



Songbird Station NEWS

Celebrating 25 Years of Helping Central Missouri Families
"Enjoy The Gift Of God's Nature In Our Backyards Together!"

Getting the Most Out of Hummingbird Season

By: Tristan Palmgren

It's a good rule of thumb to be ready to welcome Hummingbirds by tax day - but rules of thumb are imprecise, and, in 2020, we can be more accurate. This has been a strange, warm season. (As I write this in early February, the temperature is 72 degrees, and we have a 40-degree drop followed by a snow-storm forecast). We expect that Hummingbird migration will be correspondingly unusual. A Hummingbird migration map is a great tool that will give you a more accurate idea of when to place your Hummingbird feeders. These maps record Hummingbird sightings from all over the country and are a good place to go to track the leading edge of their migration. Our favorite migration map is from Hummingbird Central and can be found at the following address: <https://bit.ly/2S9Pf0p>

For those of us in Central Missouri, the day you see Hummingbirds sightings in the south of the state would be a good day to put your feeders out. That way, you'll be sure to attract as many Hummingbirds as you can, and without letting your nectar sit out

so long that it spoils. Hummingbirds have amazing memories. They can remember the same backyards even after migrating thousands of miles. Like most birds, they're creatures of habit. Establishing that habit of coming to your



Best Hummer Brush Kit
\$7.50

backyard can be tricky. Most Hummingbird feeders are red or otherwise brightly colored

both to mimic flowers and to help Hummingbirds spot them as they fly overhead. You can help Hummingbirds spot your backyard with a few colorful additions, like tying red ribbons around tree trunks. A number of smaller Hummingbird feeders scattered throughout your yard are also more effective at attracting and retaining Hummingbirds than one large feeder in a central location. Treat your yard like a habitat rather than a stopover, the Hummingbirds will treat it that way too.

One of the hassles of feeding Hummingbirds is keeping the feeder clean. Left out for more than a few days, Hummingbird nectar will start to ferment. When this starts to happen, it's invisible to the naked eye, but Hummingbirds will definitely sense it and be turned off from the feeder. (They've got a lot of precision flying to do, and can't afford to do it drunk.) Much like they'll remember the same backyard year after year, they'll remember feeders

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Copper Hummingbird Swing \$11.68
Photo by Jill Eoff.



Dr JB's 16 oz. Clean Feeder
\$23.95



Glass Hummingbird Feeder \$19.99

Photo by Jill Eoff.

Getting the Most Out of Hummingbird Season

Continued...

that have gone bad and will stay away.

A clean feeder won't keep your nectar fresh forever, but less residue means that your nectar will last much longer. The cleaner your feeders, the happier your hummers will be. Two brushes – one with a good, long reach for nectar bottles, and a second, smaller brush for nectar ports – are essential cleaning supplies. Some feeders can even be run through a dishwasher. Dr. JB's Clean Feeder is a sturdy, 16-ounce Hummingbird feeder that's easy to disassemble and clean. All of its parts can be

run through the top-shelf of a conventional dishwasher. A second, and very persistent, hassle is ants. Ants are just as determined to get into nectar feeders as squirrels are to get into seed feeders. Fortunately, ants are a little easier to stop than squirrels. Nectar Protector ant moats, kept filled with water, will keep ants from crawling down into the feeder. Simply hang the moats where you had hung your Hummingbird feeder, and hang your Hummingbird feeder underneath the moat. Ants can't swim. If there are no other points of contact between your feeder and other surfaces (as is the case for most Hummingbird feeders), ants won't be able to reach the nectar. Hummingbirds are exceptionally territorial, and will often dive-bomb other birds that they perceive as approaching "their" feeder. My co-worker Mary calls Hummingbirds "the Jack Russels of the bird world."



Nectar Protector
\$5.25

They will often fend away birds many times their size. Though sometimes a nuisance, this behavior can be harnessed to allow you more bird watching opportunities. If you provide a perch with a good view of their feeder, Hummingbirds will park there just to keep watch. Our copper Hummingbird swing will provide just such a perch, and also allow you, the birdwatcher, a clear view of your Hummingbirds as they keep their vigil. However the rest of the winter and spring's weather shapes up, this year's Hummingbird season is sure to be delightful. Drop by our store for more tips and supplies for getting the most out of your time with them.



