



# BIRDTracks

March 2013  
Issue 27.3

Wild Birds Unlimited — Middleton, WI

8402 Old Sauk Rd., Middleton, WI 53562, 608-664-1414 [www.wbumadison.com](http://www.wbumadison.com)

## Is It Spring Yet? Not For The Birds!

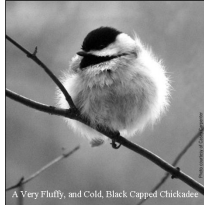
*March Is the Hardest Month for Birds - You Can Help!*



### Dear Friends of Nature:

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

Especially this year, natural food supplies are at their lowest ever, insect populations are still low, and the few remaining wild



A Very Fluffy, and Cold, Black Capped Chickadee

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, frigid 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, as the remaining snow melts, 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 Bits 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

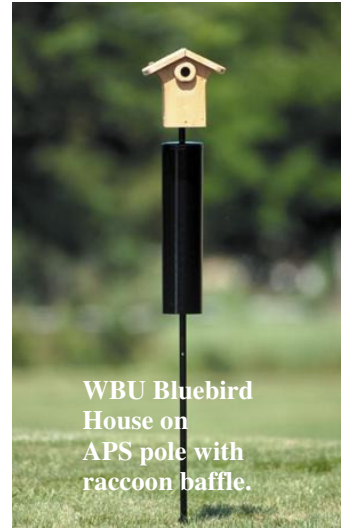
to your yard. Bird houses can make your birds' lives a little easier. After all, they have already expended a lot of energy migrating back home, establishing territories, courting and looking for scarce food. \*See Preparing Your Yard For Spring inside for more information on these topics.

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

Also, with this month's Bird House Exchange, you can provide a new house for 20% OFF.

Visit us in the store this month. Our backyard bird feeding 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.



WBU Bluebird House on APS pole with raccoon baffle.

*Happy Birding! Bob and Jan Ross*

*For Pat, Sharon, Steve, Patrick, Madeline, Connor, Meghan, Heather, Megan, Fran, Marta, Barb, and Tom*

**Your backyard Birdfeeding Specialists**

*Wild Birds Unlimited*

**Earn Double Points\* at our DSC Spring Fling**  
**Fri, Sat, Sun, March 8,9,10**  
*at Wild Birds Unlimited*

**Daily Savings Club Members**



*The other day the kids and I had a real treat. Arriving home at 6:00 pm we heard our resident Great Horned Owl hooting. He was perched atop the tallest pine tree holding on for dear life in the wind, calling and calling and*

*calling. Our hooting at him caused him to look our way. "Who is that strange owl standing in front of the garage?" he seemed to say. It was a brief encounter, but a very special one. Remember, owls are nesting and fledging their young now, so they are very active. Jan Ross.*

It's a special weekend event just for Daily Savings Club (DSC) members. That means you reach 200 points faster to earn a \$10 Bird Buck, good for a future purchase of any merchandise in the store. No minimum purchase required to receive Double Points, and only Daily Savings Club members can enjoy this special offer. Please come in and enjoy our store! \*Double Points does not apply to optics, tripods or previous purchases.

**Not a DSC member? Join any time for this special members only offer.**



Eastern Bluebird Dad with Young

# Birding Essentials

## Preparing Your Yard for Spring Great Spring Additions for Any Yard



Male Eastern Bluebird



### Dinner Bell

Our versatile Dinner Bell's™ 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: \$30.00**

**Regular Price : \$36.99**

### 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.



**Splish Splash**  
**Heated Bird Baths 15% OFF**  
**While Supplies Last**

### High Energy Foods for March



**Peanuts:** provide quick energy without much effort, are easy to feed and are available shelled or not, depending on your feeder. Serve in a hopper, tube peanut feeder or wreath.

**Suet** provides a high-fat, high-energy sustaining food that is loved by our winter resident birds. Serve in a tail-prop or cage feeder.

