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"Nature News" from Wild Birds Unlimited at Moana Nursery



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The Seasons' Not-so-Lone Rangers

Remember the Lone Ranger? Ever notice how he wasn't really alone? He always had his trusty sidekick, Tonto at his side. Why? Because there is strength in numbers. Well, there is strength in numbers in bird feeding, too. During fall and winter, some nuthatches, titmice and chickadees search for food together in a "foraging guild." [Learn more](#)



Mountain Chickadee

October Bird of the Month - Mountain Chickadee

The tiny Mountain Chickadee is a busy presence overhead in the dry evergreen forests of the mountainous West. Often the nucleus in mixed flocks of small birds, Mountain Chickadees flit through high branches, hang upside down to pluck insects or seeds from cones, and give their scolding *chick-a-dee* call seemingly to anyone who will listen.

Like all chickadees, the Mountain Chickadee is black-and-white on the head, but gray elsewhere. The white stripe over the eye distinguishes Mountain Chickadees from all other chickadees. They are active and acrobatic birds, clinging to small limbs and twigs or hanging upside down from pine cones. In winter, Mountain Chickadees flock with kinglets and nuthatches, the birds following each other one by one from tree to tree.

Mountain Chickadees eagerly come to feeders. Like many feeder birds, they will often disregard millet in bird seed mixes. Feed them black oil sunflower seeds instead. In winter, they'll also eat suet and peanut butter.

For more bird of the month information, visit our local WBU website by clicking [here](#).

Free October Seed Samples

Receive a FREE 2lb. bag of seed with any Wild Birds Unlimited purchase!
Each week we will be featuring a different seed. For the first week of October, enjoy a free 2lb. bag of Dove & Quail with any WBU purchase. This is a great opportunity to try new seeds or seed blends.

Limited to one per customer per week.

Creating a Fall Bird Sanctuary Seminar

Saturday, October 8, 10 a.m. at Moana Nursery

No RSVP necessary.

Alan Gubanich, Vice President, Lahontan Audubon Society

Fall is a great time to set up bird feeders. It allows the winter dwellers to get familiar with them before bad weather, and gives migratory birds much needed nutrition for their travels. You'll learn about plants that provide shelter, food sources, how to provide a consistent source of water and how to identify the many species that will show up in your yard.

All seminars are free and held at Moana Nursery in our Landscape & Design Center, 1190 W. Moana Lane, adjacent to the Moana Lane garden center. Seminars begin promptly at 10 a.m. and last one hour. Please arrive 15 minutes early, as seating is limited to 60 and is first come, first served.

For more information, visit www.moananursery.com or call (775) 825-0600.



Spotted Towhee by Jacque Lowery

Local Bird Sightings by Jacque Lowery

Early morning bird sounds are a little different this time of year. Robins and finches are singing like they do in Spring. This is known as autumnal response - a late increase in testosterone brought on by length of daylight and warm weather. As the days get increasingly shorter, this response goes away and the singing stops.

A few days ago I heard the unmelodious call of a Spotted Towhee. Northern Flickers have been present for several weeks - a sure sign that winter's on its way. This morning there were several White-crowned Sparrows singing, although I haven't spotted one yet at the feeders, and Cedar Waxwings have visited the last two days.

Yes, fall is here whether we humans are prepared for it or not. It's time to dig up the iris and separate them, thin the daylilies, and clip the dead stalks from other plants. Remember not to clean and trim your flower beds too much. Leave the seed stalks on coneflowers, sunflowers, coreopsis and others - it is so enjoyable to watch the Goldfinch work on them over the winter. Leave the leaf litter under the shrubs to provide foraging areas for the towhees and sparrows.

It's also time to be thinking of an ice-free bird bath for the winter. Consider a heated birdbath or add a heating element to one. Remember, many birds need to bathe in winter to keep feathers conditioned for insulation.

Keep your ears and eyes tuned in to the activity in your yard-you never know who or what might make an appearance.

Why the Rising Price of Seed?

Unfortunately due to an increase in wholesale prices from our vendors, we must raise the price of our seed. We are seeing a 14% to 23% price increase, depending on content. Bird seed is a commodity item that fluctuates with market demand and global happenings. We appreciate your business and understanding. For a more detailed explanation, please [click here](#).

October Nature Happenings

- Oct. 8 - 9: Draconids meteor shower
- Oct. 11: Full Moon, Oct. 26: New Moon
- Oct. 21 - 22: Orionids meteor shower
- In the past, Mourning Doves were fall migrants. But due to an ever warmer climate, increased winter cover in suburban backyards and availability of wider range of food, they are seen in communal flocks through out the winter.
- All members of the dove family favor ground feeders, seed blocks and flat trays of millet and cracked corn.
- The first storms of winter usher in winter migrants which often seek shelter in the cover of backyards.
- Many members of the sparrow family (Golden-crowned, White-crowned, Song and Savannah) join the ubiquitous House Sparrow at ground feeders.
- Sparrows can be seen scratching for fallen seeds in fading gardens.
- Leave spent perennials standing to provide cover and much needed food for our winter visitors.
- This is the month to install and repair nest boxes for use next year.
- Waterfowl migration continues to build throughout month.
- Peak of raptor and hawk migration
- Pine Siskin return to lower elevations and feeders this month.
- Bluebird and other nest boxes need to be cleaned out this month to prepare for winter roosting.
- First juncos can appear late in the month.
- Sandhill Cranes migrate.
- Remaining hummingbirds will depart this month.
- Beavers are very active in the evenings while caching a winter supply of food.

Lahontan Audubon Society Upcoming Trips and Events

- [Sunday, October 8, 2011 - Lemmon Valley Marsh](#)
- [Sunday, October 9, 2011 - Taylor Creek, South Lake Tahoe](#)
- [Sunday, October 16, 2011 - Oxbow Park, Reno](#)

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

Animal Ark Upcoming Events

Harvest Festival - Saturday, October 8 & Saturday, October 22, 10:15 AM - 2:30 PM
Admission Prices \$15 Adult, \$12 Children/Seniors, Children 2 and under free.

As part of our behavioral enrichment program some animals will receive pumpkins filled with their favorite treats. Watch the enjoyment experienced by our resident predators when presented with these unique and delicious meals. Throughout the day pumpkins will be delivered to different animals. Come spend the day; bring the camcorder.... This is animal viewing at its finest! Pumpkin painting for kids.

Last Chance Cheetah Dash - Sunday, October 16, 4:30 PM

Reward yourself with an incredible experience: watch these magnificent cats running with extraordinary speed, off-leash, across the desert in pursuit of an enticing lure.
Children must be at least 10 years old to participate.

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



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