Hummingbird at Nectar Protector \$5.25
Photo by Jill Eoff.

Stop, Look & Listen

By: Kaylee Paffrath *Nesting season is near, which*

means one thing, sweet baby birds and an opportunity for a lesson from nature!

As Spring nesting season draws near, I can hardly wait to take my children out to explore the variety of nests in our own back yard. Over the years I have taught my little nature lovers to

Stop, Look, and Listen.

Stop and enjoy gifts nature has provided. Make your journey with care. When it comes to nests they can be found high and low or even on your front porch. It is important to be sure you do not disrupt the busy mom or her eggs.

Look. It is best to observe nests from a distance. Young and curious kiddos might be tempted to be hands-on, after all, sometimes

the sense of touch brings life into a whole new perspective. Instead, grab a pair of binoculars for a better look. Songbird Station has a variety of optics for all abilities. Are you looking for a hands-on activity? You won't be disappointed in our selection of D-I-Y birding kits for all ages.

Listen. Nesting season brings multitudes of songs and calls. For the untrained ear, these calls can be overwhelming. As each bird sings their song, take a second to home in on the tones and hidden details of these beautiful tunes.



Baby Baltimore Oriole
© Dana Maddox



Bluebird House Kit
\$17.99



Eastern Bluebird Nest



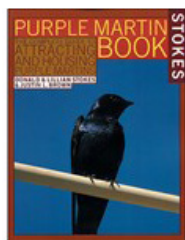
Carson Hawk Kids Field Binoculars
\$19.99

Do You Have An Open Space? If So, You TOO Can Attract Purple Martins!

By: Mel Toellner

Just go to
www.birdmanmel.com
and you'll see I love my
Martins.

Why? Nothing to me is more beautiful than the songs and the soaring beauty of Purple Martins. Plus, a great bonus is, they are a mosquito and bug-eating machine!! If you are interested in attracting Purple Martins, don't miss our Purple Martin Seminar I'll be putting on March 14th at 10:00 a.m. at Songbird Station. Also make a trip up to the area in front of our Mexico, Missouri warehouse. You'll see our large colony, and if you warn us you are coming, I or one of my staff will share and show our tips for success to you.



Purple Martin Book
\$9.97

A new colony can be started by young Martins arriving many weeks later from their winter home in Brazil.

Yard Requirements for Attracting Martins:

Many people ask us, "Can I attract Martins?" The main consideration is "Do you have enough open area?" In general, there should not be any trees or buildings



Purple Martin Decoy
\$5.83

within about 40 feet of the Martin pole. This is particularly true in the "glide paths" to the sides of the house containing housing opening. A Martin house should be placed in the center of the largest opening you have in your yard. The taller the surrounding trees, the farther the housing should be placed from them.



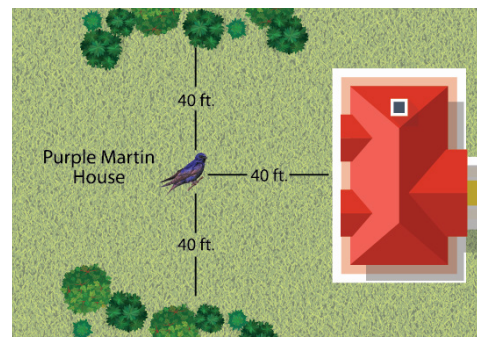
Purple Martin Colony at Gold Crest Distributing in Mexico, Missouri.



PMCA Excluder
Ultimate Gourd
Crescent
\$29.99

Placing your house:

DO put it where Martins come in as much contact with humans as possible. Martins LIKE humans! Keep the house within 100 yards of your back door!!



Type of Housing:

No matter how perfect your location you will not attract Martins without first supplying them with proper nesting facilities in the form of pole-mounted Martin houses or gourds. Look around to determine what type of housing Martins are successfully using in the areas near your proposed site. It's often a good idea to use the same type of housing. Martins show just about equal preference between houses and gourds and many Martin enthusiasts offer both.

