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Songbird Station NEWS

Celebrating 26 Years Helping Families Enjoy Nature Together

Getting Your Feeders Ready for Winter's Arrival

by Mel Toellner



Every season of the year brings with it new reasons for feeding your backyard birds. Fall provides its own, unique pleasures. Although there is an abundant supply of natural foods available, such as mature grains, seeds, berries, and insects, keeping your feeders full during the autumn months offers several benefits to the birds and provides a great deal of enjoyment for you.

In early fall, your feeder might be frequented by families of the late-breeding birds, like the American Goldfinch. Juvenile birds often will congregate to eat relished items such as Nyjer seed and Sunflower hearts. Entire families visit feeders where adults can feed the beginning chicks, and the young learn how to hull seed. This is a wonderful sight to see.

Around mid-fall, birds begin to feed actively in order to build the extra stores of body fat needed to help them through harsh, cold winter months. During this time of preparation, all birds appreciate easy access to a bountiful food supply so that valuable energy isn't spent searching for all the components of their diet. During this period, birds that do not frequent the feeder in the summer may often

be seen, such as Nuthatches, Chickadees, Titmice, and Juncos. Also, in later fall, migrating birds may stop at the feeder for a brief visit, which means you may see new species in your backyard. Feeding during the fall is the most effective way to help establish a larger resident population of birds in your vicinity during the winter. Contrary to some beliefs, feeding during the fall does not deter birds from migrating. Instead it may hold them in a more northerly portion of their *normal* range.

Migratory birds instinctively head to more favorable climates. The availability of food affects only the migratory distance, not inducing a bird to stay in an intolerable climate or in an area that otherwise would not be normal for it to reside.

It is very helpful to start supplying any "winter" foods, such as high oil content seeds or mixes (Sunflower, Sunflower hearts, Peanuts), or other suet by mid-fall. I love to use Essential Nuts & Berries and Hearty Hearts. This will show both your current populations, and any transient birds, that your feeders will provide adequate, high-energy foods to carry them through the winter. Establishing your feeders as a reliable food supply will encourage resident birds to include your yard within their winter feeding range.



Take the opportunity during the pleasant fall months to clean out your feeders and add new ones in protected locations, such as the south or southeastern side of your house, or near evergreens.

Clean out existing bird houses, and add a layer of pine shavings or grass clippings for bedding and insulation. This type of shelter will be appreciated by many species. Open-fronted bird shelters or ledges may also be added for those species that don't use houses, like Robins, Cardinals, Song Sparrows and Mourning Doves. Our Robin Roosts are great to use!

An often overlooked, but important, part of bird feeding is access to fresh water. Take this time to thoroughly clean out your birdbaths and install a submersible heater. We've got several models from which to choose. Check out more information on water in the winter on page 3.

Attracting birds is a fun activity with a purpose that has positive results. When we provide for birds, we contribute to our quality of life. Plus, it can become a lifetime hobby.

Tips for Saving Seed Dollars

by Mel Toellner

Wild bird seed prices have been, and appear to continue to, mirror the increase of prices that Central-Missouri farmers are seeing in grain. Why is that? Sunflower meal can, and is, used in livestock feed. It and other songbird grains are tied to the general grain markets, so when it fluctuates, so do bird seed prices.

While this presents a problem for many in the birding community, we have some great news for you; at Songbird Station we can help you continue to enjoy the benefits of feeding your birds! We locked in our seed supply early on, which means you won't see further increases in our prices unless the market just goes crazy.

To help ensure you get the most for your money, we suggest you take advantage of the following seed money saving strategies:



A Chickadee will pick out the best seeds!

- Stock up on seed at our annual Truckload Seed Sale October 29 & 30. See details on the back page.

- Utilize Brome's Squirrel Proof feeders. In Central Missouri, Songbird Station is the only carrier of all 6 models of Squirrel Buster feeders. We guarantee they are Squirrel proof, and they have a life time guarantee.



- Make use of Cole's hot meats and other hot squirrel product mixes in stock at Songbird Station.

- Shop the store for other squirrel proof and resistant feeders offered. Be sure to browse our exclusive Squirrel Defeater baffle and large raccoon proof metal baffles.



