

J.J. Cardinal's Notebook

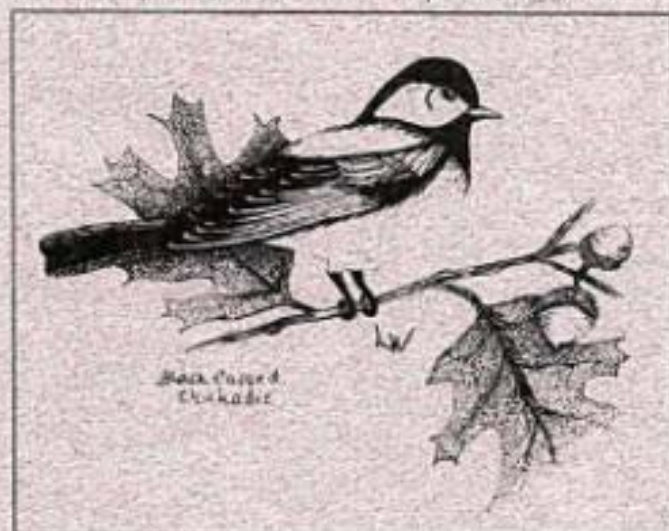
WINTER 1991-92

INFORMATION AND NEWS FOR THOSE WHO ENJOY WILD BIRDS

VOL. I NO. 1

WINTER FEEDING

Winter's migration has brought a new cast of characters to our backyard feeders. Our winter feeding stations still have quite an assortment of wintering birds; you will see the Blue Jay, Black-Capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-Breasted Nuthatch, White Breasted Nuthatch, Northern Cardinal, American Tree Sparrow, White-Throated Sparrow, White Crowned



Sparrow, Dark Eyed Junco, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, Evening Grosbeak, and more!

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife's 1980 study on the attractiveness of various seeds to specific species helps determine the most efficient seed to attract the desired birds in your backyard habitat (U.S. Dept. of Int. Scientific Report #233). Many common foods in some commercial blends such as fine-cracked corn, wheat, sorghum, hulled oats and rice were found unattractive to most birds. Seeds like the small, black oil-type sunflower are preferred over the black and grey striped sunflower. White proso millet was the best seed for use in attracting the small seed-eating species. Feeding preferences differ strikingly among many birds, consequently formulating a "mixture" attractive to all desired birds in your backyard feeding stations is difficult.

Black-oil sunflower seeds are popular among many of the more colorful varieties: American Goldfinch, Chickadee, Grosbeak, Finches, Cardinals, and The Tufted Titmouse.

You may also wish to provide fruits and berries mixed with corn meal and suet (see Suet Feeding p. 2). Peanut butter is a relatively inexpensive source of high-protein, which is often scarce during winter months.

(CONTINUED PG. 2)

THAT J.J. IS A REAL CHARACTER!

So, who is J.J. Cardinal? And why is everyone so fond of him? He's in tune with nature, and the environment around us. He recalls a simpler life. To those close to him, he insists Mr. Bush got his slogan of "a kinder, gentler world" from him! It is a way of life for J.J., not merely a slogan.

J.J. is a composite character of the bird-watcher in all of us. He is the spectacled, gentlemanly neighbor who faithfully maintains his well-populated bird feeding stations. J.J. is also the wide-eyed child intrigued by the swooping flight of a Black Capped Chickadee...or the outdoors enthusiast who's absolutely delighted in the sighting of a new bird, or the discovery of an abandoned nest. J.J. relishes the dawn of each new day and the opportunities ahead to learn more of mother nature and the behavior of those magnificent flying creatures and critters, alike.

There is a little of J.J. in all of us, and we hope you will enjoy a new store dedicated to the spirit of him and all naturalists like him. We hope, too, you will share your special knowledge with others through letters and suggestions which we can pass along in J.J. Cardinal's Notebook, or through the various nature programs at J.J. Cardinal's Wild Bird & Nature Store. (Editors Note: see page 3 for related article.)

J.J. Cardinal



WINTER FEEDING

(continued from pg. 1)

All birds need to consume water to survive. A reliable source of water is essential to attracting backyard birds. All birds lose water while breathing through evaporation from the moist lining of their lungs and through their skin. Another factor in water consumption is the relative size of the bird.

Most birds drink to replenish this water loss, by dipping their bill and tipping their head allowing the water to slide down their throat to be swallowed. This gives the appearance they are looking skyward, particularly with long-billed species. Some other species like doves and pigeons will dip their bill into a pool and suck water to drink.