In houses, we very strongly recommend aluminum over wood. I also strongly recommend and use gourds. We are blessed to manufacture here in Missouri the



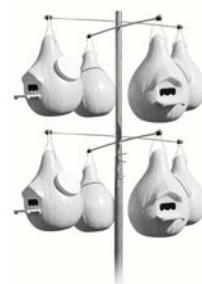
Heath Heavy-Duty
Mounting Pole
\$49.99

Starling Excluder Martin Gourd, which is the only gourd endorsed by the Purple Martin Conservation Association. You'll see these, as well as Lone Star, houses in use if you ever visit us in Mexico, MO or check them out at

www.SongbirdEssentials.com.

Poles: DO NOT buy a Martin house unless you buy a telescoping pole. Without one, you cannot easily raise and lower the pole for Sparrow control and Martin management. We have a great one for less than \$59.99. You should raise the house to a height of 12'-15'.

To help control Sparrows we also offer ST-1 Sparrow traps. These traps attach directly to a Martin pole. Martins will not occupy a house heavily infected with Sparrows. Sparrows often attack and destroy Martin's eggs and small birds. Sparrow control is key to Martin colony success.



Starter Ground Pole
Expansion Kit
\$59.99

10% OFF

PMCA EXCLUDER GOURD

**10% OFF PMCA EXCLUDER
ULTIMATE CRESCENT GOURD
(SE954)**

10% OFF SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS PMCA ULTIMATE EXCLUDER GOURD CRESCENT SE954. COUPON EXPIRES 4/1/2020.

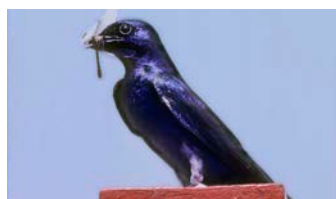
BIRD MAN MEL IS BACK!

Upcoming Free Seminars

Join Bird Man Mel in store at Songbird Station for a series of FREE seminars! Bring the family and enjoy refreshments, discounts, and the joy of backyard birding.



Reservations are requested, but not required, so we can have plenty of chairs, refreshments, and handouts. Specials on products presented during seminars on seminar day only!



Purple Martins

Saturday, March 14th at 10:00 a.m.

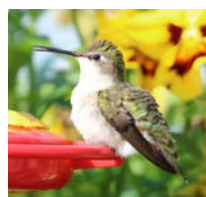
In this seminar Bird Man Mel will discuss how to attract Martins to your yard as well as how to grow & maintain your own Martin gourds.



Bluebirds & Tree Swallows

Saturday, March 21st at 10:00 a.m.

Do you want to learn more about Bluebirds and Tree Swallows? Join Bird Man Mel as he discusses these beautiful birds and how to attract them to your yard.



Hummingbirds & Orioles

Saturday, April 4th at 10:00 a.m.

Attracting colorful birds to your yard can be easy.

Wingman's FEATHERED FACTS

By: Grant Toellner

Snakeskin, Hair, & Feathers



Cedar A-Frame Wren House
\$16.99

The Carolina Wren uses the skin of snakes, hair, feathers and many other materials to build their dome-shaped nests. Try and attract this spring visitor to your backyard by hanging one of the cedar Wren houses made right here in Missouri. I like the look of the A-Frame house (pictured) at Songbird Station as a variety of others to choose from as well.



Songbird Safflower
20 lb.. Bag
\$18.95

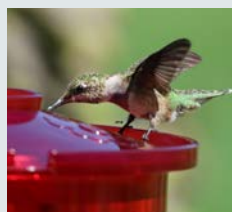
4,000
At least 4,000 species of birds are regular migrants, which is about 40 percent of the total number of birds in the world. Make sure to stop in and check out the different seed blends Songbird Station offers not found anywhere else in town. They are catered to attract buntings, grosbeaks, and other spring arriving birds.

1758

The Purple Martin was first described in 1758 by Carolus Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist, physician, and zoologist and is one of my favorite migrating birds and also one of the chattiest. Make sure to come in and check out the largest selection of purple martin items in Columbia that can add to your colony or make you a first-time Purple Martin landlord.

70 More than 70 different types of birds have been observed drinking nectar from Hummingbird

feeders so a lot of other birds must have a "sweet bill" too. I know around my house woodpeckers don't mind clinging for a quick drink from my Hummingbird Haven feeder. Around Missouri, Hummingbirds start arriving mid-April so make sure to get your feeders cleaned and ready or come check out some of the new Hummingbird feeders at Songbird Station before the season starts.