COLESGCHM05

Doing these things ensures that the money you spend on seed goes to the songbirds you love and NOT four-legged varmints!

One of the most important things you can do to make the most of your seed dollars is to ensure you are choosing from the **quality** seed selection at Songbird Station. Many big box mixes include junk that songbirds won't eat and that end up on the ground. Read the article *Choosing Quality Bird Seed* on page 4 to learn how can ensure you are purchasing the seed your birds will actually enjoy and eat.

At Songbird Station we offer you the best value in wild bird seeds and feeders. We Guarantee it!

Welcome Peter Hayes!



We are pleased to welcome Peter to the Songbird Station family! With a rich background in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, he is well equipped to help you with your birding needs. Ask and he can share a story or two from his own bird watching ventures.

Peter is a lover of motorcycle rides, hikes, and all things nature.

Stop in and say Hello!

World's LARGEST Bird Seed, Feeder, House & Accessory Sale

SONGBIRD STATION WAREHOUSE SALE

Saturday, October 16
8am - 12pm
1600 Bassford Drive
Mexico, MO

Stock up for
Christmas



ALL ITEMS
at least
50% off!

Tons of bird feeders, houses and baths.
Including Home Decor, Wine/Beverage Lovers Items & Christmas
Items! PLUS - SUPER SEED SPECIALS - Cash & Carry!!

Many items are simply in "damaged boxes,"
are overstocks or discontinued lines.

Sale!

\$2 - \$5 - \$10 - \$20 TABLES!!

Directions:

From Columbia go east on I-70
to US 54. Take 54 north to the
first Mexico exit (Bus. 54 North).
Turn left on Lakeview (by the
Presbyterian Church). Turn right
on Bassford.



Do I Need to Provide Water in the Winter?

The short answer is Yes!

Water is vital to birds in the winter! About 70% of a bird's non-fat body tissue is water, which needs to be maintained to avoid dehydration.

Birds also use water in the winter to keep warm. By cleaning their feathers and grooming them with natural oils, they are able to help insulate their bodies from the frigid weather.

While they are able to find some water in natural food sources like insects, berries, and even snow, when those supplies dwindle, the water you supply is even more vital!

Following are tips to help you provide water to your feathered friends this winter.

How to Choose a Bath

With the vast selection of baths available, how do you choose one for your yard? Will any bath work, or do you need to look for specific features to keep your birds happy?

Not all birdbaths are the same. They vary in material, depth, and other features. But, knowing what birds prefer can help you select a good one for your yard.

A good birdbath mimics shallow puddles, which are nature's birdbaths. Choose a bath with a gentle slope from the outer edge to the center to allow

birds to wade into the water.

Choose a material that is easy to clean as algae and sediment build up, and it is important to remove those often. We recommend using a hard plastic saucer. While, ceramic and concrete ones are great in the summer, they will easily crack in cold temperatures.

Rough-textured bottoms give birds areas to grip, which most closely bottoms of natural puddles.



Where to Place the Bath

Birds sometimes prefer baths that are lower to the ground, where puddles are typically found. However, the threat of a cat assault can determine that you need to place it higher for safety.

Choosing a versatile bath could be a great option. The Songbird Spa heated birdbath, available at Songbird Station, can be mounted to the deck, clamped in place, or simply used on the ground, giving you options to choose what is best for your backyard feathered friends.

Cleaning Birdbaths

It is vital to clean your birdbaths regularly, even in the winter. A bath cleaned weekly with a brush and a weak solution of detergent and bleach will prevent bacteria and diseases that may harm wild birds.

About Birdbath De-Icers

We hear your thought: *But water freezes in the winter. How does providing frozen water help the birds?*

Simple - add a de-icer to the water that will thaw it and keep it thawed. De-icers are submersible in water, economical, and safe as long as you use a high-quality outdoor extension cord to plug it into an electrical source.

While most de-icers won't keep the entire bath of water thawed under a certain temperature, they will keep enough thawed that birds can still utilize it for their needs.

Alternatively, go ahead and choose a birdbath with a heater built in, like our previously mentioned Songbird Spa.

