



BACKYARD nature center News

December 2019/January 2020 • Issue 56



Enjoying a crowd at Christmas!



Enjoying a “crowd” at Christmas! This fall I may have mentioned that your bird activity may be a little slow due to our wet spring and the heavy production of natural seed in the wild. Many of our customers come in saying “what happened to all my birds? What am I doing wrong? Is my seed rotten or old? Is there a hawk keeping my birds away?” Here it is December and I’ll bet you’re not saying that anymore! We’ve had a small amount of bad weather that has mashed the natural fall seed crop down making it very undesirable and.... they’re back at your feeders looking for fresh/dry seed! Your fast food restaurant!

While year-round bird feeding is a great source of enjoyment for most folks, nothing beats the rewards of winter feeding and the peace and calm that comes over you on Christmas morning as you watch a display of nature in your own backyard.

The stunning sight of a male cardinal’s bright color against a bleak landscape, especially if it’s covered with snow makes winter bird feeding very popular. Winter can be a very difficult time of year for our feathered friends and feeding them is important for more than just aesthetically pleasing. Days are often windy and cold; nights are long and even colder and each cold day stretches into the next as birds fight for survival. You can help them survive and, in the process, enjoy their song and colors in an otherwise bleak backyard winter landscape.

Need another reason to feed the birds or encourage your children to do so? Bird feeding is good for you and your family. A Purdue University study showed that a home-based wild bird feeding program actually increases not



only knowledge of birds among children, but also awareness of conservation and nature. Participants in Cornell’s Project Feeder Watch shows the project changed the way they think about science and conservation and therefore benefits both birds and humans.

Chickadees, titmice and bluebirds form flocks in fall to help increase their chances of survival in winter, making nest boxes with fresh soft mulch a favorite cozy roosting spot to cuddle down in. To survive cold nights, they can lower their normal 108 F body temp by 12 to 15 degrees to conserve energy. By dawn, like many birds, they will dart to your feeder to fill their empty bellies. That’s why you see some of the biggest “crowds” at your feeders in early morning and late evening!

Don’t forget critically needed water free of ice near your feeders. Your activity will increase three-fold with a shallow bath that is heated to keep ice from freezing it solid. Bathing and preening is critical.

Feathers need to be kept clean so the birds can “fluff” and create pockets of air between themselves and the cold north wind. Using a De-Icer is a smart way to keep your bath open. They are thermostatically controlled and cost pennies to operate. Follow these simple tips and get ready to enjoy a “crowd” at Christmas!

I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security. Defense of our natural resources is equally as important as defense abroad. Otherwise, what is there to defend?

—Robert Redford

What I've Learned from My Favorite, The Chickadee: Be Thankful for What You Have



As I write this newsletter, we are finishing the Thanksgiving Holiday and as I gaze out the window at my early morning visitors, I see my favorite bird, the chickadee. Often the first brave bird at a new feeder and always there to

say thanks when I go out and fill the feeders. The chickadee could teach us all to have a better positive attitude and to be thankful for the blessings we have. On the coldest of days, he flits around happy at being equipped with built in down underwear! After weeks without fresh water and a throat that is so dry, he celebrates the trickle of melted snow and drinks it as though it were champagne! A chickadee

seems to find good fortune in the very act of looking, perhaps knowing that a cheerful eye sees more clearly than one with clouded despair. A few frozen insects wedged in the crevices of tree bark or frozen berries hanging from a bush constitute a Thanksgiving feast.

