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"Nature News" from Wild Birds Unlimited at Moana Nursery



True Blue & Warm, Too!

It's really hard to think of wild birds as being loyal friends.

After all, they are truly one of the freest creatures on the planet, able to fly anywhere at anytime with nothing to bind them to any single location. But birds, like humans, are creatures of habit and bird banding studies have shown that many of our winter birds, such as Juncos and native sparrows, utilize the same wintering location year after year.

With a potential lifespan of over 10 years, it is likely that the Junco gleaning millet off of the ground below one of your feeders has spent many previous winters as your loyal backyard guest. And recent research shows that is only half

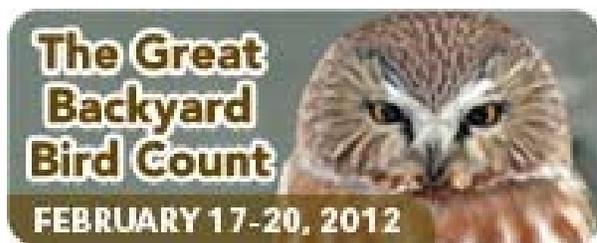
the story!

These birds are not only loyal to a specific location, but also to a single feeder! The study showed that the only time they abandoned their favorite feeder was during periods of cold weather when the feeder was placed in a location too exposed to the wind.

So help your birds stay loyal and warm by locating your feeders in a sheltered location out of the wind. The east or southeast side of a house or near a row of trees or evergreens is ideal.

Once you have them in a safe and sheltered location, be sure to keep your feeders filled with the high-energy, high-fat foods that provide your birds with the crucial nutrition they need to survive the coldest months of the year.

Take a look below for more of our expert advice and quality products that will help your birds to stay true blue and warm, too this winter



[Get Involved ... here's how.](#)

For the New Year ...

We're thrilled to announce that Jacque Lowery has joined our Moana staff, bringing all of her Wild Birds Unlimited experience and birding knowledge! She's looking forward to getting reacquainted with many of her former customers and helping us grow our birding expertise.



January High Desert Bird of the Month: Spotted Towhee

Picture by Jacque Lowery

Spotted towhees are smaller than a robin, about 8 inches. Like many songbirds the male has striking plumage. His head and upper parts are black. They have a thick pointed, black

bill, and fire red eyes. The sides are rufous, and the breast and belly are white. White spots stand out on the black back, and wings. The long tail is black with large white spots at the corners which are visible in flight. The female is similar, but has brown where the male has black.

Spotted towhee's main diet is seeds but they also eat insects and fruit. Although they do search for food in trees they mainly forage on the ground. They scratch the ground by kicking both feet backward at the same time to uncover food.

These birds prefer to forage in bushes with leaves on the ground, making quite a racket as they rustle through the leaves. If you have a seed feeder near bushes towhees may search for seeds fallen, or sprinkled on the ground.

Their song is a long buzzy chweeee. In some areas the bird is called a chewink because of the sound of their alarm. Other sounds are shenk, chup-chup zedededee, and a cat-like meow call.

For more Fun Facts on the Spotted Towhee and more "bird" information, visit our local WBU website by [clicking here](#) .

Announcing Lower Seed Prices ...

Save \$3 on 20# Black Oil Sunflower Seed

Save \$5 on 20# Deluxe Blend

Save \$4 on 20# Nyjer

Save \$4 on 20# No Mess Blend

High Energy Foods:

- Seed cylinders, dough cylinders & stackables can be used with the Dinner Bell, APS Cylinder Feeder and APS Seed Cylinder Feeder. Buy one cylinder or stackable plus Dinner Bell or cylinder feeder and get a coupon for 50% your next food cylinder or stackable.
- Mealworms can be served in Dinner Bell or any tray feeder.
- Peanuts, Nyjer and Black Oil Sunflower seeds are all high protein/energy foods for feeders.

January Promotion

- Starter Peanut Feeder + 2 lbs. peanuts for \$10.00 A great way to interest young children in the hobby of bird feeding. Offer expires Jan. 15th or until supply runs out.