Hummingbird Haven
\$22.50



Red Headed Woodpecker at Hummingbird Feeder
Photo by Jill Eoff.



House Finch at Small Recycled Hopper Feeder
Photo by Jill Eoff.



Small Recycled Hopper Feeder
\$25.50

Tips to Attracting Bluebirds & Tree Swallows

By: Mel Toellner



Male Eastern Bluebird © Shutterstock

As you read this issue of Songbird Station News, Bluebirds have been starting the process of courtship and nesting in Central Missouri. Tree Swallows will soon arrive from their winter migration from points south.

Bluebirds in Mid-Missouri don't migrate far, and many simply drift within their Central Missouri ranges looking for food sources (berries like American Bittersweet).



American Bittersweet

Want to attract both birds? Both love open habitat, and both to utilize a Bluebird house. I, and many others, recommend placing Bluebird boxes 100 yards apart (remember a football field). If you want Tree Swallows, you should place a second house approximately 20-22 feet (7 paces) from your Bluebird

house (spaced as recommended above.) This way the Bluebirds will take one box and the Tree Swallows the other, and they will peacefully co-exist.



Ultimate Bluebird House
\$49.99

My favorite box by far is our Ultimate Bluebird Box.

Why? Both sides open for easy care, and observation (I love showing my grandchildren the babies). A predator guard and nest lift help keep the babies

safe. The roof has been built to NABS standards with appropriate ventilation. These are made right here in Central Missouri by Songbird Essentials and are available at Songbird Station.

Please mount all your houses on metal poles with a baffle just below the house to keep snakes, raccoons, cats, and other predators from turning your houses into a food source. I mount a house by driving in a 6-foot steel rod. Then put a radiator or hose clamp

tight on the pole just under the bottom of where the house would be at the top of the pole. I then take a 6-foot piece of PVC Pipe, put a cap on it, drill out a hole, and slide the pole and cap over the pole until it hangs "just above" the ground on the hose or radiator clamp. The baffle must be off the ground to be effective against snakes. You can purchase 18" metal baffles that work well also. They do not, however, give as much protection against snakes.

Come to Songbird Station where we have a complete kit available (complete parts you need).

Make sure you keep houses at least 50 feet away from nearby trees and bushes. Move 200 feet away if Wrens start inhabiting your houses. Likewise, if at all possible, keep houses far away from any buildings, livestock feed areas, etc. that attract English Sparrows and Starlings which are both fierce, non-native competitors of Bluebirds. Once you see one of these two non-native birds kill a Bluebird, and build a nest over it in a box, you'll understand why I utilize traps and a gun to control English Sparrows and European Starlings.



Squirrel Defeater Super
Snap On Baffle
\$27.99



Male Tree Swallow © Shutterstock

You should face your boxes where the opening of the nest box is directed away from prevailing winds, and from the hot exposure of the sun. In Central Missouri, I recommend an East/Southeast facing. If a potential small "perching spot" like a small tree or bush is 30-50 feet away, I'll turn the box slightly in that direction.

You can increase your chances of attracting a Bluebird by putting your own "T-Cross" perch (available at Songbird Station) made from tomato stakes or fiberglass electric fence rods out in front of your house 20 feet or so. You'll often see a Bluebird use it, as they scan for insects to...



Cedar Chalet
Mealworm Feeder
\$21.99

10% OFF




SE516 PICTURED

LIVE OR DRIED MEALWORMS

10% OFF LIVE OR DRIED MEALWORMS WITH PURCHASE OF SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS BLUEBIRD FEEDER

10% OFF LIVE OR DRIED MEALWORMS WITH PURCHASE OF ANY SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS BLUEBIRD FEEDER. COUPON EXPIRES 4/1/2020.

10% OFF



SPARROW TRAP

10% OFF SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS SPARROW TRAP (SEST1)

10% OFF SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS SPARROW TRAP (SEST1). COUPON EXPIRES 4/1/2020.

Tips to Attracting Bluebirds & Tree Swallows

Continued...

grab and take to the nest to feed the babies.

While Tree Swallows only have time for one brood before they migrate, Bluebirds will often have 2 and even 3 broods depending on the location and weather. You can always tell which nest is a Tree Swallows as it has white feathers on top. What is endearing about Bluebirds is that when the 2nd brood is born, the babies from the first brood stay around and can be seen bringing food to their new siblings at the nest. This often continues into the fall, and at times they stay together until the following year.