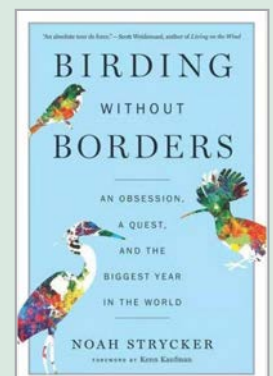


SE994 - De-Icer

Songbird Station ~ Contributing Sponsor of Birding Without Borders

Friday, October, 15, 2021
6 p.m. @ Monsanto Auditorium
in MU's Bond Life Sciences Center

Noah Strycker will share humorous and inspiring stories and slides detailing his 365-day Big Year of birding, an adventure during which he travelled to 41 countries and documented more than half of all the world's bird species.



SE509

Choosing Quality Bird Seed

In much the same way that you pay attention to ingredients in the food that you eat and ensure you are feeding your pets quality nutrients, you should also be doing all you can to purchase and offer quality nutrition to your backyard bird friends. Not doing so could lead to waste in seed and, therefore, your hard earned money. It could also cause your birds to lose interest in your feeders and find their meal in someone else's yard.

But, how do you know if the seed you are considering is *quality*? What makes one seed quality and another not? These are great questions, and we will answer them here.

The diet of a bird is very different than yours or mine in that a bird requires a diet

high in fat and protein. Sunflower, safflower, Nyjer, and peanuts hold between 20-40% fat and 20-25% protein, which is why they are the major inclusions of any quality seed mix. Cheaper mixes may tempt you with price, but know that they fill their mixes with "fluff" - milo, wheat, red millet, and other "assorted" grain products that only contain 2-4% fat and 8-12% protein. Birds just won't eat the stuff.

Know, too, that not all Black Oil Sunflower offered stacks up. If the seed did not reach maturity or is infected by insects or disease, the quality suffers, and a bird can tell one from the other without even popping the seed open. If they find that a feeder contains a lower quality offering, they won't take their time sifting through the seed; they will simply move on to the next yard.

So, how do you make sure you're getting the good stuff that birds

want and need? Check the label carefully. All ingredients used in wild bird feeds, by law, must be correctly identified in the ingredient section. They will be labelled in order of greatest to least quantity included. Watch for generic statements and misleading label information. For instance, if a mix states that it has nuts, fruits, or any other ingredient, this should be listed in the ingredient section as well. Any product listing "assorted grain products," is really telling you they've bulked their mix up with filler grains that birds don't eat. They do this to increase the weight while keeping cost low.

At Songbird Station we only sell quality mixes and seed!



A Note from Birdman Mel

Songbird Station's number one mission is, and always will be, to help families enjoy songbirds and all of the beauties of nature in your backyard. I truly believe that nature is a stress reliever from God, and I encourage you to take time today to listen to the birds sing. We are central Missouri's oldest, largest, and best backyard birding store. No one offers more product at better prices to help you attract the birds you want than Songbird Station!

Thank you

for letting us serve you for 26 years!

While our home's backyard, deck, and patio are full of bird feeders and the joy they bring us daily, we want to also share with you the joys we experience with our children and grandchildren when we change our in-home décor to fit the seasons. We invite you come in to the store and see the fall and Halloween décor that your family will enjoy during the crisp weeks ahead. Curated by my wife, Bev, and daughter, Becky, we offer the

most unique seasonal home décor - from a spinner or garden flag in the yard, to our distinctive witches and more! Come in and check them out while supplies last.

Make a mental note to not miss our 2021 Incredible Joys of Christmas presentation starting with a sneak preview at our 25+1 Anniversary Celebration the weekend of October 29.



We ARE central Missouri's best wild bird store and so much more!

STORE HOURS

Monday - Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Pumpkin Seeds & Bat Facts



One of the most fun fall activities while gearing up for Halloween is carving pumpkins into Jack-O-Lanterns! Scary, happy, sad, or silly - no matter which face you create, the experience is nothing but FUN.

Did you know that birds love pumpkin seeds? Those with strong bills, like Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Jays, and Titmice crack open the hulls of the seeds and gobble up the contents!

