



Please be sure to check out The Wild Bird Store's
HOLIDAY HOURS

Listed on the last page of this Christmas newsletter



Merlins are small, fierce falcons that use surprise attacks to bring down small songbirds and shorebirds. They are powerful fliers, but you can tell them from larger falcons by their rapid wingbeats and overall

dark tones.

Medieval falconers called them “lady hawks,” and medieval European noblewomen—including Catherine the Great and Mary Queen of Scots, used them to hunt Skylarks



FUN FACTS

Merlin populations have largely recovered from the twentieth-century declines, thanks to a ban on the pesticide DDT and their ability to adapt to life around towns and cities.

- ◇ Merlin pairs have been seen teaming up to hunt flocks of waxwings: one Merlin flushes the flock by attacking from below; the other comes in moments later to take advantage of the confusion
- ◇ Merlins don't build their own nests. Instead, they take over the old nests of other raptors or crows. They also use magpie nests, sometimes laying eggs right on top of the nest's dome rather than inside the cavity
- ◇ Though it's not much bigger than the common American kestrel, the Merlin is heavier and often appears considerably larger. As with most raptors, female Merlins are larger than males
- ◇ The name “Merlin” comes from *esmerillon*, the old French name for the species. Merlins used to be called “pigeon hawks” because in flight they look somewhat pigeon-like. Their species name, *columbarius*, is also a reference to pigeons

Merlins are widespread, particularly in migration and winter, but seeing them is unpredictable. They have two modes: scanning open areas patiently from a treetop or fence post, and cruising at top speed in pursuit of small birds. If a flock of foraging birds (particularly shorebirds) suddenly bursts into flight, a Merlin or other falcon may be the cause. Be ready to look quickly—Merlins cover a lot of ground and can be out of range in just a few seconds. Scanning treetop and low perches, like fence posts, at forest edges, grasslands, or saltmarshes can also turn up a perched Merlin and the opportunity for a longer view. Merlins are also increasingly common around towns, where there is a steady supply of House sparrows.



THE WILD BIRD STORE

Southern Alberta's Backyard Birding Specialist

\$5.00 OFF COUPON

Present this coupon within 30 days
of the date stamped on the back of this card.

**For the month of December,
every \$100 you spend at
The Wild Bird Store, you will
receive a \$5 coupon. The coupon
is valid for purchases in January
2025 only!**

(Purchases must total \$100 before GST to receive coupon)

**12 Days of
Bird Feeders**



**PEANUTS IN SHELL
FEEDER**



**Tube feeders for
small song-
birds—come in
a variety of sizes**



**Birds' Choice humming-
bird feeder available in
8oz or 12 oz**

**Locally hand-crafted cedar hop-
per feeders with or without
suet**



**Locally hand-
crafted cedar
feeders in a variety
of designs**



**Locally hand-crafted cedar
ground feeders available in
three designs**

**Squirrel Buster
feeders to solve
all your squirrel
problems as bird
feeders—we are
also the repair
depot for
Squirrel Buster
feeders and carry
a full line of
Squirrel Buster
accessories**



**BEST
SELLER**



**Caged squirrel
resistant tube
feeders—a variety of
sizes and designs to
choose from**

**Peanut (no shell) metal feeders
available in 10 inch or 16 inch—
discourages bigger birds and
squirrels**



**Decorative high-
capacity feeders avail-
able in different de-
signs and finishes**



**Cedar gazebos—
either post mount or
hanging available in
several sizes and
designs**





Saturday Morning Bird Walks With Jim St. Laurent



CARBURN PARK Saturday, December 7, 2024

9:00am meet in parking lot

Ticket price: \$7.00 +GST +fees

2025

SNOWY PROWL 1st DAY TRIP Saturday January 11, 2025

9:00am meet at rear of Wild Bird Store and carpool

Ticket price: \$7.00 +GST +fees WATCH FOR TICKETS

BEBO GROVE (Fish Creek Park) Saturday January 25, 2025

9:00am meet in the parking lot at the end of 24th Street S.W.

