



PILEATED DRUMMING

Dubuque Audubon Society

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HOW TO START BACKYARD BIRD FEEDING By Melissa Mayntz, About.com

Bird feeding is an easy and rewarding hobby and these five easy steps to get started feeding birds can help any beginning backyard birder attract a hungry flock right to their door.

- 1. Learn your local birds.** The first step in successful bird feeding is to learn what birds are hungry in your area. Purchase a local or regional field guide to identify birds that already visit the trees, shrubs, or flowers in your neighborhood and browse similar birds to see what other birds may be nearby. You can also learn local birds by asking at a wild bird store or checking to see if your neighbors feed the birds. By learning your local birds, you will know what types of food to offer to attract them to your yard.
- 2. Choose bird feeders.** The easiest bird feeders to satisfy many species include hopper, platform and tube feeders, all of which can offer a variety of different foods. Other feeders to consider are mesh socks for small finches and nectar feeders for hummingbirds and orioles. When choosing feeders, consider local conditions such as weather and potential pests. If you are in an area with a lot of rain for example, choose a covered feeder to keep seed dry, or if your yard is frequently visited by squirrels, opt for a feeder with squirrel-resistant features.
- 3. Choose bird seeds and other foods.** The most important step when you get started feeding birds is to offer the right food. There are several types of birdseed that are suitable, including black oil sunflower seeds, millet and Nyjer. To feed woodpeckers, offer suet, and to feed jays, offer whole nuts. Hummingbirds will drink nectar while orioles will eat grape jelly, fruit and nectar. For a varied backyard flock, offer a range of foods to attract many different species.
- 4. Put up feeders conveniently.** Birds won't visit feeders they can't find, and you aren't likely to refill feeders that are inconvenient. Place feeders near good shelter or water sources for birds so they will find them, and be sure the feeders are safe from hawks, feral cats and other potential predators. Keep the feeders easily placed so you can refill them as necessary – many backyard birders prefer to place feeders near patios or porches not only for convenience, but also to watch the birds feed.
- 5. Maintain bird feeders.** Once you have started feeding the birds, it is essential to take care of your bird feeders. Refill the feeders whenever the seed is running low, and keep the feeders clean to avoid spreading diseases among different birds. Check the feeders regularly for damage that might injure birds or make the feeders less effective. Store birdseed properly and know how to check for spoiled birdseed so you are always offering the most nutritious food to your backyard birds.

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How to Start Backyard Bird Feeding

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Above all, be patient. It can take several weeks for birds to discover a new bird feeder and learn to count on it as a reliable food source. If after six weeks your feeder is still not attracting birds, check the seed quality and feeder position and consider changing to a different feeder style that is more open and noticeable for local birds. With patience and perseverance, it is possible for anyone to attract and feed a beautiful flock of backyard birds.

SPRING SPECIES COUNT

By Joe Tollari

We had great weather for the Spring Species Count on May 12. This year, as I joined the group at Eagle Point Park, I remembered that it snowed the first year I did a Spring Count at Eagle Point. Evidently, the weather did not discourage me since I have completed many more counts in the intervening years. There were eleven participants starting the day at Eagle Point. With the early spring, the tree leaves were well on the way to development. Amazing how those little birds can hide behind a leaf! Here are some of the highlights. We heard more warblers than we saw, but we did get a great look at a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher when it landed on a bare tree limb to rest. At John Deere dike, we had a good look at a group of Dunlins – little shorebirds with black bellies. Bob and Sandy Walton saw several Wilson's Phalaropes at Green Island. Before we left Swiss Valley Nature Center that evening, a Pileated Woodpecker flew over. It was the first of the day. Finally, as I was working at my computer that evening, I heard a Common Nighthawk in my neighborhood. We saw a total of 123 species for the day, enjoyed good weather, and had fun conversation when we tallied the results. Not a bad day! The list of birds follows:

American White Pelican	Cliff Swallow
Double-crested Cormorant	Barn Swallow
Great Blue Herron	Black-capped Chickadee
Great Egret	Tufted Titmouse
Green Heron	White-breasted Nuthatch
Turkey Vulture	House Wren
Canada Goose	Sedge Wren
*Trumpeter Swan	Marsh Wren
Wood Duck	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Mallard	Eastern Bluebird

