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Issue No. 09.13

September 3, 2013



"Nature News" from Wild Birds Unlimited at Moana Nursery
American Kestrel Bird-of-the Month



Save it for
Later.

Birds usually depend on caches when natural sources are not abundant or when severe weather inhibits their search for food.

Did you know that some birds "cache" or save their food for

later?

For the past several years, our partners at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology have used lightweight transponder tags to track the feeding behavior of individual birds.

The research shows that during peak caching season, an individual bird may visit the same feeder up to 200 times per day, hiding their food for later.

Come see us for the best caching foods to fill your feeders and enjoy the show.



Beginning in late-summer, like squirrels, some birds cache or hide their food for a later meal. Birds depend on caches when natural sources are not abundant or when severe weather inhibits their search for food.

Buy 3 lbs. of Peanuts; Get a Peanut Wreath Feeder for \$8.00
(reg. \$15.99)

Offer not valid on previous purchases or sale items. One discount per purchase.

Offer expires 09/15/2013. Coupon not required.



Cashing in on Caching

Right now chickadees, nuthatches and jays are hiding food to retrieve and eat at a later time. This behavior is called "caching." Caching helps birds survive during bad weather and when food sources are low. These birds can store hundreds of seeds a day. Each seed is placed in a different location and they generally remember where each one is, even a month later.

By providing an easily accessible food source, you can help your birds with their caching needs.

Chickadees prefer to cache black oil sunflower seeds; often eating a small portion before hiding it in and under bark, dead leaves, knotholes, clusters of pine needles, gutters, shingles and in the ground. Chickadees cache more in the middle of the day when visiting feeders.

Nuthatches prefer heavier sunflower seeds over the lighter ones. Be sure to have some sunflower chips in your blend, too, as they like these 25% more than one in the shell. They cache more in the morning and prefer to hide foods on deeply furrowed tree trunks and the underside of branches. Nuthatches are also known to hide seeds under a shingle or behind wooden siding.

Jays love to cache peanuts, sunflower seeds and acorns. They are especially fond of peanuts in the shell. They bury them in the ground and are known to cache about 100 in a day; emptying a feeder in no time. Watch for them make repeated trips to your feeders (or an oak tree) and fly off. They can travel up to two miles to bury their nutritious treasure.

Come see us for the best caching foods to fill your feeders; we guarantee the wild birds in your yard will put on a show.

Jacque Lowery, Manager
Wild Birds Unlimited at Moana Nursery



September's High Desert Bird-of-the-Month:

American Kestrel

The American Kestrel is North America's smallest falcon. In many older field guides you might see it referred to as "sparrow hawk", indicating the propensity to seek out small

songbirds as prey.

The Kestrel is one of the most colorful birds of prey, with a slate blue head, black mustache and warm, reddish brown back. The male amps up this feast of color with slate blue wings, also. The Kestrel is roughly the size and shape of a Mourning Dove, but with a larger head, longer tail and distinctive falcon-shaped wings.

Kestrels most often hunt from the ground, although they can also catch food in flight. Their diet is heavy on invertebrates and insects such as dragonflies, grasshoppers, beetles; but they also are fierce hunters with prey including song birds nearly their size, lizards, small snakes, mice and voles.

Because of their small size, they can end up being prey for larger raptors like Red-tail Hawks, Barn Owls, Cooper's Hawk or even American Crows.

[Click here to read all of Jacque's complete Kestrel Bird-of-the-Month article.](#)



Local Bird Sightings by Jacque Lowery

Hopefully, as summer wanes and the hints of fall increase, most of you are still enjoying hummingbirds. And the goldfinch and finch populations should be visiting your feeders with more frequency. You should also start watching for the fall migrants from now through October. For the rest of this article I really want to digress a little from backyard sightings to address a couple of issues I find important.