Provide live mealworms to make life easier for your Bluebird parents. We offer live mealworms raised right here in Central Missouri that Bluebirds love, and other feeders and tips for best success. Come in today. We'll help you "See Blue in your yard"!!

One final tip. Don't forget each year to use a bar of soap and rub it on the inside surface of your nest box roofs. That really helps keep wasps from utilizing a nest box.

Want to learn more and perhaps even build a Bluebird house with your children or grandchildren? Sign up now for our Bluebird Seminar on March 21st at 10:00 a.m. Details elsewhere in this newsletter. Don't miss it!



Bluebird View Thru House
\$38.99

Q&A

WITH BIRD MAN MEL



Wren A-Frame
Bird House
\$20.99

Q. I only seem to get one House Wren to nest. What am I doing wrong?

A. The male House Wren likes to claim every potential cavity in sight. A secret in attracting Wrens is to put multiple houses out on opposite sides of your home or spread houses around your property in such a way as to keep them as far apart as possible. Don't forget to always clean nest boxes after each nesting. All of our Wren nest boxes at Songbird Station have the proper 1



Cedar Wren
House
\$15.95

1/8" size opening to keep Sparrows out and also have cleanouts.

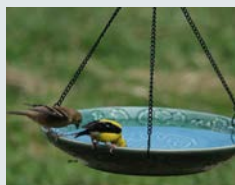
Q. Each Spring I see bright yellow Goldfinches. What's best to keep them coming back?

A. The secret to attracting Finches is to provide seed and water. If you have a Nyjer

feeder with the very small holes it's critical to keep seed fresh and mold-free. I love our Yellow Spiral Finch Feeder as I can fill from Top one time and the bottom the next time. Fill it with our Songbird Essentials Finch Mix that has "no millet fillers", and is 50% High Energy, "fine chopped Sunflower Kernels" Finches prefer it 10/1 over straight Nyjer. Come in and we'll tell you why!! Also, feed Hearty Hearts in any type of feeder, Finches love'em. If you are feeding Hearty Hearts you may have Finches at your feeder now. Look for the small bird with black and white wing stripes. Water is critical as Finches only eat seeds and thus get no moisture from berries or insects. Provide a source of water now in one of our "Birding Friendly" birdbaths.



Finches Favorite
3-Tube Copper
Feeder
\$44.95



Hummingbird Ceramic
Bird Bath
\$34.99

Q. I am sick of squirrels eating all my seed. Is there really a squirrel proof feeder??

A. Yes, there is! Our Brome feeders are guaranteed squirrel proof. Our family business is one of the largest sellers of Brome in the nation. We guarantee no one offers a better price on them! Plus, we have the widest selection, including their new Squirrel Proof Suet Feeder.



Squirrel Proof
Suet Feeder
\$69.99

Q. I always have one bully who drives other Hummingbirds away. Is there anything I can do??

A. Similar answer to Wren question above. Put out feeder and plant flowers Hummingbirds live on different sides of your home to attract more hummers. I love our 8 ounce "Big Red Feeders". They are easy to fill & clean – Yet inexpensive enough you can hang them all around your yard to help attract "Lots" of Hummers.



Big Red
Hummingbird Feeder
\$5.99



Orioles ARE COMING!

And You Can Attract Them!

By: Mel Toellner

In photo above, Patented Jelly/Jam Feeder. \$11.95
Photo By: Jill Eoff

Each year I know that when I see a bright orange Oriole in my yard here in Central Missouri that summer is not far behind. I used to say May 1st was the day to be ready for Orioles, but now I say to be ready for Orioles (as well as Hummingbirds) on Tax Day, April 15.

In Central Missouri, we almost always attract the Baltimore Orioles (It gets its name from Sir George Calvert the first Baron of Baltimore who wore the same colors). You'll know these birds, as the male is the only bird with bright orange colors (7-8" in length / 11-12" wingspan). The female is a dull orange. Both with black backs and wing bars.

The key to attracting Orioles is you must be ready and have food out "when" they stop by in migrating. Empty or no feeders – "They WILL pass you by and NOT come back!". The favorite foods to attract Orioles are Oriole nectar, Oriole jelly, and oranges.

