

BLUE JAY



Some backyards may be lucky enough to have a Blue jay pair nest in their backyard, but

Usually Blue jays prefer to raise their young in the forest; and they are

Very secretive about their nest locations. Another interesting fact about the Blue jay is you will certainly hear him long before you actually see him.

And of course everyone knows the peanut-in-the shell is his favourite food. But not just any peanut will do.

When given a choice, they will pick up each peanut and give it a shake. This helps them to determine by weight which one is the freshest and are there more than a single peanut inside the shell. The shell is important too – as most of his preferences will be “cached” for later consumption, so if the shell is cracked or broken, moisture may seep in and cause mold!

Here are some more interesting facts about the Blue jay:

1. Blue jays are not blue! It is just a trick of the light!. A Northern cardinal is red because its feathers are red pigment. Blue jays have no such blue pigment. If you crush the wing of a cardinal into a powder, it will be red. If you do the same with a blue jay feather, the powder will be brown. Blue jays (and all blue birds!) use a little trick called light scattering. In a very basic nutshell, when visible light strikes the feathers, all of the colors pass through the feather EXCEPT blue. The blue color is reflected, so your eyes will see BLUE.
2. Blue jays like to party! As we have mentioned, jays are loud, boisterous birds that typically make a big entrance. So we shouldn't be surprised that a group of Blue jays is often referred to as a “party” or a “band”
3. Blue jays have been known to chip off light-colored paint to store and eat later, most likely for the limestone these paints contain—a source of calcium needed to lay eggs. If your house is experiencing Blue jay paint removal, try putting out egg shells for a natural source of calcium.



**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
August 2026**

August 13 and August 27

We apologize for any inconvenience!



On Location:

Wildwood Community Centre (4411 Spruce Drive SW):

On Tuesdays 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm

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

On Wednesdays 2:00pm to 5:30pm

Please place orders by 12:00 noon the day BEFORE truck is on location

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.

Text us @ (403)701-4571 OR email us at orders@wildbirdstore.ca

OPTIONS FOR SHOPPING AT THE WILD BIRD STORE



Shop in Store

In Store or the Seed Truck



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 curbside outside the store, 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 or



QUESTION: I have had no less than three woodpeckers killed by a hawk on my feeders over the period of just one month. Is that an unusually high frequency? It is almost as if the hawk is targeting these birds in particular.

RESPONSE: Three woodpeckers in a month's period with no similar attacks on your other backyard birds is certainly worth pondering!

The only things I can think of are the following. First, perhaps the posture of woodpeckers, i.e. hanging vertically with their eyes looking forward to their food, might make them more vulnerable to an attack from behind. Perhaps even the noise of their pecking might dull their hearing ability? But that begs an important question...why adopt a feeding or resting posture that is fatal in the first place?! Second, the fact that you have had not one but three woodpeckers lost to possibly the same hawk, likely a Sharp-shinned or Cooper's Hawk, might mean that the raptor has developed a particular search image for these birds and perhaps even a successful foraging strategy. However, the hawk would have to find a way to counteract a woodpecker's typical response to any predator (aside from flying away) which is a quick movement to the other side of the tree they are clinging to. Perhaps that is not possible or a useful tactic on your feeder? As for why the hawk would select woodpeckers for prey over chickadees, finches, and even doves, a Cooper's Hawk's favourite menu item, I doubt that they would taste any different to a hawk! Thankfully, hairy, downy and several other woodpecker species are not showing any signs of declining numbers in North America.

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 or email david.bird@mcgill.ca

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



Young sunflowers exhibit heliotropism, meaning they move to track the sun across the sky. They face east in the morning and gradually turn west by evening, resetting overnight to repeat the process. That movement helps them grow stronger by capturing as much sunlight as possible.

Researchers have found that east-facing sunflowers warm up faster in the morning. This warmth attracts more pollinators like bees, which are most active earlier in the day. It's a clever adaptation that improves their chances of being pollinated. The faster they heat up, the sooner they start drawing in visitors. Once mature, though, they stop turning and settle permanently facing east.