Wilson's Warbler

During the spring and summer there are hundreds of orphaned birds - from songbirds to raptors - keeping the licensed bird rehabilitation facilities very busy. We are extremely lucky to have the Wild Animal Infirmary for Nevada (W.A.I.F.) located in Washoe Valley. Nancy Laird and her staff work tirelessly in all seasons, but especially in summer, taking care of injured birds and raising orphaned birds - all for release back into the wild when possible. W.A.I.F. receives no state or government funding and must rely on donations to keep the hospital open. Please consider making a cash donation, or provide supplies they need such as Exact and Nutri-Start for baby birds, hen scratch for older birds, and puppy pads for cage liners. Most of these products can be purchased at Petco or Petsmart. Contact information is: W.A.I.F., 2920 Eagle Street, Carson City, NV 89704, 775-849-0345. Visit them on the web at www.waifnv.org.

A large percentage of North American songbirds migrate to spend winters in Central and South America and need good living conditions there in order to fuel up for the migration north for the nesting season. Some of the best winter habitats for these birds are the types found on traditional coffee farms. Coffee grown in the traditional manner, in the

"shade" of larger canopy trees, provides very good habitat for birds and other wildlife. The abundance and diversity of birds increases in direct proportion to the abundance and diversity of the shade trees on coffee farms. Unfortunately, in Latin America three million of the seven million acres of coffee farms have been converted to sun cultivation. The impact of this is even greater than the loss of habitat, as sun coffee requires more fertilizer and pesticides and causes erosion and depletion of soil nutrients.



Male Western Tanager

[Click here to read the rest of Jacques' article.](#)

September Nature Happenings

- * The annual elk rut begins in the high country.
- * Aspen leaves begin to change to a beautiful shade of gold which dot the mountainsides.
- * Without question, September is our most settled and beautiful month, with North American weather systems taking a breather to offer glorious warm days and cool nights as we settle into autumn's arrival.
- * Bird populations are transitioning in preparation for winter - some birds move out, some birds come back and some become nomadic in their search for food, water and shelter.
- * American Goldfinches molt into a dull, nondescript color, even changing the color of the beak from orange to black.
- * Jays become nomadic and revisit yards in search of food which they can store through burial. Peanuts in the shell are their favorite.
- * Western Meadowlarks migrate.
- * Mule Deer are shedding the velvet from their antlers.
- * Asters are the last plants to bloom.
- * Fall hawk migration begins.
- * Monarch Butterfly migration peaks.
- * Bats are busy feeding, building fat for hibernation and migration.
- * Shorebird migration ends.

- * Fall migration peaks for warblers and others.
- * Most hummingbirds depart by the end of month.
- * Bears are feeding in preparation for hibernation.
- * Switch feeders to high-fat, winter foods.

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

Lahontan Audubon Society

Meetings

Monthly Meetings are held every fourth Tuesday, August through May, 6:30 p.m. (social) 7:00 p.m. - meeting begins. Monthly meetings are held at the Moana Nursery Landscape and Design Center, 1100 West Moana Lane, in Reno.

- September 24, 2013 - Holly Walton-Buchanan and Jessica Courts: Animal Ark, A Sanctuary for Life
- October 22, 2013 - Carol Grenier - Deep In The Heart of Texas: Subtropical Birds and More

Field Trips

- Saturday, September 21, 2013 - Oxbow Park, Reno
- Saturday, October 12, 2013 - Taylor Creek, South Lake Tahoe
- Saturday, October 26, 2013 or Saturday, November 2, 2013, TBD - Damonte Ranch Wetlands, Reno

The nearby Plumas Audubon Society also has field trips scheduled that area birders may find of interest. For more details please visit <http://www.plumasaudubon.org/>

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

Animal Ark

Sunday September 8, 2013 - - 5:00pm - 6:30pm: On the Wind Cheetah Run

Majestic balloons grace the skyline at dawn, and our cheetahs race into the sunset! Come see the world's fastest land mammal in action running at top speeds - completely

off-leash - around the Animal Ark run field!

Saturday September 21, 2013 - - 2:00pm - 6:00 pm: Out of Africa

Enjoy great food and drink; meet Tango the cheetah from Project Survival's Cat Haven; watch Animal Ark's cheetahs run at top speeds; chat with leading cheetah conservationists; and bid on amazing art and gifts in our silent auction! This is a great afternoon of conservation. Funds raised at this event directly support cheetah conservation in Africa as well as Animal Ark.

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



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