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## "Nature News" from Wild Birds Unlimited at Moana Nursery

Born, year after year, on our "green" roof shed at the Moana Lane location, they clearly own the parking lot, water features and habitat despite nursery dogs & cats that were there first .. oh well.

They come every year, welcome or not, to celebrate Easter and remind us to wish you ...



*Happy Easter*

## It's Worth the Risk for Mom

As you read this, millions of birds are on the most hazardous journey of their lives as they migrate north to nest. Long migrations are deadly for birds; it is estimated that about half of all migrating birds do not survive the annual round trip.

The hazards they face include bad weather, predators, exhaustion over water, collisions with towers, building and wind turbines, and starvation due to the lack of suitable stopover habitat along the way.

So why take the chance? Why would a bird that has all the necessities of life in the tropics subject itself to all of the dangers of flying north in the first place? It all has to do with giving their nestlings the best odds for starting their lives.

It's worth the journey to the northern hemisphere as it has much more land mass than the wintering grounds in the southern hemisphere. Millions of birds have more space in which to spread out and establish larger nesting territories that offer less competition for food and a better chance of avoiding detection by predators.

In addition, as the birds migrate north, the hours of sunlight per day grow longer. This advantage allows birds to make many more feeding trips to their young every day. The young grow faster, leave the nest earlier, thus shortening the dangerous nesting period.

So for mother birds, this dangerous migration has evolved into a risk worth repeating for the good of their young and their species as a whole.

Visit us soon. We have all of the expert advice and quality products that will give the nesting moms in your yard a helping hand that will make the risks of migration even more worthwhile.

Jacque Lowery, Manager  
Wild Birds Unlimited at Moana Nursery

Seed of the Month ... Dove & Quail Blend  
20 lbs. \$13.99 (reg. \$15.99) for the entire month of April!

Attract ground feeding Mourning Doves, Quail, Towhees, Juncos and White -Crowned Sparrows.

## Offer Bird Mom's A Helping Hand

Help Mother birds by making their lives a little easier. Provide them with safe, reliable homes and abundant, nutritious and easily obtained food sources.

### Safe Homes

Invite Mom to raise a family along with yours by offering appropriate, safe and ready-to-use nest boxes. Well-constructed nest boxes provide more options and more protection from weather and predators than may be found naturally. Nest boxes are available for chickadees, wrens, bluebirds and more.



## Nesting Nutrition

It may not seem like much, but having to shell every seed you eat can take time and energy. Moms need all the energy they can muster for building a quality nest, laying eggs and raising young. Blends without any shells offer a grab-and-go bite of quick energy.

Spring Nesting Blend is packed with sunflower hearts, black oil sunflower, safflower and peanuts and is a great source of protein which is essential for baby birds from the time they hatch until they are fully grown. This includes growing strong feathers which are made up of over 90% protein. Spring Nesting Blend also includes calcium, a mineral birds need during nesting season.

Mealworms attract common and uncommon insect-eating birds. They are a convenient protein-packed food. Offer them in an EcoClean Dinner Bell, SideDish Feeder or other smooth-sided tray feeders.

Jim's Birdacious Bark Butter Bits are packed with energy for quick grab-and-go bites with added calcium is attractive to egg-laying Moms as well as nestlings and fledglings.



## April High Desert Bird of the Month: Mourning Dove

Picture by Jacque Lowery

The Mourning Dove is a graceful, slender-tailed, small-headed dove that's common across the continent. Mourning Doves perch on telephone wires and forage for seeds on the

ground; their flight is fast and bullet straight. Their soft, drawn-out calls sound like laments. When taking off, their wings make a sharp whistling or whinnying. Mourning Doves are the most frequently hunted species in North America.

Mourning Doves are plump-bodied and long-tailed with short legs, small bill and a head that looks particularly small in comparison to the body. Their long, pointed tail is unique among North American doves.

Mourning Doves often match their open-country surroundings. They're delicate brown to buffy-tan overall, with black spots on the wings and black-bordered white tips to tail feathers.

Mourning Doves fly fast on powerful wingbeats, sometimes making sudden ascents, descents, and dodges, their pointed tails stretching behind them.

You can see Mourning Doves nearly anywhere except the deep woods. Look for them in fields or patches of bare ground, or on overhead perches like telephone wires.

