removed another abundant food source. RHWs may now be more attuned to acorn abundance than to beech nuts. Though the species was common in towns and cities a century ago, it began declining in urban areas as people started felling dead trees and trimming branches. After the loss of nut-producing trees, perhaps the biggest factor limiting the RHWs is the availability of dead trees in their open-forest habitats. Management programs that create and maintain snags and dead branches may help RHWs. Although they readily excavate nests in utility poles, a study found that eggs did not hatch and young did not fledge when the birds nested in newer poles (3-4 years old), possibly because of the creosote used to preserve the poles. In the middle twentieth century, RHWs were quite commonly hit by cars as the birds foraged for aerial insect along roadsides.

RHWs climb up tree trunks and main limbs like other woodpeckers, often staying still for long periods. They have their two toes pointing forward, while the other two point backward. This assists them in gripping and has also given them the power of good mobility. They are famous for catching insects in midair and being among the only woodpeckers that store their food in tree cavities, which they cover with wood or bark for later. Prospective mates play “hide and seek” with each other around dead stumps and telephone poles, and once mated they may stay together for several years. Both males and females perform aggressive bobbing displays by pointing their heads forward, drooping their wings, and holding their tails up at an angle. Males and females look very similar to each other (sexual dimorphism), in fact they are practically indistinguishable even when taken in the hand. To know the gender, you actually need to run a DNA test or a dissection of the bird.

The RHW has gained the reputation of a bad-tempered bird for its display of aggression. They are highly territorial, especially during the breeding season and wouldn't hesitate getting aggressive with even larger species of birds, when it comes to defending its nesting or food storage areas. They can be quick to pick fights with pushy European starlings and the much bigger Pileated woodpeckers.

RHW predators include snakes, foxes, raccoons, flying squirrels, Cooper's hawks, Peregrine falcons and Eastern screech-owls.

After birth, both parents would feed their fledglings and protect them from enemies. Though, there have been reports that these birds also practice cooperative breeding, which means, more than two birds can also be involved in defending a nest and raising the young.

A RHW takes 2-3 weeks or more to excavate one single hole.

PLEASE READ THE COMPANION PIECE REGARDING THE RARE SIGHTING OF A RHW IN INGLEWOOD BIRD SANCTUARY ON PAGE 8



**PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING
CHANGE IN DELIVERY SCHEDULE**

**Commencing June 1, 2026 deliveries
Will be EVERY SECOND week**

**Delivery dates will be as follows for the month of
July 2026**

July 2, July 16 and 30

We apologize for any inconvenience!



ON LOCATION

Wildwood Community Centre (4411 Spruce Drive SW)

EVERY Tuesday 3:00pm to 6:00pm

PLEASE NOTE: Seed truck will not be at this location Tuesday July 22nd

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

Every Wednesday 2:00pm to 5:30pm

PLEASE NOTE: Seed Truck will not be at this location on Wednesday July 1, 15 and 23

The Mobile Seed Truck is a mini version of The Wild Bird Store, and as such, we are limited to what we can carry. It is therefore, highly recommended that you place an order the day before the truck is to be at your desired location. This will ensure that when you come to the Mobile Seed Truck you get the items you need. You can place orders by emailing orders@wildbirdstore.ca or texting to

(403) 701-4571

OPTIONS FOR SHOPPING AT THE WILD BIRD STORE

In Store or on the Seed Truck



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, call the store (403) 640-2632, pop your trunk or hatch and leave the rest to us.



Home Delivery

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 YOUR ORDER IN AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AS SPACE IS LIMITED!

If you have any specials instructions, please do not forget to inform us when you place your order.

A minimum order of \$25.00 (before GST) is required on ALL delivery orders
Delivery charge of \$10.00 (before GST) is applicable to every 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
(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. (Sorry! - excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items.)



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)





QUESTION: Why do birds choose the places they do to make their nests?

RESPONSE: Well, I actually see two layers to this interesting question. The first layer is much broader, having to do with the type of bird or species we are referring to. Let us tackle the first.

Choosing a nest site and a nest design has a lot to do with the species of bird in question. They have to consider the tools they have on hand to build a nest, such as their beaks and feet, and also where they live, e.g. near water, in a grassland, on a cliff, etc. Keeping predators from finding and accessing their nest to eat their eggs and/or young is very critical in nest site location. A good example are the orioles which prefer to hang their pendulous grassy nests from their very tips of drooping branches right near the tops of tall mature deciduous trees to keep squirrels from raiding them.