Sunflowers are used in a process called phytoremediation, where plants absorb harmful substances from soil. After nuclear disasters like Chernobyl and Fukushima, sunflowers were planted to draw out radioactive particles and heavy metals. This makes them more than ornamental. Their ability to clean up the environment highlights how powerful and practical plants can be when harnessed in the right way.

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)



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 Nature Centre.

We ask for your support quarterly for each of these organizations

For June, July and August 2026 your donations will go to:



<https://www.calgarywildlife.org>



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

WILDLIFE RESCUE ORGANIZATIONS IN AND AROUND ALBERTA



1. Northern Alberta Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation (WILDNorth)

12515 128 Street, Edmonton
780-914-4118 www.wildnorth.ca

2. Alberta Society for Injured Birds of Prey (ASIBP)

51562 Rge. Rd. 222, Sherwood Park
780-922-3024 & 780-720-5507 www.raptorshelter.org

3. Medicine River Wildlife Centre (MRWC)

Twp. Rd. 360 between Rge. Rd. 40 and 42, Spruce View
403-728-3467 www.medicineriverwildlifecentre.ca

4. Alberta Institute For Wildlife Conservation (AIWC)

Twp. Rd. 282 & Rge. Rd. 30, Madden
403-946-2361 www.aiwc.ca

5. Cochrane Ecological Institute (CEI)

Twp. Rd. 280 & Rge. Rd. 51, Cochrane
403-932-5632 www.ceiwildlife.org

6. Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society

11555 85 St NW, Calgary
403-214-1312 www.calgarywildlife.org

7. Alberta Birds of Prey Centre

2124 16 Ave, Coaldale
403-345-4262 www.burrowingowl.com

* Emergency * 911

-In an emergency where there is immediate danger to humans

* Report a Poacher * 1-800-642-3800

-Report suspicious or illegal hunting and fishing activity, or dangerous wildlife encounters

-For reporting large, injured wildlife (bears, moose, deer and cougars)

When suspected sick, injured, trapped or in-need wildlife is found, please note the species, location and other relevant information and contact the nearest wildlife rescue organization for advice and so they can determine if rescue is required. Phone numbers valid as of 2023.

Made by Kamala and Kyle with the hope that it will help fellow wildlife lovers when they come across animals and birds in need!

www.KamalaKylePhotography.com

It's hard to miss a five-foot-tall bird with bright white plumage.

7, 2026. (Amir Said/CBC)

When Calgary birder Jonah O'Brien heard a Whooping crane had been seen along a rural road about an hour northeast of the city Tuesday morning, he was quick to make his way there.

"It's really cool," said O'Brien, who has documented more than 270 bird species in his birding career. It was his first time seeing a Whooping crane, which is among the most coveted Canadian species for birdwatchers to find.

Birdwatchers keen on finding whooping cranes in Canada typically have to go to Saskatchewan to catch the birds during their fall migration, which is why this summertime sighting in Kneehill County was a welcome surprise for Calgary-area birders.

But this Whooping crane being away from home isn't all that's got birdwatchers excited about this sighting.

Gavin McKinnon, co-author of *A Field Guide to the Birds of Alberta*, says the bird represents a "conservation" success story thanks to strict legal protections, habitat preservation and intensive captive breeding programs which account for the Whooping crane population rebound.

"The more individuals there are, the more likely it is for one to stray a little bit," McKinnon said.

While they've experienced a well-documented population resurgence, Whooping cranes are still considered endangered by the federal government of Canada and the United States, as well as the Alberta government.

"Definitely respect the bird," said McKinnon, who was among the first to find the Whooping crane and expects others to go looking for it. "Don't try and pressure it and get too close...if it appears stressed, back up, give it some space and just encourage others to be respectful as well."

McKinnon says this particular Whooping crane is likely a young bird that isn't breeding this year. He pointed to other out-of-the ordinary sightings in recent years, like a bird that spent the summer west of Calgary in 2024 and another that was documented near Lethbridge in 2015.

"It's just hanging out in southern Alberta for the summer, where it can find some food, and will probably continue on migration maybe next year," McKinnon said. "Who knows? Maybe it'll end up at Wood Buffalo breeding."

Whooping crane populations in the wild plummeted to only about 20 individuals in the 1940s, with hunting and habitat loss bringing the species to the brink of extinction.