So, this year when you carve the friendly pumpkin, set the seeds aside for your backyard friends. If you plan to share the seeds immediately, simply rinse the pulp from the seeds and spread them on the ground or in a platform feeder.

Otherwise, to share them later, boil them for 10 minutes and then bake at 325 degrees for about 30 minutes, turning several times. They will turn a slightly darker color. You can store them in an airtight container and share when you are ready!



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Kitchen Science



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Bat Houses

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BAT FACTS



Every year around Halloween, bats are portrayed as evil. The truth is, they are one of our most beneficial mammals.

Did you know that...

- Most bats in Mid-Missouri are Little Brown and Big Brown Bats
- Bats are known to eat half their body weight in insects in a 24-hour period
- In some cases, a nursing mother will eat her total body weight in one day. This equates to thousands of mosquitos, moths, and beetles per night!
- Bats eat a lot because they experience great heat loss with so much exposed skin
- They sleep in large colonies for warmth

Installing a bat house, or two, on your property is a great way to help these amazing creatures!

PUZZLE TIME

Help the bat find all the words hidden below in time for Halloween!






T	Y	J	N	T	Y	K	P	C	I	A	S	H	F	C
A	P	A	E	I	E	U	M	S	A	N	Z	P	C	L
B	Y	C	E	T	C	O	F	T	I	R	J	P	G	I
N	B	K	W	M	A	T	G	K	N	L	V	O	G	A
W	H	O	O	I	U	C	P	X	H	C	L	E	S	G
O	T	L	L	C	Q	M	I	A	A	U	Z	I	B	Z
R	C	A	L	E	U	G	R	O	S	B	E	A	K	S
B	O	N	A	P	S	I	E	S	U	O	H	T	A	B
E	L	T	H	B	I	G	B	R	O	W	N	B	A	T
L	O	E	Y	S	L	A	N	I	D	R	A	C	F	U
T	N	R	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	S	E	E	D	S
T	I	N	P	Y	J	C	O	B	B	A	C	A	Z	O
I	E	S	A	Y	E	A	A	E	D	O	J	S	P	O
L	S	U	H	J	P	T	Y	J	D	H	M	R	O	F
V	L	B	K	N	S	I	O	S	T	S	E	A	A	H

Bat House
Cardinals
Grosbeaks
Jays
Pumpkin Seeds
Bats
Carve

Happy Halloween
Little Brown Bat
Titmice
Big Brown Bat
Colonies
Jack O Lanterns
Pumpkins

Pairing Your Feeder With the Correct Seed to Attract Your Desired Birds

In September, many Mid-Missouri Songbirds start searching for winter food sources. Putting out the right kind of feeder with the right food in it can help you attract and enjoy songbirds at your home. Use the table below to help you select a feeder and seed mix that will help your yard appeal to your desired birds.

Feeder Type		Seed	Songbirds Attracted				
 Fly-Thru	 Hopper	 Tray	 Essential Nuts & Berries	 Titmice Nuthatches Gold Finches Purple Finches	Chickadees Blue Jays Downy Woodpeckers Cardinals*		
			*This bird's favorite feeder				
 Seed Tube with Tray			 Essential Nuts & Berries	 Hearty Hearts	Titmice Nuthatches Gold Finches Purple Finches	Chickadees Blue Jays Downy Woodpeckers Cardinals*	
			*Only if tray is attached				
 Seed Cylinder			 Fruit Berry Nut Seed Log	Flickers Chickadees Nuthatches Titmice	Large Woodpeckers: Red Headed Red Bellied		
			Almost all birds during winter				
 Suet Feeders Cedar Suet Log	 Double Tail-Prop	 Decorative Suet Holder	 Peanut Suet Plugs	 Peanut Butter Suet Cake	Flickers Chickadees Nuthatches Titmice	Large Woodpeckers: Red Headed Red Bellied	
			Pileated Woodpeckers				
 Mesh Kernel Feeder			 Hearty Hearts	All of the songbirds you love, love hearts!			
			*The only seed Bluebirds & Robins can, and do, eat.				
 Mealworm Feeders Mealworm Bowls			 Stake Feeders	 Mealworms	Bluebirds* Chickadees Blue Jays	Robins Woodpeckers + Many More	
			*This bird's favorite food				
 Window Feeders Window Hopper			 Window Suet Feeder	 Shell-Free Deluxe	 Hearty Hearts	 Suet Cake	
			Woodpeckers Chickadees Titmice			Finches Cardinals	
 Squirrel-Proof Feeders Squirrel Buster			 Caged Feeders	 Essential Nuts & Berries	 Hearty Hearts	All of the songbirds listed here if filled with Hearty Hearts.	Smaller Songbirds: No Cardinals, Blue Jays, or large Woodpeckers
			Cardinals attract better to Squirrel Buster Feeder				