**Cylinders & Stackables** are an easy way to offer high energy foods without the mess of scattered seed. Serve in a Dinner Bell or special Cylinder Feeder.

**New: Bark Butter Bits** are versatile, easy to feed, and birds love them.

**10% OFF**  
**All**  
**Calcium~**  
**Added**  
**Bird Food**

**DSC Members:**  
**You get 15% +**  
**5% off**

**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 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 10% on all calcium-added foods. Not valid with other discounts or offers or previous purchases.

**\*White Deluxe Plus is our**  
**SEED OF THE MONTH**  
**aka "No Mess without Corn."**



### 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 overcrowding 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. **\$67.99.**

**Feeders Sold Separately.**

**New Arrival**  
**Buy a bag of**  
**Bark Butter Bits**  
**Get this Feeder**  
**FREE**



**Congratulations:** To Lyn Reigstad, winner of the red-roofed hopper feeder filled with chocolate kisses. Her guess was closest at 312. Actual count was 311. (We wonder how many sunflower seeds this feeder will hold? Care to guess?)



[www.wbumadison.com](http://www.wbumadison.com)  
Visit wbumadison on facebook and twitter.

## Better Bird Watching Through Binoculars

\*Sale Prices valid only at Wild Birds Unlimited, Middleton until 4/30/13. 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.

### Quality Optics Sale



#### Vortex Diamondback 8x42

Save \$22

**On Sale \$197.99**

Regularly \$219.99

Includes case, strap & caps

#### Vortex Nomad Angled 20-60X Spotting Scope

Save \$110.00!!

**On Sale \$229.99**

Regularly \$339.99

60mm objective lens, light & compact, 100% waterproof.

While supplies last.



Both optics come with a lifetime, no-fault warranty.  
Made in Middleton, WI.

## Bird House Trade In Sale

Swap out your old, broken & dirty, bird houses for new, clean ones.  
Here's the deal:



Bluebird  
Houses in  
Cedar and  
Recycled

10% OFF a  
New Bird House

or

20% OFF  
with Trade in

Expires 3/31/13.



Wren/Chickadee  
houses in Several  
Shapes to hang  
or mount.



## Wild Birds Unlimited

### 20% OFF\*

### One non-sale item

\*excludes tripods, optics, gift cards, bird food, & Daily Savings Club Memberships. Valid only at WBU Middleton.

### Through March 31, 2013.



Give a Hoot Today  
At our Entire Collection

## Owls

Decorative, Granite,  
Lamps & Yard Stakes



## St. Patrick's Day Sale

### 17% OFF\*

anything with the color green on it.

### March 15th - 17th only

\*Valid only at WBU Middleton. Excludes bird food, optics, tripods, gift cards, sale prices and Daily Savings Club Memberships.

## 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 WBU Seed Blend FREE!

**DRAWINGS:** All participants will be entered to win either

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

The Challenge ends 3/31/13. No purchase necessary.



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

## FREE BLUEBIRD SEMINAR

Saturday, March 16th  
10:00 am is Full.  
11:30 am has openings  
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.

## 15% OFF Anything Bluebird Sale



WBU Recycled Bluebird House on APS Pole with Raccoon Baffle

Houses  
Poles  
Books  
Mugs  
Photos  
Cards



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!

## 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!

## Wild Birds Unlimited

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

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

Next to Walgreens where Junction and Old Sauk Roads intersect.  
Seniors Save 10% on non-sale items each Wednesday!

WBU will be closed Easter Sunday, March 31st.

## March Nature Happenings

- March 1 – 31: Project FeederWatch continues
- March 11 New Moon, March 27 Full moon
- March 10: Daylight Savings Time – "spring forward"
- 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 as water opens mid-March.
- Spring Peepers, Wood Frogs and Chorus Frogs begin calling late in the month.
- Sandhill Cranes can be seen and heard 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