Our Songbird Essentials "Bird-Berry™ Jelly" and Oriole Nectar are widely recognized and recommended as absolutely the best foods to attract and keep Orioles coming to your feeders. I do also recommend offering whole oranges (cut in half) offered flesh side up.



BirdBerry™ Jelly
\$4.99

Birdman Mel's favorite and the best feeders to attract and hold Orioles on your Central Missouri property:

* Our original, patented jelly feeder comes with a refillable jar or fits on most jelly jars (pictured left). Note our Bird Berry Jelly's™ unique formula of grape and blackberry fruit with absolutely no preservatives or corn syrup as proven to be the best jelly to attract and hold Orioles.



Switch'N'Swap™
Jelly Feeder
Available this Spring



Love Birds
Jelly Feeder
\$36.99

months, and then switch to the seed saucer bottom and it's an excellent inexpensive seed feeder during fall and winter. Every home needs a "Switch N Swap" Feeder.

Try it and you'll agree!!

* Want a beautiful jelly and fruit feeder? You need one of our Holland Hill handmade, twisted copper heirloom feeders made right here in central Missouri! A great way to feed Bird Berry Jelly and orange halves.



Copper Oriole
Fruit & Jelly Feeder
\$39.95

* Last but not least is our Ultimate Oriole Feeder with the unsurpassed capacity to offer Songbird Essentials Oriole Nectar, Bird Berry Jelly, and orange halves. It's the ultimate in Oriole food attracting feeder with built-in Ant Moat!



Ultimate Oriole
Feeder
\$23.49

Don't forget to put one of our orange Nectar Protectors filled with water above all your Oriole fruit, jelly, or nectar feeders to keep ants out while the orange color acts as an Oriole attracting billboard.



Nectar Protector Jr.
Orange
\$4.95

We are proud that all the Oriole foods and feeders recommended in this article are made in the USA, here in the Heart of America! Buy local – Buy Songbird Essentials from Songbird Station. We are in 2020 celebrating 25 years, Helping Central Missouri Families "Enjoy the gift of God's nature in our backyards together!"

Come to our free "Attracting Hummingbirds and Orioles Seminar"

Want to learn more on how to attract Orioles? Come to our "Attracting Hummingbirds and Oriole Seminar" at 10:00am, Saturday April 4th at Songbird Station. Reservations are requested, but not required. So we have plenty of seats, handouts, and refreshments sign up today and we can "Help You Attract Orioles and Hummingbirds". See you then!

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www.songbirdstation.com

and
1600 Bassford Drive
Mexico, MO 65265

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Songbird Station NEWS

"We Help Families Enjoy Nature Together"

Bird Man Mel is Back!

Spring Seminars on Attracting:

3/14/20 • Purple Martins • 10:00 a.m.

3/21/20 • Bluebirds • 10:00 a.m.

4/4/20 • Hummingbirds & Orioles • 10:00 a.m.

More info on Page 3

If you would like to receive our newsletter via email,
please email kaylee@songbirdstation.com

Songbird Station is Blossoming with NEW Spring Garden Decor, Gifts, & More!

Driftwood & Sea Glass Wind Chimes



Decorative Watering Cans



Kinetic Spinners



Rain Gauges



Metal Garden Decor



10% OFF NEW GARDEN FLAGS



10% OFF SELECT
NEW GARDEN FLAGS

10% OFF SELECT NEW GARDEN FLAGS.
COUPON EXPIRES 4/1/2020.

20% OFF SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS NECTAR PROTECTOR



20% OFF ONE SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS
NECTAR PROTECTOR WITH PURCHASE OF
ANY SE NECTAR FEEDER

20% OFF ONE (1) SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS NECTAR
PROTECTOR WITH PURCHASE OF ANY SONGBIRD
ESSENTIALS NECTAR FEEDER. COUPON EXPIRES
4/1/2020.

10% OFF SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS SQUIRREL DEFEATER BAFFLES



10% OFF ONE SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS
SQUIRREL DEFEATER BAFFLE

10% OFF ONE (1) SONGBIRD ESSENTIALS SQUIRREL
DEFEATER BAFFLE (SESQ85, SESQ86, SESQ87,
SESQ88) COUPON EXPIRES 4/1/2020.