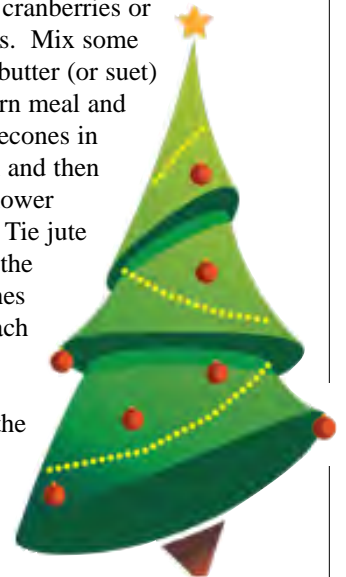
Sunflower seed feeders and suet cakes provide dining fit for a king. Every minute it sucks in more than sixty-five breaths of air. A chickadee weighs a mere ten grams—you could mail three of them with a single postage stamp—but the energy and enthusiasm within its tiny frame would dwarf Santa Claus. As the rush of the Holiday Season approaches, let us all be cherry and thankful like a chickadee.



Create A Fun New Family Tradition

After decorations are all put away, and the only thing left is the Christmas tree, consider instead of putting it out for the trash collectors, why not leave it out for the birds, at least until the weather breaks.

Locate a suitable spot near your house or feeders, decorate it with strings of peanuts in the shell, raisins, cranberries or almonds. Mix some peanut butter (or suet) with corn meal and roll pinecones in the mix and then in sunflower seeds. Tie jute around the pinecones and attach to the tree. Watch the fun begin!



Visit the **BACKYARD** Nature Center for all your gift-giving needs.



A One-time Wild Card Coupon

20% OFF one item

(Good on in stock merchandise/no special orders, excludes optics and seed)

C191201; Good through December 30, 2019. Cannot be combined with other offers.



Holiday Gift-Giving Ideas!

Optics

BNC is your local resource for nature viewing binoculars, carrying a full line of VORTEX optics. A superior value with a great warranty.



Mug Mats

Mug mats filled with spices to sit your hot coffee or coco on while emitting wonderful fragrance.

Ornaments

Mr. Bird seed ornaments, great neighbor or teacher gifts that the birds will love.



Art Poles

Decorate with thoughtful words on an indoor/outdoor pole with artists drawings and thoughtful messages.



Gourds

Hand-carved natural gourd ornaments and wren houses colored in a 4,000 year-old technique using fire and done by Peruvian artists. All done under the Fair Trade Act.



Brome Squirrel Buster Suet Feeder



Introducing a truly innovative squirrel-proof suet bird feeder. No more greasy fingers with mess-free suet loading. two suet cakes allow a number of woodpeckers, nuthatches, titmice and chickadees to feed at the same time. No suet goes wasted: two crumb ports will catch the suet that birds drop. This suet feeder is weight-adjustable so that you can control who uses it. We think you'll love it....and so will your birds!

Hand-crafted Copper Birds by BOVANO

The glass cases at the rear of our checkout stand holds a display of incredible copper wall art. Made in the USA, Bovano is an artisan studio located in Cheshire, Connecticut.



Highly skilled artisans hand-craft the beautiful Bovano collection of nature inspired artistic wall décor using the medium of

glass enamels. It is important to note that the word "enamel" means glass and not paint. Since 1953 the former copper refinery, built in the mid-1800s, Bovano designers work the enamel process by firing layers of finely ground glass powder to solid copper shapes. After cooling, the enameled components are welded into the final sculpture.

Bovano's goal is to produce the finest heirloom quality enamel sculptures for customers to enjoy. It is our wish that this interpretation of nature's beauty will bring elegance and pleasure to your life or to someone who receives it as your gift.

Decorative Doormat and Tray

Proudly we introduce another durable and recycled product that's as good for the environment as it is good for your every day use. The backing and refillable tray are made from ground up car tires, making them slip-proof, water resistant while keeping tires out of our landfills!



**BACKYARD
nature center**

For people who feed and care for backyard birds
The Shops at Tallgrass
8336 E. 21st Street, #500 • Wichita, KS 67206
www.backyardnaturecenter.com
316-683-2121

STORE HOURS

OPEN 7 DAYS WEEK

Monday–Saturday: 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sunday: 12 noon–4 p.m.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
WWW.BACKYARDNATURECENTER.COM



With grateful hearts
we wish you and yours
a Happy Holiday.