Ticket price: \$7.00 +GST +fees WATCH FOR TICKETS

SNOWY OWL PROWL 2nd DAY TRIP Saturday February 8, 2025

9:00am meet at rear of Wild Bird Store and carpool

Ticket price: \$7.00 +GST +fees WATCH FOR TICKETS

Jim's years of guiding bird walks has been instrumental in teaching "birders" how to get the most out of their birding excursions. Children 12 and older are most welcome as long as accompanied by an adult and have purchased a ticket through our website: www.wildbirdstore.ca

All participants on any bird walk must have purchased a ticket through our website: www.wildbirdstore.ca and present the ticket to Jim prior to the bird walk.

The weather plays a big part in bird walks and Jim reminds participants to dress anticipating weather changes and to carry water to keep hydrated.

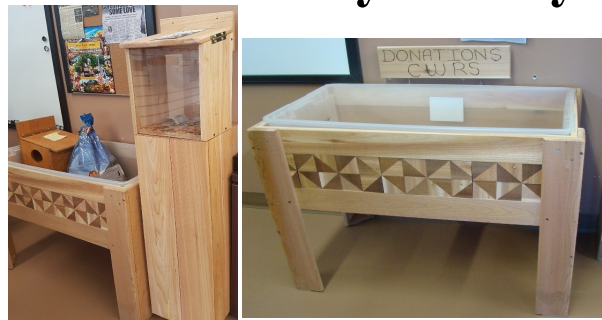


We offer a discount if you bring your own container or bag to refill (sorry—not the Mother Nature bags which we cannot re-use), suet ball containers, if you bring your own container to fill or use a bag from our re-cycle bin. This discount is in addition to any other discount offered.

DONATIONS

Located at The Wild Bird Store (near the seed bins). We collect your cash as well as "wishlist" donations and arrange to deliver them to Ellis Nature Centre.

Thank you for your support



Ellis Nature Centre (near Lacombe)

<https://ellisnaturecentre.ca>

QUESTION: Do albatrosses ever land on water?

RESPONSE: Occasionally as an ornithologist I get asked by media outlets to fact-check possible misinformation circulating on social media. Here is a fairly recent example that you might find interesting. The Reuters Fact Check Team was working on an article on albatrosses. The so-called fact that I was asked to corroborate was claiming that albatrosses spend the first six years of life flying over the ocean before coming to land to mate. I too have read that some albatrosses can fly for years without landing, but as an ornithologist who knows a thing or two about flight and energetics in birds, it made little sense to me. Here is what I know to be true. Basically, using dynamic soaring where they constantly catch uprising currents off ocean waves and swells, Wandering albatrosses with 11-foot wingspans can indeed fly continuously and cover vast stretches of ocean to the tune of close to a thousand kilometers in a day at an average speed of about 40 kilometers an hour for days and weeks on end. Due to our ability to place tracing devices on these birds, one bird was clocked circling Antarctica for a 46-day period and amassing around 16,000 kilometers without landing. But they certainly cannot fly for several years without landing on either the water or land. I had originally thought that these large birds with their huge wingspans might not land on water to rest if only because they might find it difficult to take off from the surface. After all, they commonly build their nests on rocky promontories on islands or on mainland where they can catch updrafts from prevailing winds to take off. But albatross experts have confirmed that these birds can and do land on water to either perform shallow dives to catch squid and other marine invertebrates and also to rest. So obviously, they have no problem lifting off the water surface to take to the air. Anyway, the lesson here is—don't believe everything you read on the internet!



ABOUT DR. DAVID

DAVID M. BIRD, Ph.D Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology McGill University david.bird@mcgill.ca www.askprofessorbird.com			CANADA JAY MÉSANGEAI DU CANADA FRIENDLY, SMART, LOYAL AND TOUGH. TRULY THE MOST CANADIAN BIRD! AMICAL, INTELLIGENT, FIDÈLE ET ROBUSTE. UN OISEAU VRAIMENT CANADIEN! WWW.CANADAJAY.ORG
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David M. Bird is Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology and the former Director of the Avian Science and Conservation Centre at McGill University. As a past-president of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, a former board member with Birds Canada, a Fellow of both the American Ornithological Society and the International Ornithological Union, he has received several awards for his conservation and public education efforts. Dr. Bird is a regular columnist on birds for Bird Watcher's Digest and Canadian Wildlife magazines and is the author of several books and over 200 peer-reviewed scientific publications. He is the consultant editor for multiple editions of DK Canada's Birds of Canada, Birds of Eastern Canada, Birds of Western Canada, and Pocket Birds of Canada. To know more about him, visit www.askprofessorbird.com or email david.bird@mcgill.ca.