Nest site location all depends on need. For example, Bald eagles like to build huge nests because it must be able to support at any given time two adult eagles, up to three eaglets almost adult-sized, and numerous large prey items like rabbits, fish, birds, etc. The largest Bald eagle nest ever recorded was discovered in 1963 in St. Petersburg, Florida. It was 9.5 feet (2.9 meters) wide, 20 feet (6 meters) deep, and weighed over two tons (4,409 pounds)! To support a nest even half this size, the eagles must obviously choose a structure that can handle it, often a huge mature tree or sometimes a powerline pylon. They do not start off with a nest of the size described above, but add on new nesting materials each year. They are long-lived birds, sometimes seeing their 30th birthdays or more, so you can well imagine how large their nests can get! To build such a nest, these birds have powerful feet and bills to break off branches and place the sticks in just the right places to build a solid nest.

Now let's turn to the smallest birds in North America—the hummingbirds. These tiny birds only weigh between 2 and 20 grams and are 3 to 5 inches (7.5 to 13 centimeters) long. Thus, they only require a very tiny nest about the size of a walnut to house their two eggs no bigger than the smallest jellybean. Made of dandelion, spider webs, and lichen, these nests are often located on a protected slanted branch on a tree or dense shrub sometime waist-high but more often higher up out of reach of ground predators. They have even been known to place their nests on wind chimes or a security camera.

Now, having said all that, I know that birds also make dumb decisions when choosing a nest site. One of the funniest examples was a Red-shouldered hawk which chose to locate its nest right on the barbeque in someone's backyard! Naturally, that was not going to sit well with the owner. Fortunately, that story had a happy ending. The nest was relocated nearby to the homeowner's roof and the chicks all fledged and.....the owner got to eat his steaks!

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.....

ABOUT DR. DAVID

<p>DAVID M. BIRD, Ph.D. Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology McGill University</p>		<p>CANADA JAY MÉSANGEAI DU CANADA</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>www.canadajay.org</p>
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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 or email david.bird@mcgill.ca.



Myriad number of American robins every spring choose to build their round mud and grass cup-shaped nests on the porch lights of a main entrance to a house. Not a smart choice to my mind, mainly because every time someone wants to enter or leave the house, the birds are flushed from their nest! Robins have even been known to build their nest on a train car, having to actually fly along with the moving train to attend to their eggs and young.

The funniest nest location that I ever heard of was in the pocket of a man's trousers!

Okay, okay, the pants were worn by a scarecrow.

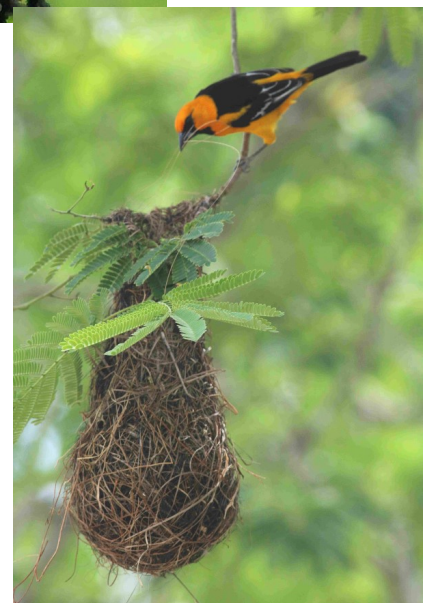
I could go on and on, but basically, a given species of bird has to build a nest using the tools that nature has provided and in the cleverest location they can find to prevent their eggs and young from falling victim to predators and equally important factor—weather.



Hummingbird nest



Bald eagle nest



Oriole nest



American robin nest on top of light
Fixture by backdoor



JIM ST. LAURENT

Jim's years of guiding bird walks for the Wild Bird Store has been instrumental in teaching "birders" how to get the most out of their birding excursions.

As per usual, Jim reminds you to dress for Spring weather and carry water for rehydration.

PLEASE BE ADVISED: Jim will be away for a period of time starting in July. Please consult future newsletters or the Wild Bird Store online calendar at www.wildbirdstore.ca for future dates.




