

# Wild Bird Habitat Store

February Newsletter - 2022

## South Lincoln

In the Alamo Plaza  
56<sup>th</sup> & Hwy 2  
Lincoln, NE 68516  
(402) 420-2553

## North Lincoln

4900 Dudley St  
2 BLKS South of Holdrege  
Lincoln, NE 68504  
(402) 464-4055

## Omaha

Harrison Village Mall  
168th & Harrison  
Omaha, NE 68136  
(402) 504-4450

**wildbirdhabitatstore.com**



**New Wild Bird Habitat  
website - Coming soon**



## **Great Backyard Bird Count**

**FEBRUARY 18 – 21**

It's Fun, Free, and for all  
levels of birding experience

***DETAILS INSIDE***

## **February is National Bird Feeding Month**



Bird of the Month

## **The Brown Creeper**



A common winter bird that often goes unnoticed is the Brown Creeper. That is due to the fact that this bird, which forages for food on tree trunks, blends in so well it appears to be part of the tree bark until you realize it is moving.

*Continued on page 2*

## **You may continue to enjoy our new service for wild bird feed**

Call either store to place your order for wild bird feed and it will be ready when you arrive. South location may also order online at **shopwildbirdfeed.com**

## **February Bird Notes**

- Watch your feeders closely for any new birds showing up. Backyard bird watchers account for most of the rare bird sighting.
- Ice and the heavy snows have covered up natural foods. Keep the feeders filled.
- Ice and heavy snows have covered up natural grit sources needed by birds to digest seeds.
- If you didn't have Goldfinches before Christmas, you should have now with the heavy snows up north.
- Open water and well stocked bird feeders can increase the survival of birds during extreme winters by up to 50%.
- Use a ground feeder with proso millet and safflower, or a general wild bird mix, for our ground feeding birds.
- Provide suet and peanuts for woodpeckers, Carolina Wrens, Brown Creepers, and other birds of the tree trunk zone.
- **Make plans now to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count, February 18 - 21, 2022**

A common winter bird that often goes un-noticed is the Brown Creeper. That is due to the fact that this bird, which forages for food on tree trunks, blends in so well it appears to be part of the tree bark until you realize it is moving.

Brown Creepers are clinging birds of the tree trunk zone. They have brown upper parts that are spotted and lightly streaked resembling a piece of tree bark. Their under parts are white but due to the fact they are a mere 4.5 inches in length and cling so tightly to the tree it can be difficult to see. They have a small white eyebrow and the long bill is curved slightly downward. The long tail of the Brown Creeper is held stiff for support as they climb and probe the tree bark. Male and female Brown Creepers are monomorphic meaning the sexes are similar, although the male has a slightly longer bill.



Can you spot the Brown Creeper?

Brown Creepers forage on tree trunks and branches spiraling upwards from the bottom of a tree trunk, and then flying down to the bottom of another tree. They creep slowly up the trunk with their body flattened against the bark, probing with their beak for insects and larvae, feeding on

small arthropods found in the bark. During the winter months they may feed on seeds but are rarely seen feeding on the ground. Creepers will also feed on suets especially if the suet feeder is close to the tree trunk. A favorite trick of mine is to smear suet directly on the trunk of a tree.

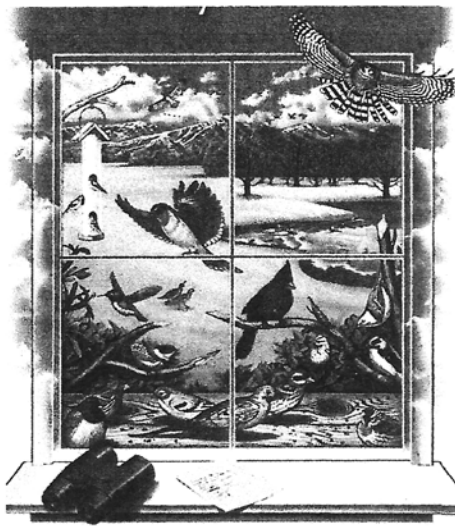
Brown Creepers are a short distance migrant. They breed from Alaska to Newfoundland and southward down the western mountain ranges and in the forests of the Great Lakes region to the Northeast. Although some spend the winter in their breeding territories, many northern Brown Creepers move south every winter into the Great Plains and Midwest drifting as far south as the Gulf Coast and into Florida. The preferred habitats of the Brown Creeper is deciduous and mixed woodlands. During the winter months they are often seen in cities and backyards where large mature trees are available.