Blue-winged Teal	Veery
Northern Shoveler	Swainson's Thrush
Lesser Scaup	Wood Thrush
Hooded Merganser	American Robin
Bald Eagle	Gray Catbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Brown Thrasher
American Kestrel	European Starling
Peregrine Falcon	Cedar Waxwing
Ring-necked Pheasant	Golden-winged Warbler
Wild Turkey	Tennessee Warbler
American Coot	Nashville Warbler
Sandhill Crane	Northern Parula
Semipalmated Plover	Yellow Warbler
Killdeer	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Greater Yellowlegs	Cape May Warbler
	Black-throated Green Warbler
Lesser Yellowlegs	Blackburnian Warbler
Solitary Sandpiper	Yellow-throated Warbler
Spotted Sandpiper	Palm Warbler
Sanderling	Blackpoll Warbler
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Cerulean Warbler
Least Sandpiper	Black-and-white Warbler
Baird's Sandpiper	American Redstart
Pectoral Sandpiper	Prothonotary Warbler
Dunlin	Northern Waterthrush
Wilson's Phalarope	Common Yellowthroat
Ring-billed Gull	Scarlet Tanager
Rock Dove	Eastern Towhee
Mourning Dove	Chipping Sparrow
Eurasian Collared Dove	Field Sparrow
Common Nighthawk	Song Sparrow
Chimney Swift	Lincoln's Sparrow
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Swamp Sparrow
Belted Kingfisher	White-throated Sparrow
Red-bellied Woodpecker	White-crowned Sparrow
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Northern Cardinal
Downy Woodpecker	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Hairy Woodpecker	Indigo Bunting
Northern Flicker	Dickcissel
Pileated Woodpecker	Bobolink
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Phoebe	Eastern Meadowlark
Great Crested Flycatcher	Western Meadowlark
Eastern Kingbird	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Yellow-throated Vireo	Common Grackle
Warbling Vireo	Brown-headed Cowbird
Philadelphia Vireo	Orchard Oriole
Red-eyed Vireo	Baltimore Oriole
Blue Jay	House Finch
American Crow	American Goldfinch
Purple Martin	House Sparrow
Tree Swallow	
N. Rough-winged Swallow	

DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June, July, August, 2012

June 14 – Thurs.	POTLUCK MEETING	5:30 pm Dubuque Arboretum, Marshall Park. Join us for a potluck supper and good conversation. Bring your own table service, beverage, and a dish to share. NOTE: The Dubuque Arboretum now asks for a \$2.00 per person donation for use of the porch area.
June 16 – Sat.	BATS	1:00 pm at EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA See live bats and learn about this wonderful mammal. Ron DeArmond from Pella Wildlife Group.
July 8 – Sun	FOURTH OF JULY BUTTERFLY COUNT	1:00 pm at E.B. Lyon s Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, or Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Rd. This is great family fun. Nets will be provided. Bring water and sun screen. 4:00 pm Tally results over your own picnic supper at E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center.
July 13 – Fri.	OSPREY CAMPGROUND PROGRAM	6:30 pm. Bring your friends to Mud Lake to learn about the Osprey reintroduction and the fascinating adaptations they have for hunting, flying and surviving! There is no need to pre-register. Just bring your questions and be prepared to have a great educational time.
July 14 – Sat.	PRAIRIE WALK IN JACKSON COUNTY	10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Iowa Native Plant Society sponsored field trip to tour prairie remnants and restorations on the property of David Gossman, located at 19502 159th Ave., Zwingle, IA. Bring a sack lunch. Visit the web site for more information: www.jacksonccb.com
July 21 – Sat.	SNAKES ALIVE	1:00 pm at E.B. Lyon s Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts. A NATIONAL TOURING PROGRAM that offers an exciting, hands-on, educational experience! Tom Kessenich lets you touch, hold and even talk to his friendly "critters".
Aug. 9 – Thurs.	PICNIC	6:00 pm at Mud Lake Park. Bring your own picnic supper, and binoculars. Share stories of summer adventures and hope to see the recently released Osprey as they set about learning their territory.
Sept. 13 – Thurs	POTLUCK MEETING	5:30 pm EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA Bring your own table service, beverage, and a dish to share. Start off the fall season with a fun time.

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If you have any questions or comments, please contact us!