A year-around source of water is necessary, and should be fresh, clean and refilled periodically. During winter months, chemicals should never be used to prevent freezing. Your backyard birds will find their birdbath popular even on the coldest winter day, provided water is not frozen. Pouring hot water into a birdbath can thaw ice, but may not be practical on a regular basis.

An immersion water heater, designed for outdoor use, should be placed at a depth of 1 1/2 to 3 inches, and connected to an approved outdoor, grounded extension cord.

Birdbaths should be located as close to the faucet or water source as possible to eliminate hoses, and lugging heavy buckets for clean and refilling. But, be sure to position the birdbath for easy, enjoyable viewing. Your birds will enjoy the water, and you can enjoy watching them from the warmth of your home.

SUET FEEDING

One high-energy selection for your bird feeding is suet (beef fat). It is popular with nearly all birds during the cold weather months, particularly with the Woodpecker family. At temperatures above 70 degrees (F) suet will melt and turns rancid. So be careful feeding with suet in warmer months.

Other meat fats, such as bacon drippings, can be added to, or used in place of, suet as wonderful sources of protein for your back yard birds.

Seeds, grains, and a variety of foods can be added to your suet recipe. By rendering (melting) your suet twice, you will experience less spoilage and have a harder substance for birds to peck at. You can have fun experimenting with your own recipes, but to get you started, here's one of J.J. Cardinal's tried-and-true concoctions:

J.J. CARDINAL'S WOODPECKER SUET TREAT

3 lb ground raw beef suet; 1 cup bread crumbs
1/4 cup peanut butter; 1 cup coarse ground sunflower chips

Melt suet (10 min. in microwave at 1/2 power), stir and let cool. Reheat. When liquified, add ingredients. Pour mixture into 9x11 pan, cool and refrigerate to set. Cut into squares and hang in suet cage. Enjoy the fun!



NEW STORE DELIGHTS LOCAL BIRDS!!

If backyard birding is your thing, guess what? You're not alone. Over 80 million of you bird-brains have made watching, feeding and tracking birds the second most popular passive sport in North America. (Ok, so what's #1, you ask? Try gardening. So, if you like birds, AND plants, you are REALLY hip!)

And if you are among this sporting group of Americans, you'll be pleased as a Peacock to know there is a new store in the area catering to your favorite past time!! J.J. Cardinal's Wild Bird & Nature Store is conveniently located in Grand Blanc at the corner of S. Saginaw and Holly Road, just north of K-Mart, next door to Little Caesar's Pizza and Troy Cleaners (see the handy map on the back page).

The place is chock-filled with everything your beaked-buddies crave: food, shelter, and some great information to help you and your friends learn more about them. Birds add color and music to our yards year around! These spectacular creatures bring an element of our world right up close to you where you can enjoy their antics and behavior every day. Children are fascinated at the variety and color, size and shapes. Seasoned naturalists learn new things daily about the world around us, and changes in bird behavior and migratory patterns. Birds are beneficial, providing natural insect control and birds are easy to attract. A small investment in time will draw them to your backyard feeding stations. But it is important to know what is attractive to them, and what is the best product to attract the specific birds you enjoy. Helping you understand bird behavior is the essence of J.J. Cardinal's Wild Bird & Nature Store. Come in, visit, and tell us about your favorite birds.

A NEW OPPORTUNITY

After working in retail business throughout the area, for over fifteen years, I now have the opportunity to share my passion for wild birds with other area enthusiasts, and with those curious about this ever-growing pastime of "birding". With the support and assistance of many active bird enthusiasts from around the country, I have decided to open a store dedicated to providing quality products and scientific advice to those who enjoy back yard birds: J.J. Cardinal's Wild Bird & Nature Store.

Our shop will feature handcrafted, field-tested bird feeders, houses, accessories, guidebooks, binoculars, quality seed and accessories. I think you will also enjoy our selection of beautiful environmental music and recordings, art work and gift items for the avid birders. But don't misunderstand, this is not another gift shop which also carries seed and feeders.

You will especially enjoy the casual atmosphere and information available to you on the birding hobby. Whether it is a casual past-time, or you are a seasoned enthusiast, I hope you find the store fascinating to visit.

I have lived in the Grand Blanc area for over ten years, and have come to realize what a special, environmentally rich area we live in. I am dedicated to supporting local schools and community groups interested in educational programs on birding, bird-walks, and guest lecturers. Please contact me at our new store: J.J. Cardinal's Wild Bird & Nature Store for details on setting up an educational program for your group.