◀ Reels ▾ 🔍 👤



DID YOU KNOW :

- Every bumblebee you see in summer will die by fall. Every one.
- Except the new queens. They dig into the ground. Alone.
- They sleep underground for 6-9 months. Alone. In the dark.
- In spring, she wakes up. Starving. Alone. Everyone she knew is dead.
- She has to build an entire colony from nothing. By herself.
- If she fails to find food in the first hours, she dies. Colony never happens.
- Every bumblebee colony starts with one exhausted, starving, grieving queen.
- Waking up alone. Everyone gone.

👍 3.8K
💬 73
➦

Why Water Matters for Wildlife

As the summer of 2026 has been forecast to be HOT, it's not just people that will be feeling the heat. Wildlife in our gardens, parks and natural spaces will also be

struggling to stay cool and hydrated. During these sweltering weeks, providing water sources for wildlife in your garden is certainly a compassionate act, but also an essential one.

While we are hyper-aware of how unbearable excessive heat can be for us and while we may also be asked to conserve water consumption by the City of Calgary, it's crucial to consider how dangerous this can be for wildlife as well. Not only do animals need water for drinking, but many also need it for bathing and cooling down. By providing easily accessible water sources, you can offer a lifeline to birds, butterflies, mammals, and other wildlife in your garden.

One of the simplest and most effective ways is by setting up a birdbath. Place it in a shaded area to keep the water cool and prevent rapid evaporation. Adding a few stones for perches and taking the time to clean and refill the birdbath every few days will ensure fresh water and prevent the spread of diseases. This simple act can also help eliminate mosquito eggs and larvae, making it a win-win for both wildlife and your garden environment.

For those looking to attract butterflies, creating a butterfly puddling area is a great option. Simply fill a shallow dish with soil or sand, add a few rocks for perching, and pour in enough water to moisten the soil. Butterflies will flock to these spots, enjoying the minerals and moisture.



Drippers, wigglers and bubblers (all available at The Wild Bird Store) can also be a fantastic addition to your garden. Hanging a drip jug over your birdbath (see photo on left) can attract birds with the sound of dripping water (especially for hummingbirds who will not use a birdbath but prefer to fly through a spray of water). You can easily make one using a plastic milk jug with a tiny hole in the bottom and filling it with water. Water will slowly drip out, and the sound will draw birds looking for a cool bath and a refreshing drink.



Don't forget to give your native plants an extra watering during these hot summer weeks. Native plants are adapted to local conditions and provide essential resources for wildlife.

However, even these resilient plants can struggle with prolonged heat and drought. A little extra water can help them thrive, ensuring they continue to offer food and shelter to local wildlife.

Clean a birdbath and keep the birds safe

Since the water in a birdbath is typically stagnant and not naturally filtered as it is in a stream or pond, it can accumulate potentially harmful bacteria and pathogens. Regular cleaning and water changes help prevent stagnant water that can breed mosquitoes, and reduce the spread of disease among birds. Birdbaths may need more frequent refreshing during hot weather, periods of algae growth, or times of heavy bird activity.

Materials needed: Rubber gloves, scrub brush, hose or bucket, water, distilled white vinegar.

Mix a solution of 9 parts water and 1 part distilled white vinegar. Dip a scrub brush into the cleaning solution and scrub the birdbath, focusing on areas with heavy algae buildup. Rinse birdbath thoroughly after cleaning. Or consider adding a purification disc to your birdbath (also available at The Wild Bird Store).

The Wild Bird Store has birdbaths and accessories and can offer advice on any questions you have. Please ask any member of our staff

Birdwatchers flock to Calgary park to catch glimpse of rare woodpecker

[Amir Said](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jun 14, 2026

A local celebrity is causing a stir in the City of Calgary!

Recent sightings of a Red-headed woodpecker in the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary have left the local birdwatching community in a frenzy, with countless birders coming to the popular park daily to catch a glimpse of the rare bird.

There's a reason the Red-headed woodpecker has generated so much interest—the species doesn't live anywhere near Calgary. It's a "vagrant" species, which in the birdwatching community refers to a bird that appears outside its normal range.

Jody Allair with Birds Canada says the woodpecker, which is primarily found in southern Ontario and Manitoba with smaller numbers in Saskatchewan and Quebec, occasionally shows up in Alberta.