Ask Birdman Mel!



Q. Can my husband watch the Tigers with your binoculars, or are they just for bird watching?

A. We are as excited as many of you are about our football Tigers and are equally excited that we have, by far, the largest selection of optics in Mid-Missouri. What is important is that our staff will show you the big difference in the types of optics primarily used for sports and vacation viewing - versus those used for strictly bird watching. Use the coupon below and save on your optics purchase. We guarantee NO one will beat our prices on optics!

Q. Do you have a favorite field guide to help identify birds?

A. This is a tough question as guides are ever changing, and each of us likes what we get used to. With that said, my favorite, without a doubt, is Stan Tekiela's new release *Birds of Missouri*. Separated by the color of the bird, this guide makes finding any bird simple. We carry other Missouri titles as well, such as *Trees of Missouri* by Stan Tekiela and *Fish of Missouri* by Dave Bosanko. If you're interested in birds of other states, we can easily supply you with a guide!



AP61355 - Birds of Missouri
AP31560 - Trees of Missouri



Q. I've got a deck and want to have feeders, but my wife doesn't want any mess on our deck or the patio below. Any suggestions?

A. Here are a couple of thoughts - with our 30" extended reach brackets, you can position feeders a long way off the deck. I use the clamp on version and love it as I can move it around. We also have a screw on version. For maximum cleanliness, though, hand a Seed Hoop under your feeders, which catch 90% of anything that drops.

Q. Do birds use houses in the winter?

A. Birds like Bluebirds, Chickadees, Titmice, and some Woodpeckers often seek protected places to roost or sleep. Songbird Station stocks the SE600 Convertible Roosting House, which is incomparable to other roosting boxes. The benefits to this Roosting Box is that it contains several perches inside to accommodate more birds - the more the merrier! The other exciting feature allows you to remove the perch and rotate the front panel 180 degrees, converting it into a Bluebird House for Spring. It is easy to clean and made from Cedar to last a long time. Stop by to see our wide selection of bird houses.



SE600
Convertible Roosting House



10% OFF
25 lb Feed & Seed Canister
OR
Quick Release Seed Scoop
with purchase of 20#+ of seed.
Coupon Expires 11/15/21

Buy any Garden Flag
Get the matching doormat
& mailbox cover for

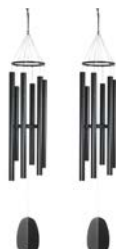
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Coupon Expires 11/15/21



10% OFF

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and

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



"We Help Families Enjoy Nature Together"

STORE HOURS

Monday - Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you would like to receive our newsletter via email and help our environment in the process, please email edkuras@songbirdstation.com.

We're Celebrating 26 Years!

Free Gift
for all who
attend

October 29 **ALL DAY:** Truckload Seed Sale
4-6 PM: Kid's Activities

October 30 **ALL DAY:** Truckload Seed Sale
8:30 AM: Bird Walk

11 AM - 1 PM: Raptors

11 AM - 1 PM: Kid's Activities

2 PM: All About Owls Seminar
by Jim & Julie Lunstead

25% OFF

Some of our best
Feeders, Mealworms,
Chimes, Puzzles
+ Much More



TRUCKLOAD SEED SALE



**40# Black Oil
Sunflower Seed**

\$21.95

**All 20# Bags
of mixes**

\$1.00 off

**High Energy Suet
(Case of 12)**

\$11.99



Call ahead to request the quantity of seed preferred • Cash & Carry Only • We will load for you

573-446-5941