New Product

Holscher seed bucket now in stock - - airtight, 20# capacity for most seed: has flanged lid for easy access and a handle for carrying.





Local Bird Sightings by Jacque Lowery

Today my six-year-old granddaughter helped me with bird feeding duties. She likes scattering Dove & Quail Mix for the ground feeding birds, but is especially enamored of the goldfinches on their feeders. I encouraged her to slowly inch close to the feeders so she could watch them in action. She got within four feet and stood very still to see them eating and jostling for space on the wire mesh.

Each time she participates in feeding our backyard birds I give a little nature lesson. "Listen to that song, that's the Mountain Chickadee", or "Hear that chip chip? That is the Yellow-rumped Warbler protecting his suet feeder." During summer months it might be watching a bee gather nectar from a flower or following the flight of a butterfly or dragonfly. My hope is these small moments of connecting with nature - standing still or listening or watching - will extend into the rest of her life and help alleviate some of the nature disconnect that seems so prevalent these days. If each of you will do the same for a child or grandchild, we can really make a difference for future generations.

On another note, I just returned from a week in Hawaii. I guess the need to see birds is a passion for me, as I didn't feel the vacation was complete without a visit to a couple wetlands areas on Maui. There weren't a lot of birds, but it was fun to see Black-necked Stilts in the middle of winter and try to identify which Plover I was seeing from a distance. Gorgeous sunsets, warm ocean waves, palm trees swaying in the breezes, a little tropical rain, and some birdlife to complete the experience! Life IS good.

Looking for something fun to do with the kids?

- New Years Origami Crane at <http://www.wbu.com/doc/WhoopingCraneOrigami.pdf>



- Dress a Snow Angel ...

[Click here or on picture for link.](#)

No-Melt Suet Dough Cake Special



Buy 2, Get 1 Free*

Only available at our Moana Lane location

While supplies last

*Of equal or lesser price. Excludes cylinders.

Buy several and store in freezer until time to use.

January Nature Happenings

- * Jan. 1 - 31: Project FeederWatch continues
- * Jan. 3 - 4: Quadrantid Meteor Shower - See up to 60 falling meteors per hour!
- * Jan. 9: Full Moon, Jan. 23: New Moon
- * Jan. 11: Aldo Leopold's (Father of Wildlife Conservation) birthday
- * Watch for Bald Eagles along the rivers.
- * Beaver mating season.
- * Tree-loving birds such as Black-capped Chickadees, nuthatches and various woodpeckers will leave their winter night's cavity or roost box in search of high-calorie food.
- * Rather than search for worms in the frozen soil, large winter flocks of robins will visit fruit trees for food.
- * Cedar Waxwings will visit yards in search of fruit, often staying for hours before moving on.
- * Juncos will hunt for fallen seed, often before dawn.
- * Bushtits, our smallest winter visitors, can be seen in large flocks flitting all over suet feeders and other high-protein sources of food.
- * The smaller the bird, the earlier it hunts for food in the winter darkness.
- * Listen for Great Horned Owls' "hoot" as they pair up for mating season.
- * Now through late March is a difficult time for birds; providing food and an open source of water is important.

- * Winter is a great time to look for birds' nests. Admire the craftsmanship, but leave the nest in place.
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Lahontan Audubon Society Upcoming Trips and Events

- Saturday, January 7, 2012 - Virginia Lake, Reno
- Saturday, January 21, 2012 - Annual Dipper Day
- Saturday, February 4, 2012 - 11th Annual Riverview Park Winter Bird Trip, Carson City

For more information on the Lahontan Audubon Society, [click here](#).

Animal Ark Upcoming Events

Animal Ark 2012 Wild Winter Weekends:

Sat-Sun Jan. 14-15: Martin Luther King Junior holiday weekend

Sat-Sun Feb. 18-19: Presidents' holiday weekend

[For more information about Animal Ark click here.](#)



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