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Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Nick Kontonicolas

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: MAY'S PROGRAM – PRAIRIE CONSERVATION

By Michele Zuercher

Steve Winter, Wildlife Biologist from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Minnesota, presented an overview on the effect of management practices of different prairie types on a few bird and plant species. The variety of grassland prairies of the Great Plains is

contingent on the precipitation gradient. The easternmost edge is the Shortgrass prairie, extending from Canada to Texas, just west of the Rockies. Typical bird species of this area of eastern Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado are the Lark Bunting, Horned Lark, Mountain Plover, and Burrowing Owl. Traveling eastward is narrow band of the Mixed-grass prairie and is home to the Greater Prairie-Chicken, Sharp-tailed Grouse, and Long-billed Curlew. Along the eastern border of North Dakota and extending southward into Texas, also reaching into Indiana, the Tallgrass prairie has the Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Bobolink.

As wind farms have begun to change the landscape, some of these grassland species will abandon these areas and those with buildings and power lines. For a homogenous landscape with no vertical structures (even trees) traditional range management of cattle and bison ranching provides open areas. While some species do well, it is not optimal for the Greater Prairie-Chicken which prefers taller grass.

Another practice in the prairie ecosystems is patch-burn management, alternating controlled burning of land sections over a period of years. As foraging animals prefer the new growth after a burn in the Shortgrass prairie, the Lark Sparrow's population increases at this time. In contrast, the Cassin's Sparrow prefers areas three to four years post-burn, and the Field Sparrow thrives in no-burn pastures. Still yet in the Tallgrass prairie, the Upland Sandpiper does well after a burn and the Henslow's Sparrow will settle into an area at least a year after the burn. In these pastures, there is a higher richness of bird species. Therefore, various agricultural and environmental practices place different pressure on birds found in their prairie habitats.



Dunlin

Kristen Westlake



Pileated Woodpecker

Gerrit Vyn

FOURTH OF JULY BUTTERFLY COUNT

Three goals of North American Butterfly Associations' Butterfly Count Program are to (1) gather data that will monitor butterfly populations, (2) give butterflyers a chance to socialize and have fun, and (3) raise public awareness by hosting events that will increase general interest in butterflies.

Just as the Christmas Bird Count isn't conducted on Christmas Day, the Fourth of July Butterfly Count isn't necessarily conducted on the Fourth of July holiday. This year, Dubuque Audubon Society will conduct the butterfly count on July 8, 2012. We will have count areas at E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center (Mines of Spain) and at Swiss Valley Nature Center (Swiss Valley). The counts will begin at 1:00 pm. We will tally our results at 4:00 pm at E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center. Bring your own picnic supper. We will use the picnic area next to the parking lot.



Wilson's Phalarope

Terry Sohl

SUMMER PROGRAMS

The three area nature centers have a full calendar of events for the summer months. You can take part in a Wildflower Workday or Investigate Insects at Swiss Valley. Try Canoeing or study Raptors at E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center. Or you can learn about Terrific Turtles and Hiding in Plain Sight at Hurstville Interpretive Center. These are just a few programs from each. To find a full list of programs, check out their web sites or make a phone call.

Swiss Valley Nature Center

(www.dubuquecounty.org) or 563.556.6745,

Hurstville Interpretive Center

(www.jacksonccb.com) or 563.652.3783, and E.B.

Lyons Interpretive Center (www.minesofspain.org) or 563.556.0620.

Have a fun summer with your family.



Common Nighthawk

Philip Simmons

BIRD WATCHING IN SRI LANKA

Are you open to a new experience? Dubuque Audubon Society Board member Lalith Jayawickrama has agreed to lead a group to bird watch in Sri Lanka in the summer of 2013. Lalith and his wife, Rasika Mudalige-Jayawickrama, teach at the University of Dubuque. He knows where to go and what to see in his native Sri Lanka. Both Lalith and Rasika have presented programs to the Dubuque Audubon Society. We will have full information about the trip in the September newsletter. In the meantime, consider joining us for this unique bird watching trip.

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The mission of
Dubuque Audubon
Society is to
provide educational
opportunities to
the people of the
tri-state area and
to preserve the
natural habitat of
birds and other
wildlife.

**DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY
NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Do NOT use this form to renew a membership in National Audubon Society. Use the form mailed to you by the National Audubon. There are two categories of memberships in the Dubuque Audubon Society

CATEGORY A: This category includes membership in National Audubon Society and the local chapter. You will receive 6 issues of Audubon Magazine and 9 issues of the local chapter newsletter, Pileated Drummings.

_____ National Audubon Society Free Membership **INTRODUCTORY ONLY**

CATEGORY B: This category of membership is local chapter only. You will receive 9 issues of the local chapter newsletter, Pileated Drummings. All funds will remain with the local chapter. Membership year is from July to June.

_____ Local Chapter Dues **\$10.00**

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