

BIRDTracks®

Wild Birds Unlimited

8402 Old Sauk Rd., Middleton, WI 53562,
608-664-1414 www.wbumadison.com

March 2011 Issue #25.3

Is It Spring Yet? Not For The Birds! *March Is the Hardest Month for Birds - You Can Help!*

Dear Friends of Nature:

March can be the most difficult month in a birds life.

Early in March, natural food supplies are at their lowest point of the year. Insect populations are still low, and the few remaining wild fruits, berries, seeds and nuts are either hidden or undesirable. Unpredictable weather doesn't make life any easier. Sunny, warm, spring-like days can turn into cold, damp conditions that challenge birds' survival skills. And to make matters worse, this is all happening as some birds prepare for nesting season.

Take heart! These various challenges provide you with one of the best opportunities of the year to help your birds.

Start by cleaning your feeders, bird feeding stations and baffles, repairing any weather damage and raking up any debris under your feeding stations. If your feeders look anything like ours, they really need cleaning after the long winter of use!

Providing Food and Water Makes a Difference*

Offer your birds lots of high-energy foods, such as peanuts, Bark Butter and suet. Loaded with fat and protein, these are beneficial substitutes for the scarce insects many birds would eat if they could find them.

Counteract the lack of natural insects by offering protein-rich mealworms, either alive or dried. They are eaten by numerous species of birds and can be a lifesaver during a sudden cold snap. Add a bird bath if you don't have one.

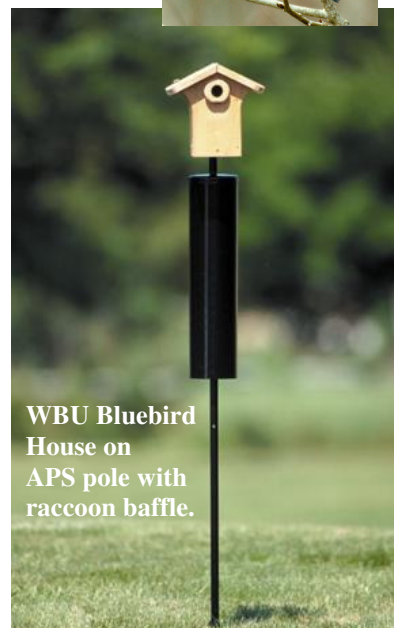
Nesting Birds Need Help Now, Too*

Birds build open-cup shaped nests in trees or on the ground, or they nest in cavities (or holes) in trees. By placing nesting materials and installing bird houses around your yard, you can entice birds, such as Bluebirds, Wrens, Chickadees, Titmice, Nuthatches, Woodpeckers, Purple Martins, Swallows, and Owls to your yard. Bird houses can make your birds' lives a little easier. After all, they have already expended a lot of energy migrating back home, establishing territories, courting and looking for scarce food.

*See Preparing Your Yard For Spring inside for more information on these topics.

If you are using a functional bird house to provide your birds a home, be sure it meets these six requirements:

1. Designed for the species, according to bird's size and nesting requirements.
2. Ventilation holes to provide release for heat build-up.
3. Easily cleaned.
4. Easily mounted or hung.
5. Durable to withstand several seasons of use.
6. Drainage holes in the bottom of the house



WBU Bluebird House on APS pole with raccoon baffle.

Visit us in the store this month. Our backyard birdfeeding specialists will help you choose the appropriate feeders and nesting boxes. We have everything you need to assist your birds through the messy March weather we have here in Wisconsin.

Happy Birding!

Jan and Bob Ross

*For Pat, Sharon, Steve, Marta, Meghan, Heather,
Patrick, Jean, Jim, Barb, and Tom*

Your backyard Birdfeeding Specialists

Wild Birds Unlimited

March Birdfeeder Sale

SAVE 15%

On All Bird Feeders Through 3/31/11

We carry the widest variety of feeders in town: Seed Tube Feeders, Hopper Feeders, Finch Feeders, Specialty Food Feeders and Tray Feeders. Stop in soon for the best selection! We have them all.

Inside BIRDTracks:

*Optics Specials
*Nature Challenge

*DSC Spring Fling
*Spring Birding Essentials
*Bluebird Basics

Better Bird Watching Through Binoculars

*Sale Prices valid only at Wild Birds Unlimited, Middleton.
Visit our website for more detailed descriptions.

Stop by, speak with our expert staff and try out a variety of binoculars — many ON SALE in March. Here are a few examples of the savings you will find.



Eagle Optics Denali 8x42

List \$229.95, Our Price \$179.99

Now \$159.99



Ranger SRT 10x42 Binoculars

\$80 OFF

Regularly \$339.99 — Now \$259.99



Eagle Optics Triumph Spotting Scope

Half Price: \$49.99

While you're at it, check out our extensive line of locally designed binoculars, spotting scopes and tripods on our website, www.wbumadison.com, many ON SALE in March. You can save from \$15 to \$180.