The breeding season for Brown Creepers usually starts in April. They are a monogamous solitary nester. The female will construct a nest in the shape of a partial cup made with small twigs, bark, pine needles and mosses in the cavity of a tree or under a partially dislodged piece of tree bark. Once the structure is completed she will line the nest with shredded bark and feathers and lay 3 – 7 white eggs with brown flecks. Incubation is carried out by the female for about two weeks while the male brings her food to the nest. Once the eggs are hatched both parents will assume the duties of feeding the young.

Although Brown Creepers may be difficult to spot they are easy to identify since there are no similar species in North America. If you happen to see them on a tree in your backyard you will certainly enjoy watching them.

### **Fun Brown Creeper Facts:**

- When Brown Creepers are threatened they will spread their wings and freeze against the tree trunk for several minutes. Their plumage blends in with the bark of the tree so well they are almost invisible.
- Brown Creepers start foraging for insects at the base of a tree trunk spiraling upwards and will ascend the trunk before hopping down to the base of the next tree where they will start again.
- A Brown Creepers nest will often have two openings. One opening will serve as the entrance and the other the exit.
- A group of Brown Creepers are known as a “sleaze” or a “spiral” of creepers.



February 18 - 21

*It's the 25th annual*

# *Great Backyard Bird Count*

This four day bird count is **FREE** and open to all ages and levels of birding experience. Great fun for individuals, schools, and families to become citizen scientists and help track birds during the winter for the biologists at the Cornell Bird Lab.

**[www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org)**

- Lots of fun for families, individuals, classrooms, youth and adult clubs and organizations.
- For all levels of birding experience. Beginners and experts alike.
- Count on one or all four days
- **Count birds in backyards, parks, nature centers. Count birds anywhere.**
- Become a "Citizen Scientist" and provided valuable data about the birds you see to the biologists at Cornell.
- Best of all it's **FREE** to participate. So just count. **"It's for the birds"**

## **Its As Easy As 1, 2, 3**

1. Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, February 18 - 21, 2022. You can count for longer than that if you wish! Count birds in as many places and on as many days as you like -one day, two days, or all four days. Submit a separate checklist for each new day. You can also submit more than one checklist per day if you count in other locations on that day. Locations are entered by zip code.

2. Count the greatest number of individuals of each species that you see together at any one time. You may find it helpful to print out your regional bird checklist to get an idea of the kinds of birds you're likely to see in your area in February. You could take note of the highest number of each species you see on this checklist.

3. When you're finished, enter your results on the Great Backyard Bird Count website. You'll see a button marked "Enter Your Checklists!" on the website home page beginning on the first day of the count, February 18, 2022. It will remain active until the deadline for data submission on March 1, 2022.

## ***Mark your calendars and count for the birds!***

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an opportunity for all levels of birding experience from the beginner to the novice to provides valuable data to biologists that track birds, This is a joint venture by the Cornell Bird Lab, Bird Studies Canada, and National Audubon. You can review bird count results in real time when the count begins

Get more details at the Wild Bird Habitat Stores and sign up at **[birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org)** or go to eBird at **[ebird.org](http://ebird.org)**.

# Dave's February Bird Chatter

February is **National Bird Feeding Month** and also time for the **Great Backyard Bird Count**. If you have never participated in this annual bird count, take the time this year to do so. You'll have a great time as it is a lot of fun and provides hard usable data to the biologists at the Cornell Bird Lab.