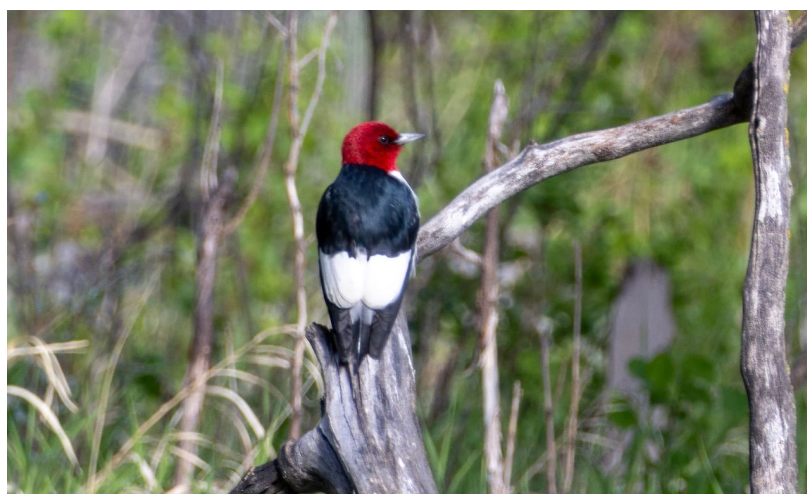
"Normally it's a very sort of remote, rural place like a farmstead in the middle of nowhere," he said. "So to have one in the middle of a city is pretty fun, and hopefully it sticks around."

The Red-headed woodpecker has faced significant conservation challenges, with fewer than 5,000 believed to be left in Canada, according to the federal government.

It is classified as an endangered species by the Canadian government, and it's believed the population across North America dropped by 67 per cent from 1970 to 2014.

Allair said the primary struggles the Red-headed woodpecker has faced are habitat loss and a decline in insect populations, which make up much of the bird's diet.

Please remember to enjoy the bird respectfully. Don't disturb it. Don't make it fly. Don't approach too closely. Just use some common sense and enjoy from a distance, and don't linger too long, right? The bird's just trying to do its thing.



Amir Said/CBC

What the unraveling of environmental safeguards means for the birds we love

3 Jun, 2026 | [Featured News Stories](#)

According to the Canadian Climate Institute, “Canada’s commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 is now firmly out of reach.” This, at a time when climate change is already having a significant impact on so many bird populations. Here are just a few examples:

- Arctic-nesting shorebirds like Red knot and Hudsonian godwit are undergoing steep declines. These birds make long and challenging migrations, each travelling 30,000 km annually, returning to the Arctic to take advantage of insects and plants that emerge within a short window of time. Climate change is altering the suitability of breeding habitats and the timing of food pulses, so food may not be there when the birds need it most
- As global temperatures rise, high-elevation species have begun migrating upslope. For birds already living near mountaintops like Bicknell’s thrush or White-tailed ptarmigan, there will simply be no further uphill to go, leading to shrinking ranges and local extinctions
- More frequent freeze-thaw cycles are impacting species which cache food in the Fall, like the iconic Canada jay. Comparable to plugging and unplugging the fridge in our own homes, these cycles are spoiling more of the birds’ stored supplies, which is impacting survival and reproduction
- Also worsened by climate change is an increase in frequency and severity of wildfires, which are driving habitat losses for birds that rely on mature boreal forests like Cape May warbler, Brown creeper, and Canada warbler

If you would like to read more on this matter from Birds of Canada, please google the following:
<https://www.birdscanada.org/what-the-unraveling-of-environmental-safeguards-means-for-the-birds-we-love>



Red knot

Canada jay



White-tailed ptarmigan



THE AMAZING STORY OF A HAWK RAISED BY EAGLES

The case of a Red-tailed hawk being raised by Bald eagles in British Columbia captivated birdwatchers and scientists worldwide. The story has unfolded at a nest located in the small town of Sidney, in the Shoal Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary (SHMBS), about 30 kms north of Victoria. Two young hawks were spotted in the nest in late May, joining the two adult eagles and three eaglets. The adults are experienced parents: they have been nesting in this spot for the last 26 years and typically raise two or three chicks every year.

Unfortunately, one hawk chick died and no one knows when it happened. It may have starved to death. Bald eagles are usually hard pressed to raise their own young. It is not uncommon for them to lose chicks because they have too many mouths to feed.

Two theories have emerged on how two hawk chicks came to be in the nest. The dominant theory suggests that the eagles raided a hawk nest and brought the chicks back as food for their three eaglets. Once in the nest, the chicks begged for food, the eagles' parental instincts kicked in, and the chicks were adopted.

"It's not uncommon for eagles to bring back live prey, especially when the prey is small enough that the talons wrap around it," says David Hancock, a biologist and founder of the Hancock Wildlife Foundation. He has witnessed this on three occasions with the help of his live camera feeds.