Alberta Birds

Loreli Madiuk · 15h · 🌐



UPDATE...

This is a very old Hen Mallard. When they get quite old their level of estrogen diminishes and they start to take on Drake plumage characteristics. This gal is even starting to have a curly tail like the drakes. Thanks for the info Mark! I've been reading up on this since seeing your comment. A first for me and I've definitely learned something new today!

Alright experts..... What is going on here?? I've never seen a mallard Drake with such a vibrant orange bill! I've seen this fellow a few times and have been watching his green plumage grow in but that orange bill..... Certainly a first for me! Quite the unusual little fella! 🍊💚🍊
St. Albert ~ Oct 26/24



Parasitic Jaeger

Known in Britain as the Arctic Skua, this relative of the gulls is known for its habit of stealing food from other birds—which scientists call :kleptoparasitism.” Jaeger comes from the German word for hunter.



THE BIRDS OF THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

On the first day of Christmas



The partridge in a pear tree is probably the Red-legged partridge, which is a bird in the pheasant family. Though not living in this country, it is similar to our Chukars. These partridges are game birds that reside naturally in southwestern Europe, although they were introduced to England in the 1700s. Subsequently today, these are very common and at times appear in people's backyards in England.

On the second day of Christmas



The two Turtle doves are probably European turtle-doves. These are native to England and were very common in the 1700s. They tend to be shy birds living in wooded and semi open habitats. Similar to our pigeons, these birds are ground feeders.

Sadly, today they are in trouble. Since 1995 the United Kingdom has lost 94% of their population. In addition, there has been a 78% loss throughout the remaining areas of Europe.

It is believed Turtle-doves are declining throughout the Mediterranean due to human practices such as over-hunting during migration.

Another contributing factor is the loss of habitat during breeding season.

On the third day of Christmas



French hens are a type of domesticated chicken that is a variant of the Red jungle-fowl—a bird of South Asia. Unfortunately, the wild form of these chickens is another bird that is in trouble with populations declining. The population's downward trend is a result of the hens being hybridized almost out of existence by their free-ranging domesticated cousins.

On the fourth day of Christmas



One version of the song calls these "colly birds." The word colly means black, so it is believed that these may be Eurasian blackbirds, which are the most common black bird in Europe. Eurasian blackbirds are thrushes and only distantly related to the black birds in the United States and Canada.

On the sixth day of Christmas



Six geese a-laying would more than likely be the Graylag geese. These are large, bulky geese that are native to the United Kingdom and Europe. This is a bird that is the ancestor or domestic geese in Europe.

These birds have become pretty famous as they are one of two breeds used in the imprinting experiment conducted by Konrad Lorenz. In this study, Lorenz proved that newly hatched goslings form an attachment to the first moving object they see.

On the seventh day of Christmas



The seven swans are Mute swans. During the time when the lyrics were written, Mute swans were semi-domesticated in Britain. Moreover, they were considered to be property of the Crown.

Mute swans can also be found in North America although they are not native. Imported from Europe, the swans were first brought to North America to decorate ponds and lakes.

Mute swans are widespread throughout the world due to introductions as decorations for private estates and parks. Escaping from

these areas and breeding in wild populations, they have become invasive species in some locations.

Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale *"The Ugly Duckling"* is based on the Mute swan.



ON LOCATION

Wildwood Community Centre (4411 Spruce Drive SW)

Every Tuesday 3:00pm to 5:30pm **PLEASE NOTE NEW HOURS FOR THIS LOCATION**

STARTING NOVEMBER 1, 2024

Crowfoot Arena (corner of John Laurie & Nosehill Drive NW)

Every Wednesday 2:00pm to 5:30pm

The Mobile Seed Truck is a mini version of The Wild Bird Store, and as such, we are limited to what we can carry. It is therefore, highly recommended that you place an order the day before the truck is to be at your desired location. This will ensure that when you come to the Mobile Seed Truck you get the items you need. You can place orders by emailing orders@wildbirdstore.ca or texting to