Winter is far from over. Think back to February 2021. Natural food sources for birds are becoming increasingly sparse or covered by snow, so bird feeders will continue to draw more visitors. Heavy snows to our north have been driving more birds into our area, and new ones can arrive at anytime. Keep vigilant about new birds at the feeders. Already this seems to be a good year for Dark-eyed Juncos, Goldfinch, and a few Pine Siskin. We have had several reports of Snow Buntings and Brown Creepers. I wouldn't be surprised to see Red-winged Crossbills showing up.



The Central Great Plains seems to get the heaviest snowfalls in late February and March. Remember that "grit" is essential for birds to digest the seeds they eat. If the ground becomes covered by snow and ice, mix a little grit in your feeders or place some in an open space where it will not become covered with snow.

Suet will become even more popular now that winter has really set in, and will continue to be so through all of spring and well into the summer months. Woodpeckers consume about 30% more animal protein from late winter to mid summer than all winter long. The Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers seem to prefer suet, while the Red-bellied Woodpecker will spend more time feeding on peanuts and woodpecker nut mixes. Make suet and peanuts available for these birds. Nuthatches will eagerly feed on these products as well as the Carolina Wrens that seem to winter over more and more in the Eastern Plains states and Midwest.

Some folks have reported numbers of Eastern Bluebirds wintering over. Evidently these birds have an adequate food source of berries to sustain them, but may drift off if those food sources dwindle. Some folks have provided them with suet nuggets and meal worms. And heated bird baths have provided them with fresh water. Others have reported some bluebirds using nest boxes as evening roosts during harsh weather. By months end we may see other bluebirds begin to arrive along with their cousin the American Robin.

At some locations folks have been over-whelmed with Goldfinch while for others the numbers are much less. Remember to use fresh Nyjer seed. Wild Bird Habitat's finch mix, 50% Nyjer thistle and 50% ground sunflower chips, has proven to be a favorite, giving the finch both of their most sought after food at the feeder. Remember however that if squirrels are a problem, the ground sunflower chips will get their attention in a hurry, and you may end up with a destroyed thistle feeder. By months end and into early March the numbers of Goldfinch at the feeders will increase dramatically. Our adults who drifted south for the winter will be returning, and the northern finches that have been visiting us during the winter will remain here until early May.



Keep water available for your birds as open water will attract more birds than just feed alone. And as food resources diminish into late winter, the bird feeders will become even more popular with birds. Keep them stocked. After all, it will be mid to late summer before many of our bird's natural food supplies will be replenished. Throughout the growing season.

Have you been enjoying feeding the birds in your backyard? Next time you have a guest over, share that excitement with them. National Bird Feeding Month is a great time to get someone interested in feeding birds. Bird feeders make great birthday gifts, and are excellent Valentines Day presents for the one you love. Enjoy nature together. Have your kids and their friends count birds during the Great Backyard Bird Count. Take a bird walk at the Pioneers Park Nature Center, Enjoy birding more and remember to feed the birds. It makes a world of difference.

This is one of the reasons Wild Bird Habitat publishes a monthly newsletter and has a trained staff to help with your questions. It is to encourage and assist people to learn through observation by watching the birds that come to their backyards. Enjoying them, identifying them, and becoming familiar with individual birds and their personal habits. Further Wild Bird Habitat encourages everyone to take a few moments and count the birds they see, then report your findings during the Great Backyard Bird Count. Any one can become a citizen scientist for the birds. From children to adults, no matter what you're level of birding experience. Every bird counts.

Good birding to all from the staff at the Wild Bird Habitat Stores. Let us know if you have any questions, need help with a bird ID, or just want to tell us how your birding experiences are going. We'd love to hear from you.

### Why "Doggy Dental Month?"

70% of all dogs will develop some form of periodontal disease in their lifetime. It can shorten a dogs life by up to 7 years. The cause is plaque build up on the teeth. It can create gum disease, cavities, and loss of teeth. More serious problems can occur when the plaque becomes absorbed in the blood and travels to the heart potentially plugging arteries. Check out Arnie's Pet Foods doggie dental products. Ask our canine consultants why caring for your dogs teeth is an important part of your canine companions over health and well being.