“You can’t miss it,” O’Brien said. “It’s a mega rarity.”

Standing at about five feet tall, the Whooping crane is the tallest bird in North America. The bird can be distinguished from the more common Sandhill crane by its size, all-white plumage, facial markings and black wingtips visible in flight.

The only natural migratory Whooping crane flock left in the wild travels 4,000 kms from the birds’ winter home in Texas to their nesting grounds in the isolated wetlands of Wood Buffalo National Park every year.

At this time of year, the flock's population of about 550 birds are spending their summer nearly 1,000 kms north of Calgary, in the park straddling the border with the Northwest Territories.

That makes this crane a "vagrant," which in the birdwatching community refers to a bird that appears outside its normal range



Two baffled owlets watch squirrels below, as if asking, 'We eat those, right?'

Leigh Cook Fri, July 17, 2026 at 6:14 p.m.

In an oddly relatable scene, two young owlets stared down at a pair of squirrels with the kind of uncertainty usually associated with someone trying to make sense of an unfamiliar menu item.

The birds fixate on the squirrels beneath them, leaning over the edge as if they cannot decide whether they are looking at prey, a threat, or neither

A short video posted to a nature appreciation community on Reddit focuses on two owlets watching squirrels below.



Photo Credit: Reddit

COME MEET YOUR RURAL NEIGHBOURS!

OPEN FARM DAYS - August 15 & 16, 2026

Alberta Open Farm Days is your free, behind-the-scenes look at the province's agriculture and local food system. It is also an incubator for agricultural tourism and rural sustainability, bringing Albertans together through educational and hands-on experiences that show where food comes from and how it is produced.

For one weekend, farms, ranches, breweries, orchards, dairies, and food producers across the province open their gates to the public.

- **See it firsthand:** Walk a field, meet the animals, or learn about the tools and technology that power modern agriculture.
- **Meet the people:** Talk directly with the farmers, ranchers, producers, and culinary partners who grow and prepare your food, and get your questions answered.
- **Taste local:** Many host locations feature farm-to-table meals, onsite specials, samples, food trucks, or Alberta-made products for purchase.

Alberta Open Farm Days is a chance to connect with rural communities, support agricultural tourism, and experience the diversity of food grown and raised right here in Alberta.

For more information, please visit: <https://albertaopenfarmdays.ca/>

Custom Woolen Mills is a small, family owned and operated, woolen mill!

We are located between the towns of Carstairs and Linden, Alberta. Using industrial revolution era machinery, we transform raw sheep's wool and the fibre from alpacas, llamas, goats, and bison, into finished products like hand-knitting yarns and woolen socks.





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MACHINE THAT LETS CROWS SWAP
TRASH FOR FOOD, TURNING THE
CLEVER BIRDS INTO HELPERS THAT
CLEAN THE CITY.**

Staying Connected



>>>>>>>>>>

5901 3rd Street S.E.,
Calgary, AB T2H 1K3

Phone (403)640-2632

www.wildbirdstore.ca

info@wildbirdstore.ca

The Store is open Monday through Saturday 10:00am to 5:00pm

We are CLOSED Sundays, and ALL Statutory holidays for Faith, Family and Friends

We still offer curbside pickup every day we are open and delivery service on every 2nd Thursday of each month



Monday August 3, 2026 (The Wild Bird Store will be closed to celebrate this holiday)

FOLLOW US ON:

Facebook @thewildbirdstoreyyyc

X (Twitter) @wildbirdstoreyyyc

Instagram @thewildbirdstore

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?

How Do Birds Keep Their Balance While Standing on one leg?

The main reason birds are able to keep their balance is down to anatomy. A bird's pelvis has a pair of lumbosacral canals that contain cerebrospinal fluid and allow them to maintain a sense of equilibrium. It's not an exact one-to-one, but these canals function in a similar way to the inner ears of humans.

The birds most likely to stand on one leg are bird species that spend a lot of time in and around water. (Think great blue herons, Canada geese, sandpipers, mallards, wood ducks, etc.) This is likely because water causes more and faster heat loss than air.



HAPPY BIRDING!