(403) 701-4571

PLEASE NOTE

Mobile Seed Truck will not be on location during the holidays

Wildwood Community Centre NO TRUCK Tuesday December 24th

Crowfoot Arena NO TRUCK Wednesday December 25th

Wildwood Community Centre NO TRUCK Tuesday December 31st

Crowfoot Arena NO TRUCK Wednesday January 1, 2025

We offer a discount if you return your seed bags (sorry—not the Mother Nature bags which we cannot re-use), suet ball containers, if you bring your own container to fill or use a bag from our re-cycle bin. This discount is in addition to any other discount offered.



Write a Google review on your experience at The Wild Bird Store, and as a thank-you, we will give you 100 customer loyalty points (\$5.00 value). To get a promo code, kindly email info@wildbirdstore.ca



(Please one Google review per customer)

Earn 200 customer loyalty points (\$10.00 value) by referring a friend, acquaintance or fellow birder.



Please visit the store to get a promo code

No need for a card just give your phone number.

You earn \$1.00 for every \$20.00 spent (sorry, excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items) and can be used in-store and on Mobile Seed Truck. As a loyalty member, our monthly promotional and in-store “specials” are automatically given at the cash register.



Combining our Seniors 10% discount with the loyalty program (sorry—excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items.)



Discount for membership 10% discount for members of Fish Creek Park, AIWC, Priddis Golf Club, Nature Calgary, Sandy Cross Conservation, Springbank Garden Club and Calgary Horticultural Society. Must present valid membership card at time of purchase.



Discount for Military Members & Veterans 10% discount on purchases in-store or on Mobile Seed Truck (sorry—excludes “sales” items, books, optics and consignment items)



OPTIONS FOR SHOPPING AT THE WILD BIRD STORE

In Store or on the Seed Truck



Shop in Store



Curbside Pick up

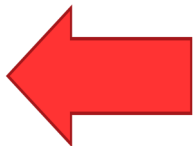
Phone your order in and pay for it at least 30 minutes prior to arriving at The Wild Bird Store for pick up. Park in the curbside parking stall, call the store (403) 640-2632, pop your trunk or hatch and leave the rest to us.



Home Delivery

Please phone the store at (403)640-2632 any day prior to 12:00noon on the Wednesday before your delivery with your order, place and pay for your delivery. Please phone with your order as early as possible to avoid disappointment. If you have any specials instructions, please do not forget to inform us when you place your order.

PLEASE NOTE: delivery charge within Calgary City limits is \$10.00



PLEASE NOTE
There will be NO DELIVERIES on Thursday December 26th



5901 3rd Street S.E.,
Calgary, AB T2H 1K3

Phone: (403)640-2632

Monday through Saturday 10:00am to 5:00pm

CLOSED Sundays and ALL Statutory holidays for Faith, Family & Friends

The Wild Bird Store will be closed to celebrate Christmas and the New Year 2025:

Last year Christmas landed on Monday, In a normal calendar year, Christmas would have fallen on Tuesday this year. But with 2024 being a leap year, Christmas was pushed out an extra day.

Christmas Eve: Close at 2:00pm

Christmas Day, Wednesday December 25th Closed

Boxing Day, Thursday December 26th Closed

New Years Eve Tuesday, December 31, 2024: Close at 2:00pm

New Years Day Wednesday January 1, 2024 Closed



Web: wildbirdstore.ca

email: info@wildbirdstore.ca

Merry Christmas

On the fourth day of Christmas
my true love sent to me....



Follow us on:

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Go to YouTube, type in the search bar "The Wild Bird Store" to watch our videos and to help us become more visible. Be sure to click on "subscribe" before you leave the page.

The Wild Bird Store

Is the warranty & repair depot for:

Squirrel Buster® Bird Feeders &

Aspects® Feeders



WILD BIRD FEEDERS

And the warranty depot for:

Leupold Binoculars & Spotting

Scopes



LEUPOLD
AMERICA'S OPTICS AUTHORITY



SENIOR'S DAY

Is EVERY Tuesday.

If you are over 60 you will receive
10% off your order

Sorry! Excludes optics, books,
cards & consignment items

HAPPY BIRDING!