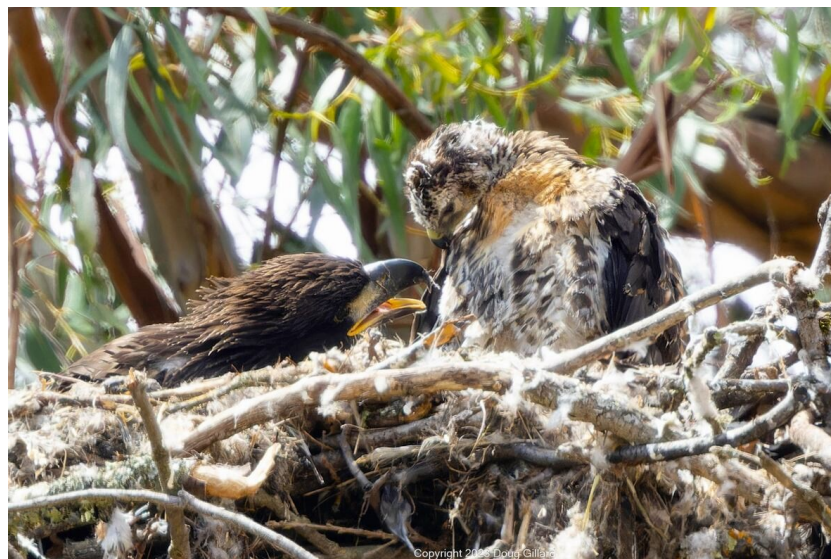
If the hawks were carried to the nest, it's possible an eagle's talon punctured the one that died, causing an infection or other fatal wound.

The second theory maintains that a hawk laid the eggs in the eagle nest. Residents Donna and Terry Rendle saw an adult Red-tailed hawk near the nest on more than one occasion. "It was my husband who saw the hawk perched on the eagle of the nest near the beginning of May." Donna says. SHMBS is not hawk habitat, and the hawks hunt over a kilometer away, yet I too have seen them in the sanctuary on two occasions this year.

The conundrum deepens when the incubation and fledgling periods of hawks and eagles are taken into consideration. The eagle eggs were laid in late February and hatched in early April. Around that time, the hawk eggs were laid, either in the eagle nest or a hawk nest. The hawk chicks hatched in early May.

A strong windstorm that spring knocked down many trees, so it's possible the hawks' nest was destroyed and they sought out another place to lay their eggs. Did the adult hawk follow her stolen chicks back to the eagle's nest, or was she checking up on her deposit, laid while the eagle was absent? Which theory is more plausible? What's noteworthy is this isn't the first time Red-tailed hawks have been raised by Bald eagles. Occurrences have been documented in southern British Columbia, Washington State, and Michigan. In some of these instances, egg laying by the hawk was indicated.

The surviving young hawk, named Spunky by the Hancock Wildlife Foundation, fledged on June 23rd, and is currently doing well. It returns to the nest to be fed, and witnesses have reported seeing feedings outside the nest. Its eaglet siblings are now branching and should fledge soon. What happens when Spunky meets other wild eagles remains to be seen. Red-tailed hawks are about one-fourth the size of Bald eagles, but they're also aggressive and capable of defending themselves against the larger raptors, experts say.



When asked for predictions on the hawk's survival, Hancock notes that Spunky has "one thing in his favour: proof to be a survivor. Most eaglets are aggressive. This hawk has proven that audacity gets you some things."

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

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



Wednesday, July 1, 2026

****The Wild Bird Store will be closed****

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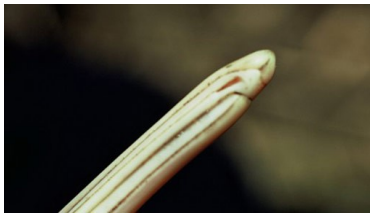
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Go to YouTube, type in the search bar “The Wild Bird Store” to watch our videos and to help us become more visible. Be sure to click on “subscribe” before you leave the page.



DID YOU KNOW?

The only bird with nostrils at the end of its beak is the kiwi of New Zealand. This placement helps it sniff for food, such as worms and insects on the ground. It often snorts to clear its nostrils.



SENIOR'S DAY

Is **EVERY** Tuesday.

If you are over 60 you will receive
10% off your order

HAPPY BIRDING!

Sorry! Excludes optics, books,
cards & consignment items