



SEPTEMBER 2012 EDITION



BIRDS AT NIGHT: WHERE DO BIRDS GO AT NIGHT?

By Melissa Mayntz. About.com

Birds can seem to be everywhere during the day, flitting among trees, [foraging](#) on the ground, visiting feeders and perching on every available stick, post or wire. But where do all these birds go at night?

Most birds are [diurnal](#), which means they are most active during the day but they typically rest at night. [Nocturnal](#) birds, such as owls, frogmouths, nighthawks and night-herons, on the other hand, are most active during the night when they forage, hunt, care for their young, [preen](#) and do other activities necessary for survival.

Like other animals that are active during the day, the principle nighttime activity of birds is sleeping. Birds choose how they sleep very carefully to ensure they can survive through

the night, and they have certain tricks that help give them warning about predators or to protect them from the elements.

Many bird species choose cavities or niches to roost in at night, which prevents predators from having easy access to them. These same cavities also provide shelter from poor weather, and may include [bird roost boxes](#) or empty bird houses.

[Wading birds](#) such as herons, egrets and flamingos will sleep standing in water. The sound and vibrations of a predator coming toward them through the water acts as an instant warning system in case of danger.

Ducks, geese and other waterfowl will float on the water to sleep, which gives them the same noise alarm system that wading birds take advantage of.

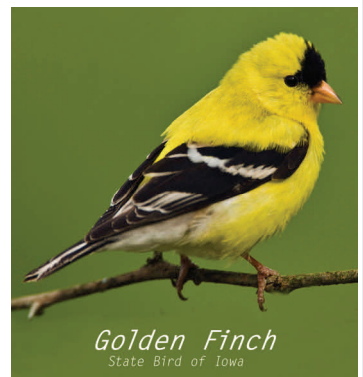
Small birds sleep perched high in trees, typically close to the trunk of the tree. The trunk holds heat from the daytime to provide better shelter, and the birds will be alerted to any vibrations predators make if they climb the tree looking for prey.

Continued on Page 2

Published Monthly
Except January, July & August

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>Birds at Night: Where do Birds go at Night</i>	1
<i>It's for the Swifts</i>	2
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	3
<i>New Member Application</i>	4





BIRDS AT NIGHT: continued from page 1

Many birds, such as [red-winged blackbirds](#) and other [gregarious](#) species, form large roost flocks at night. This provides them safety in numbers as they sleep, and several birds on the edges of the flock may remain alert through the night to guard against predators or other threats.

While sleeping is the most popular nighttime activity for most birds, it is not the only thing birds will do at night. Depending on the time of year, birds may also work to attract mates or migrate to a new part of their range at night.

Night Singing: Birds that sing at night are advertising their territory at a time when there is less ambient noise and their calls can be heard at greater distances. This can help deter competitors as well as attract a mate. Nights with bright moonlight or in areas where there is a lot of artificial light are often filled with birdsong.

Night Migration: Many diurnal birds disrupt their activity patterns in order to [migrate](#) during the night instead of during the day. This allows them to take advantage of the same routes that birds of prey will use, but because raptors need daytime thermal currents to [soar](#), migrating at night helps smaller birds avoid contact with too many predators

While daytime may be the best time to see most birds, understanding where birds go at night can help birders get a better appreciation of how birds survive, and can give everyone ideas for how to help even the smallest birds survive every night.

IT'S FOR THE SWIFTS

By Karen Manning
Friends of Jackson County
Conservation



Friends of Jackson County Conservation just completed the construction of a Chimney Swift Tower in conjunction with an information kiosk at the Hurstville Interpretive Center.

More than just decorative—it is a carefully designed nesting and roosting tower for chimney swifts. Chimney swifts are dark-colored little birds which gather in flocks. You may have seen them funneling down into an industrial or home chimney in the evening.

