

Tips for locating birds in the wild:

- Wear neutral colored clothing to try to avoid startling the birds.
- Walk softly and speak quietly, listening for bird sounds and stopping periodically to scan the edges of habitat areas for movement.
- Learn about preferred habitat areas for different birds, so you know where to expect them.
- Binoculars are essential.

Tips for attracting birds to your yard:

- Let areas of your yard grow naturally, with layers of foliage that provide protection and staging areas for birds. Many books are available on this topic.

Bird feeding tips:

- Choose to put out foods that birds you see prefer to eat. This helps reduce waste seed and prevent attraction of rodents. Wild bird stores are very helpful and knowledgeable resources.
- Clean feeders regularly, sanitizing once per month, or more during times of heavy usage. With many birds feeding in close proximity, a clean feeder will help reduce the spread of avian diseases.
- Clean birdbath at least once per week (see cleaning feeders PDF).

Studies by the National Audubon Society indicate 25% of American bird species are declining significantly.

3 Major Threats to Birds Today:

1. Loss of habitat is probably the largest threat to bird populations. Without areas to breed and raise their young, their numbers will continue to decline.

What we can do to help:

- Get involved with land-use issues and promote land preservation for wildlife refuges.
- Create bird-friendly habitat in your yard.

2. Window Collision deaths cause a staggering 100 million to one billion bird deaths each year.

Some things you can do to prevent this tragedy at your home:

- Put up a one-way film on the outside of your picture windows. A company called Large Format Digital has a product called CollidEscape, which is apparently very effective, allowing people to see through from the inside, but appears opaque on the outside.
- Put up an awning or window shade to reduce amount of sky reflected in your windows.
- Keep interior blinds tilted half open, to let light in but make windows more visible to birds.

3. We both grew up with cats and appreciated them as members of the family. Unfortunately, with the expanding human population, the number of cats compared to habitat for wild birds has become out of balance. Predation by cats is now a huge threat to birds. The American Bird Conservancy estimates that hundreds of millions of birds are killed by cats each year in the United States.

-The best thing we can do to help is to keep pet cats indoors, which is safer for the cats as well and recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association and animal advocacy groups.

Resources:

- Bell, Brian H., Gregory Kennedy. 2006. *Birds of Washington State*. Auburn, WA. Lone Pine Publishing International.
- Erickson, Laura. 2006. *101 Ways To Help Birds*. Mechanicsburg, PA. Stackpole Books.
- Kress, Stephen W. 2006. *The Audubon Society Guide to Attracting Birds*. Ithaca, NY. Cornell University Press.
- The Birds of North America Online. Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the American Ornithologists Union. 2004-2005 www.bna.birds.cornell.edu