**Arnie's recommends regular brushing, dental chews, and check-ups as part of your pet's health care routine**



**Arnie's  
Corner**

**ALL DENTAL CHEWS  
& DENTAL CARE  
PRODUCTS ON SALE**



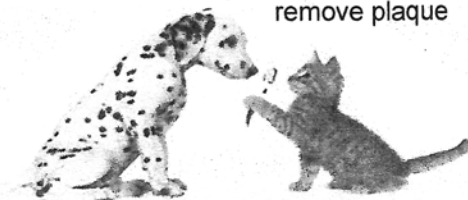
**15 %  
OFF**

February is  
**DOGGY  
DENTAL  
MONTH**



**\$5.00  
OFF**

A 100% all natural,  
non-chemical, daily  
water additive to  
whiten teeth and  
remove plaque



**PETS NEED DENTAL CARE, TOO!**

**From the U.S. Congressional Record**

February 23, 1994

**National Bird Feeding Month**

Proclaimed by the Honorable. JOHN EDWARD PORTER of Illinois  
in the U.S. House of Representatives

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize February, one of the most difficult months in the United States for wild birds, as National Bird Feeding Month. During this month, individuals are encouraged to provide food, water, and shelter to help wild birds survive. This assistance benefits the environment by supplementing wild bird's natural diet of weed seeds and insects. Currently, one third of the U.S. adult population feeds wild birds in their backyards.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, backyard bird feeding is an entertaining, educational, and inexpensive pastime enjoyed by children and adults. Bird feeding provides a needed break from today's frantic lifestyles. Adults enjoy the relaxation and peacefulness afforded by watching birds -- nature serves to relieve the stress and can get one's day going on a tranquil note.

Young children are naturally drawn to the activities involved in feeding wild birds, which can serve as excellent educational tools. Children can identify different species of birds with a field guide and can learn about the birds' feeding and living habits. These observations can then provide excellent research opportunities for school projects and reports.

Feeding wild birds in the backyard is an easy hobby to start and need not overtax the family budget. It can be as simple as mounting a single feeder outside a window and filling it with bird seed mix. For many people, the hobby progresses from there. They discover the relationship between the type and location of feeders, and the seeds offered in them, and the number and varieties of birds attracted. Parents can challenge an inquisitive child's mind as they explore together these factors in trying to encourage visits by their favorite birds."

**February is National Bird Feeding Month**

The Wild Bird Habitat Stores encourages people to make winter a little easier for wild birds by providing food, water and shelter. Consider that::

- A typical backyard bird doesn't weigh as much as two nickels.
- Birds spend most of their waking hours searching for food -- without the help of "hands" and "fingers."
- They may consume 15% of their body weight overnight just keeping warm enough to survive.
- Like mail carriers, they're outside in sleet, snow, wind and cold.



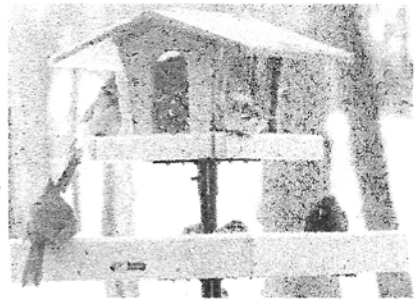
Feeding backyard songbirds is the most popular wildlife-related recreational activity around the home. A stress-free activity, it brings a welcome flash of color, dash of motion and splash of sound into the backyard, particularly during gloomy northern winters.

**JUST FEED THE BIRDS!**  
**IT MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE**



## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

There are many ways we can positively impact the long term survival of bird populations. We can directly help by promoting the conservation and protection of vital bird habitats. We can create habitats in our backyards. We can offer supplemental foods and fresh water year round which has proven to be benefit birds during the winter months and during the nesting season. We can install nest boxes.



An way we can help protect birds is to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Although this was not a priority 50 years ago, today many have learned how valuable it is. Most all children from pre-school to high school are taught the value and need of recycling. It conserves natural resources saving wildlife habitat which benefits humans, birds, and other wildlife populations.