The design was researched and developed by a Texas couple and made available in their book, *Chimney Swift Tower; a Construction Guide*, by Paul and Georgan Kyle, 2005. They state: swifts “need an interior shaft that is deep, dark, open at the top, and roughly textured on the inside.” This kind of habitat is becoming scarce.

Friends of Jackson County Conservation decided on this design for a number of reasons. It is designed to provide ideal conditions for nesting chimney swifts, small insect-eating birds which are declining in number. It provides a dramatic visual statement to draw attention to the information presented on the four panels of the kiosk. And the stone construction echoes the use of limestone in the building and the large sign facing the highway, and of course from the Hurstville Lime Kilns themselves.



The tower was built by Larry McDevitt of Maquoketa, IA, who would be happy to build such a tower as part of your landscape!

Did you know?

- Chimney swifts are not equipped to perch on branches or hop on the ground—they catch and eat insects while flying all day, then return in the evening to their roosting place in a hollow tree or rough-textured chimney.
- Only in 1943 did ornithologists learn that swifts which nest in North America spend the winter in the upper Amazon basin of Peru, Chile, and northwest Brazil.
- The pioneering studies of chimney swift nesting habits was done by an Iowa woman from rural Clayton County, Althea Sherman, from 1918-1936. You can visit a replica of the tower she designed to make observation of swift roosting and nesting possible, Sherman Swift Tower in Clayton County.

We'd like to say thank you to Lechtenberg Dental, Whitetails Unlimited, Dubuque Audubon and Iowa Ornithologist Union for helping us get it built!



DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September, 2012

Every Sunday in September	MONARCH TAGGING	1:00 PM Huntsville Interpretive Center 18670 63rd Street - Maquoketa, Iowa. Learn about the Monarch Butterfly's journey south for the winter. Be a part of the research by catching and tagging this year's migrants. All ages welcome.
September 13th THURSDAY	POTLUCK MEETING	5:30 PM EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Heights, Dubuque, IA. Bring your own table service, beverage, and a dish to share. Start off the fall season with a fun time!
September 15th SATURDAY	BLACKHAWK, Performed by THE MEDICINE BAND	7:00 pm EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Heights, Dubuque, IA. BLACKHAWK, a rock opera concert and fundraiser for land expansion at the Mines of Spain. It tells the story of legendary Sauk and Fox war chief, Black Hawk with special guest Denny Garcia. Bring your lawn chairs for this outdoor concert. In case of inclement weather, we will move the concert inside the EB Lyons Center. A free-will offering will be taken for fundraising for the 52 acre expansion at the Mines of Spain. Please no carry-ins.
September 30th SUNDAY	DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY HAWK WATCH	11:00 am Meet at the Balkown Ridge overlook in Balltown, IA. Bring binoculars, a hat, sunscreen, and water. This is your chance to see locally rare hawks like the red-shouldered and broad-winged as they pass through our area on their annual fall migration to southern wintering grounds. Members of the Dubuque Audubon Club will help identify birds and provide insight about hawk habits. Call 558-2783 for details or in case of foul weather.
October 11th THURSDAY	DUBUQUE AUDUBON PROGRAM: LIFE AS A WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST WITH US FISH & WILDLIFE	EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA. 5:30 PM - Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm - Program: Jeramie T. Strickland will speak on "Life as a Wildlife Biologist with the US Fish & Wildlife Service"
November 8th THURSDAY	DUBUQUE AUDUBON PROGRAM: WILDLIFE WONDERS OF BOTSWANA	EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA. 5:30 PM - Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm - Program: Betsy Bainbridge and Chelsie Cruise will speak on "Wildlife Wonders of Botswana"

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.

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Dubuque, IA 52001
Permit # 459

Dubuque Audubon Society
James Brown, Editor
PO Box 3174
Dubuque IA 52004-3174

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 – FIRST TIME MEMBERS 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

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

STREET _____ E-mail _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CODE: C1ZH500Z

Mail check payable to Dubuque Audubon Society. Mail to:

Dubuque Audubon Society
PO Box 3174
Dubuque, IA 52004-3174