Happy birding!



Louise A. Dawson, Proprietor

DID YOU KNOW?

Studies measuring flight speed indicate the common American Robin can fly 32 miles per hour. A Common Loon has been clocked at 90. Better watch those speed traps!

BIRD-BRAINED QUESTIONS

EDITORS NOTE: To say the very least, birds do not have a reputation for great intelligence. In naming this section of our Notebook I don't want to imply your questions are "bird-brained". It's just that many of us, with birds on our mind, have questions about birds and their behavior, eating habits, mating, migration and survival.

It appears that birds are more capable of learning and reasoning than many had assumed, and are in fact, in the same intellectual league as most mammals.

When we watch the behavior of birds in natural settings we constantly see evidence of intelligent activity. Take note, for example, the next time a White-Breasted Nuthatch snatches a sunflower seed and return time after time to the same spot in the tree to secure the seed in the bark of the tree to aid opening the seed while pecking. The bird is using the tree as an implement. A device to assist it's feeding!

This section of our Notebook will feature your questions and observations concerning your backyard birds. A friend recently asked why Juncos don't stay with us all year? Where do they migrate to, and what sort of food will help attract them to stay?



ANSWER: In fall we await the arrival of the "Snow Birds" who breed north of this region. Dark-eyed Juncos are part of the family Fringillidae. These grey and white birds tend to be ground feeding birds, fond of red proso millet as well as white millet, cracked corn, oil-type sunflower seeds. Suet, peanut butter mix, and peanut hearts are also attractive. Their seed-cracking bills are made for a variety of seeds we can offer them at our winter feeding stations. Offering different foods, however, would not entice Juncos to stay year around. Juncos prefer to breed and raise their brood in the cool Alaskan and Canadian forests.

Why birds migrate is a complex question, but it is presumably evolved as a means of increasing life-time reproductive output. Northern breeding grounds provide less competition than the wintering grounds to the south. Breeding territories are usually 2 to 3 acres and often include dense forests with openings containing some sort of vertical slope or bank where they prefer to nest.

Their arrival heralds the beginning of winter, thus the name "Snow Birds". Enjoy them while you can.

Send your questions to: Bird-Brained Questions, J.J. Cardinal's Notebook, 12500 S. Saginaw, Suite 4, Grand Blanc, MI 48439. If you know anyone who would like to receive this free publication, please write us at the above address or call (513) 695-8733.

WITH RESPECT FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

We've printed J.J. Cardinal's Notebook on recycled paper; you can aid our effort by passing it along to fellow naturalists and birding enthusiasts. How about your neighbor or a relative? They may have missed this introductory issue.

If you would like to continue to receive this free publication please let us know and we will include you on our permanent mailing list. It certainly is not our intent to add to your "unwanted mail"! But if you'd like to stay in tune with news and stories of local interest on birding, just give us a call (313-695-8733) or better yet, stop by our new store. We'll make sure you don't miss the next issue of J.J. Cardinal's Notebook! If you should phone after business hours, please leave your name and mailing address, including your zip code, on our machine.

We also welcome your input and contributions for future issues of J.J. Cardinal's Notebook. If you have unusual sightings or stories, we'd love to pass them along!



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POPULAR FEEDERS BY WILDLIFE PRODUCTS

This attractive 4-in-1 Bird Feeder is divided into four sections, which can be filled with approximately ten pounds of seed. You can fill each compartment with whatever seed assortment is appealing to the palates of your favorite feathered friends: sunflower, thistle, or a mixed blend. Eight ports will help you attract a gaggle of birds to this unique feeder.

Wildlife Products engineered this model for long lasting performance. The lid is easily removed for speedy refill (essential from your backyard birds viewpoint!). And the built-in seed tray helps cut down on the mess (great from your viewpoint!).

The manufacturers call it "squirrel proof", but they haven't met Henrietta and Hairy Houdini squirrel in your backyard!

The 4-in-1 Bird Feeder is but one of dozens of attractive and tested feeders available at J.J. Cardinal's Wild Bird & Nature Store.

Stop by and visit!



**4-IN-1
BIRD FEEDER**

• Conveniently Located

In Grand Blanc at the corner of Saginaw and Holly Road, next to Troy Cleaners & Little Caesar's Pizza, opposite K-Mart.

A Unique Store For People Who Enjoy Nature

**J.J. CARDINAL'S
WILD BIRD & NATURE STORE**

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