Seminar Schedule At WBU

All Seminars are FREE and on Saturdays
at 10:00 am unless noted otherwise.

Bluebirds, Sat, March 19th, Patrick Ready

Hawks & Eagles, Sat, April 23rd, Steve Sample

Hummingbirds Sat. May 21st with Michael & Kathi Rock

Landscaping & Gardening for Wildlife,

Sat. June 25th, Patrick Ready

Butterflies, Sat. July 26th, with Ann Thering

Binocular Basics Workshops, 10:00-10:45 am

Saturdays, March 26, April 2, 16, & 30. Reservation required.

Please call ahead to reserve a seat as our seminars and workshops fill up quickly, 608-664-1414.

www.wbumadison.com



Wild Birds Unlimited, 8402 Old Sauk Rd., Middleton
M-F: 9-7 Sat.: 9-6 Sun: 11-5 608-664-1414

Celebrating 30 Years !

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the opening of the *first* Wild Birds Unlimited store.

First
WBU
store
Est. 1981

\$30 March Special

WBU Bluebird House with Predator Guard.

Valid only at WBU Middleton. Other offers do not apply.

Earn Double Points!

At our DSC Spring Fling
March 11, 12, 13 2011

During this weekend in March, Daily Savings Club (DSC) members will earn Double Points on every purchase. That means you reach 200 points faster to earn a \$10 Bird Buck, good for any future purchase of merchandise in the store. No minimum purchase is required to receive Double Points, and only Daily Savings club members can enjoy this special offer.



No RSVP necessary. Just come in and enjoy our Spring Fling!

Not a DSC
Member?

Join any time
for this special
members only
offer

**Save 15%
on Birdfood
Every Day!**



Arboretum Native Plant Sale

Now through March 25th, you can pre-order native plants, shrubs, vines and trees from the UW Arboretum Plant Sale, scheduled for Saturday, May 7, 2011.

A pre-order brochure is available at

www.uwarboretum.org/foa or phone 608-263-7760.

There are over 100 varieties of woodland and prairie plants, all propagated (not wild), many shrubs that attract native bird species, all native to area, and come with information sheets detailing care. Open to the public.

Proceeds benefit Arboretum projects.



Eastern Bluebird Dad with Young

Birding Essentials

Preparing Your Yard for Spring

Great Spring Additions for Any Yard



Rubythroated Hummingbird

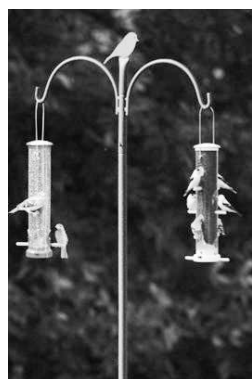


EcoClean Dinner Bell

Our versatile Dinner Bell™ is now available with EcoClean™ antimicrobial product protection built into the tray. The clear dome allows birds to easily find food and raises and lowers, allowing you to feed smaller birds while deterring larger birds. Backed with a lifetime guarantee, the Dinner Bell is easy to fill and hang, and its tray is top rack, dishwasher safe.

ON SALE IN MARCH: \$33.99

Regular Price \$39.99



Basic Advanced Pole System

Adding a WBU Advanced Pole System bird feeding station with new feeders can help attract more birds to your yard. More feeders, spread farther apart, can reduce over-crowding and help lessen birds' stress. By offering new or different foods in your new feeders you'll attract a greater variety of birds to your yard. **\$64.99**

All Feeders on Sale 15% OFF in March.
Feeders Sold Separately.



The Early Bird Gets ...

The Best Nesting Material

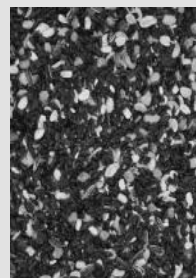
Our returning migrants are already seeking out dry nesting materials as they look for appropriate nesting sites to raise their young this Spring. We have several varieties that come self-contained or loose that can be put in the round peanut wreath you purchased at Christmas time, or hung separately. Please hang it where it will be protected from nasty March weather.

15% OFF
All
Calcium~
Added
Bird Food

Extra 5% OFF for
DSC Members

During Nesting Season birds are looking for foods that are high in calcium, an ingredient that helps promote stronger eggs and healthier bones for mother birds and their babies. Several of our NEW Seed blends contain calcium: Choice Plus, White Deluxe Plus, Tree Nutty Plus, Calcium Care Suet, and our entire line of Bark Butter and Jim's Birdacious products. Now in March save 15% on all calcium-added foods. Not valid with other discounts or offers or previous purchases.