At the Wild Bird Habitat Stores we offer a full line of birding products by Birds Choice and Hill Top Specialties that are made from post consumer recycled materials. These products are so durable the manufacturers now offer a lifetime warranty not to chip, crack, peel, or fade.



### ENTRY LEVELS

- Grades K – 2
- Grades 3 – 5
- Grades 6 – 8
- Grades 9 – 12
- Adults
- Family or Club TEAM  
*(mixed ages & levels  
building ONE birdhouse*

The Wild Bird Habitat Stores have partnered with Audubon's Spring Creek Prairie for the Big B.A.D.( **B**uild **A**nd **D**esign ) Birdhouse Project, a birdhouse building and design competition. Birdhouses can be entered in two categories divided by six grade and age levels. Winning birdhouses in each category and level will have the chance to be exhibited and auctioned off at a public "First Friday" event on May 6, 2022. Other birdhouses may be displayed around Lincoln during the month of April leading up to May 6. For more details, please read on, and we hope you'll consider joining us by designing and building YOUR BIG B.A.D. BIRDHOUSE!

Get creative and have some fun building for the birds. Contact Spring Creek Prairie for all the details or online at [springcreek.audubon.org](http://springcreek.audubon.org) and click on Bird House Project under the Get Involved tab.

# Woodpeckers Feeds & Feeders

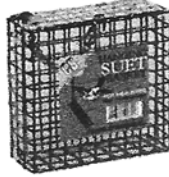
## *available at the Wild Bird Habitat Stores*

### Suet Cakes



Made from 100% rendered beef fat containing a variety of ingredients from nuts to

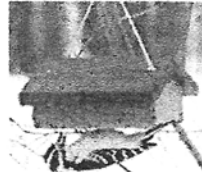
berries and seeds. An excellent year round high energy source.



**Basic Wire Suet Feeder**



**Caged Suet Feeder**



**Upside Down Feeder**



**Tail Prop Suet Feeder**

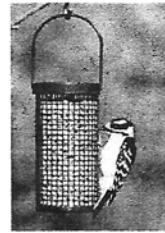
### Suet Pellets & Nuggets



Suet pellets and nuggets are available in tasty flavors that wild birds love to eat. Place pellets on a table, platform feeder or mesh feeder. A nutritious blend of premium grade high energy fats and oils, with added dried insects. Formulated to supply wild birds with lots of energy.



**Suet Pellets**

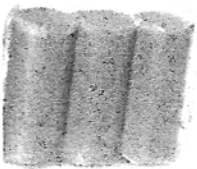


**Suet Pellet or Suet Nugget Feeder**



**Suet Nuggets**

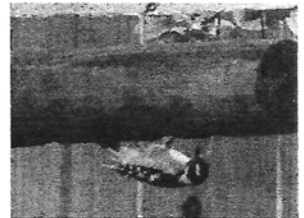
### Suet Plugs



Attractor™ Nutritional Suet Plugs™ are cold processed with beef kidney suet so no nutrition is removed. It is fortified with a special blend of vitamins, minerals and electrolytes formulated for wild birds. It contains no cheap fillers. Attractor is shelf stable and will not turn rancid



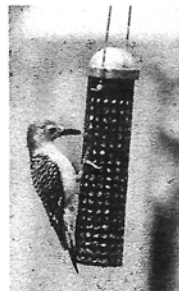
**Suet Log**



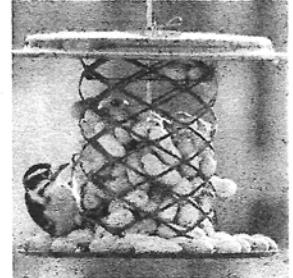
**Upside down Suet Log**

### Peanuts & Woodpecker Mixes

Peanuts also provide high-energy food to help birds to survive in cold temperatures and the calories they need in spring when nesting



**Shelled Peanut Feeder**



**In Shell Peanut Feeder**