### Fun Facts:

- Like all birds, Mourning Doves are unable to sweat, so to stay cool during hot weather, they pant just like a dog. Panting requires them to drink a great deal of water due to the excessive loss of moisture to evaporation.
- Doves are one of the few species of birds that drink by sucking up their water instead of taking a bill full of water and letting it trickle down their throat. They can suck up its total daily requirement in less than 20 seconds.

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

## Local Bird Sightings by Jacque Lowery

Elsewhere in this newsletter the Mourning Dove is featured as bird of the month. Are some of you noticing dove-like birds that look a little different in your yard? If so, what you are hosting are Eurasian Collared Doves. These doves were introduced to the Bahamas in the 1970's and by the 1980's they found their way to Florida. The first reports of this "new" dove in our area were probably five years ago. Now they are showing up all over the Truckee Meadows and other areas in Nevada.



If you think there are strange looking doves in your yard, look for these identification marks. Eurasian Collared Dove is larger than Mourning Dove. The wings are broad and slightly rounded. The broad tail is squared off at the tip rather than pointed like Mourning Dove. Mourning Doves have black spots on their wings, while Eurasian Doves have no markings on the wing. The most conspicuous field mark is the black crescent on the nape of the neck. The Eurasian Collared Doves, although larger, are not aggressive to the Mourning Doves, nor are they causing any decline in Mourning Dove population at this time. They are ground feeders and will like millet or a blend like Dove & Quail Mix.

Depending on the weather patterns for April, we will start to see a decline in the numbers of our wintering birds like White-crowned Sparrow and Junco. It's a good time to be watching for migrating warblers, tanagers, and other song birds heading north to their breeding grounds. Some birds, like tanagers, won't stop to eat from your feeders but may quench their thirst or bathe in your birdbath. Be sure to keep a consistent source of water and a sharp eye out for these potential visitors this spring.

## Upcoming Nature Events

### Lahontan Audubon Society Upcoming Field Trips and Meetings Events

- [Saturday, April 7, 2012 - Damonte Ranch Wetlands](#)
- [Saturday, April 14, 2012 - Swan Lake](#)
- [Saturday, April 14, 2012 - South of the Border down Markleeville way](#)

### Lahontan Meetings

- [April 24, 2012 - Will Richardson - Great Basin and Sierra Nevada Odonates 101](#)
- [May 22, 2012 - Sharon Schafer - The Art of Nature: Images from the Wildlands of Southern Nevada](#)

### Birds of the Truckee Meadows 2012

LAS will present the popular bird identification classes, Birds of the Truckee Meadows, again this year, starting May 2. This is an excellent opportunity for new birders to learn from some of the area's experts and a great refresher for seasoned birders.

The classes will be held at the Girl Scout Building, 605 Washington Street, in Reno, on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-9:00 p.m. The cost is \$40 for all five classes or \$10 per single class (payable at the door, please arrive early to pay).

- May 2, 2012 - Introduction to Birding, Dave Jickling
- No class on May 9
- May 16, 2012 - Birds of Prey, Bob Goodman
- May 23, 2012 - Birds of Lakes and Marshes, Larry Neel
- May 30, 2012 - Neighborhood Birds, Alan Gubanich
- June 6, 2012 - Mountain Birds, Jim Eidel

For more information or to register in advance, please contact Jane Burnham, telephone 775-677-4178, email: [jane.burnham@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jane.burnham@sbcglobal.net).

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

## Animal Ark Upcoming Events

Open March 31 to November 4

Tuesday - Sunday

From 10:00am - 4:30pm

Open Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day

Opening Weekend!

Saturday, March 31, and Sunday, April 1

10:00 am - 4:30 pm

Regular admission prices.

Our gates are open for the season after the long winter break and we look forward to welcoming visitors! Come help us celebrate Animal Ark's 31st year.

Sponsor's Night!

Saturday, April 28

4:30 - 6:00 pm

Only for members and adoptive parents!

This is an invitation-only event for Members and Adoptive Parents! Bring a treat for your animal; talk to the animal keepers; and hear behind-the-scenes stories. Not yet a member or an adopter? Please come and purchase either status at the door. Reservations required.

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

Thank You for 45 Years!

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