Perfect for the Season: Choice Plus Blend



Choice Plus Blend

Attract more birds to your yard with our Choice Plus Blend. It's a combination of sunflower seeds, nuts, suet dough, fruit (cherries & cranberries) and **added calcium**, an important ingredient during Spring nesting season. Offer Choice Plus Blend in a hopper feeder or in our Dinner Bell™ feeder.

20 lbs: \$23.99 DSC Price: \$20.39

Splish Splash

Add A Bird Bath to Attract More Birds.
And Clean Your Old One!

NATURE

CHALLENGE

Enter to Win Thayer Birding Software or a \$50 WBU Gift Card

Pick up a Nature Challenge Questionnaire when you visit the store this month. Answer the questions, turn it in, and become eligible to win the Thayer Birding Software or a \$50 WBU Gift Card.

INSTANT WINNERS: By answering five nature questions (the answers are scattered around the store), you'll instantly win a sample bag of a new WBU Seed Blend FREE!

DRAWINGS: All participants will be entered to win

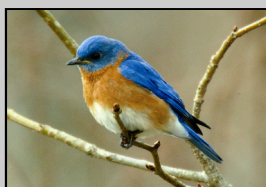
- Wild Birds Unlimited 30th Anniversary Thayer Birding Software (a \$99.99 value) or
- A \$50 WBU Gift Card (one gift card offered in drawing)

Hurry though: The Challenge ends 03/31/11.
No purchase necessary.

Visit our website today for more information and links : www.wbumadison.com
Visit wbumadison on facebook and twitter.

FREE BLUEBIRD SEMINAR

Saturday, March 19th
10:00 am
Led by Patrick Ready



Master birder and Dane County supervisor for the "Bluebird Restoration of Wisconsin" (BRAW) organizational director. No one is more of a bluebird expert!

Remember, our seminars fill up quickly, so please call ahead to reserve your space: 608-664-1414.

Tips for Attracting Eastern Bluebirds

By Patrick Ready

Location, Location, Location

- 1) Need a territorial forage area of 1-3 acres of predominately open habitat.
- 2) Ideal sites: short, sparse grass with interspersed trees
- 3) Boxes should be totally exposed to sunlight.
- 4) Near perch sites: trees, fences, electrical wires, clothes lines
- 5) Roadways with limited traffic
- 6) Spaced no closer than 100 yards apart
- 7) Do not put boxes on wooden fence or electrical posts.

Relocation: change the nest box position if there has been no bluebird nesting attempts in a season.

Box Style/Dimensions: Shallow, narrow boxes work best: 4-5" below the bottom of the hole as maximum depth, and 4x4"- 4x5" nesting platform (inside dimensions)

Direction of Opening:

Face opening away from prevailing westerly winds (cools boxes)
Try to use the same direction for all boxes
Cornell University has determined that directing the opening of a nest box to the northeast or southeast works best.

Food: Mealworms, mealworms, mealworms! And Bark Butter!

March Bluebird Special

Purchase any **Bluebird House** at regular price and **get 10% OFF** this specially designed APS pole and raccoon baffle.



Bluebirds begin nesting in mid-March. Get your supplies now so when the ground thaws you can set it up. Don't forget Mealworms for those hungry migrants!



Wild Birds Unlimited

8402 Old Sauk Road
Middleton, WI. 53562
www.wbumadison.com

Return Service Requested

PRSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Madison, WI
Permit No. 2783

Visit Wild Birds Unlimited today!

Mon - Fri: 9-7
Sat: 9-6 Sun: 11-5
608-664-1414

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Next to Walgreens where Junction and Old Sauk Roads intersect.

Seniors Save 10% on non-sale items each Wednesday!

March Nature Happenings

- March 1 – 31: Project FeederWatch continues
- March 4: New Moon, March 19: Full Moon
- March 13: Daylight Savings Time – "spring forward"
- March 14 – 20: National Wildlife Week
- March 20: Vernal Equinox – almost equal amounts of day and night
- Southwest winds bring migrating Turkey Vultures and hawks into the area.
- Common Loons begin to arrive in Northern Ontario in mid-March.
- Spring Peepers, Wood Frogs and Chorus Frogs begin calling late in the month.
- Sandhill Cranes can be seen migrating north.
- Killdeer and Great Blue Herons return from over-wintering in early March.
- Peak of spring waterfowl migration.
- Bald Eagles and Screech Owls are sitting on their eggs.
- Woodcocks are doing courtship flights in late March.
- Mourning Doves are nesting.
- Phoebe's return late in the month.
- Goldfinches begin to molt into their brilliant yellow plumage.

We're Your Experts in Bird Feeding.
Got a question? Ask our bird feeding specialists