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New this year!

Seed cards for our seed sale, more options, more benefits for you!

News
from the bird store

Game On! Game Birds



Sometimes the birds you see make you look twice. It's usually a case of "what is that!" It's not the normal bird that you would see around your yard or at your bird feeder, but there it is.

Now we all have had our share of Turkeys around the feeder, but on occasion we may come across a Ruffed Grouse, Chukar, Northern Bobwhite, or even a Ring necked Pheasant, definitely not your normal feeder bird.

Ring-necked Pheasants, originally from Asia, were introduced to Massachusetts in 1894. Old fields and brushy meadows dominated the landscape in the state at the time, habitat that was perfect for Ring-necked Pheasants. They established themselves quickly as a breeding species and enjoyed a fairly robust population, largely because of the annual release of tens of thousands of farm-raised birds. Today, that population is no longer nearly as plentiful as it once was.

In 1894, Mr. Sullivan Forehand of Worcester, Massachusetts, obtained a few pairs of breeding birds from Oregon, (Forbush 1927), which he ultimately turned over to the state's Commission on Fisheries and Game. The Oregon birds came from China and were part of a successful introduction there seven years earlier. Massachusetts built breeding pens in Winchester and began raising young birds for hunting.

DID YOU KNOW
that turkeys
sleep as a flock
in the trees?

The Ruffed Grouse, symbolic of New England, is found throughout Massachusetts, breeding from the western Berkshires to the Pitch Pines of Cape Cod. Populations in Massachusetts were highest during the period between the Civil War and World War II, when much of the state was farmed and the interspersed woods, fields, and edge made excellent habitat for nesting and feeding. As Massachusetts' forests matured, grouse numbers began to decline, and, although the species still occurs throughout the state, the populations of the early 1900s will never return.

The Chukar is a Eurasian upland game bird in the pheasant family. In 1893 five pairs of these chubby partridges were brought to the U.S. from Pakistan. Now they are hatched in game bird hatcheries for the flight bird industry.

The Northern Bobwhite, Virginia quail or bobwhite quail is a ground-dwelling bird native to the United States, Mexico, and the Caribbean. It is a member of the group of species known as New World quails. Bobwhites are small quail with rounded bodies, small heads, rounded wings, and short tails. Northern Bobwhites live in open pine forests, overgrown fields, shrubby areas, and grasslands. Northern Bobwhites were once a common species in eastern North America, but experienced widespread, sharp declines between 1966 to 2014, the bobwhite's decline probably results from habitat degradation and loss owing to urbanization, fire suppression, and changes to agriculture and forestry. Population declines from habitat loss now mean that in many places there are no longer enough to hunt. They are mostly released game birds that have survived in the wild.

We recently had a Northern Bobwhite walking through our yard. It was a treat to see and a new bird for our yard list.



Interested in bird migration? Check out Cornell Lab of Ornithology's BirdCast for all kinds of interesting information. birdcast.info/forecasts



Because you **Asked**



Q: Why do doves wings whistle?

A: The Mourning Dove is distinct for the whistling sound it makes with its wings. Scientists believe the high-pitched whistling may be a survival tactic. While in flight, the wings of the mourning dove make only a gentle flapping sound, inaudible to most due to the bird being airborne. But during takeoff and landing, the sound of the mourning dove's whistling wings is unmistakable. The flight feathers at the rear of the mourning dove's wing are contoured. This shape creates an audible, high-pitched vibration when the wings flutter rapidly, which sounds like the bird is whistling.

Since most birds have barely audible flight and some birds, notably owls, have evolved feather shapes that make their flight almost silent, it is unusual that a bird would evolve to create sound when taking off and landing. The most likely cause for this is an evolutionary adaptation is the whistling sound serves as a warning to other birds that a threat is imminent.

The mourning dove has a limited song range, which explains the reliance on wing sounds for communications with other birds in the flock. Mourning doves make nest calls and cooing sounds but have very few other vocalizations. The mourning dove's wings are important for other types of communication, as well as warnings. They clap their wings together before takeoff. Apparently the steeper the angle and the faster the flight more sound generated by the wings. It is known, however, that male doves can purposely create non-vocal sounds to help them attract a mate. When courting the male dove suddenly takes off and flies awkwardly, His wing beats are exaggerated, aggressive and extremely noisy. He'll continue this noisy flight until he reaches a height of about 100 feet. At this point, he'll go into a controlled glide and gently coast back to the branch where it all began moments earlier.



Q: How do birds deal with breathing in higher elevation?

A: Mountain climbers know the feeling. Lungs ache for air and the heart races. Legs feel like lead and the brain gets cloudy. This is a condition known as hypoxia. Imagine how the birds feel, and how they have evolved to adapt to the conditions.

Birds and humans alike can breathe easily under the column of air pressing down on us at sea level. But at higher elevations there's less air around, so a lungful just doesn't provide the same amount of oxygen to fuel their muscles. At higher elevations a lungful of air provides less than one-third as much oxygen as at sea level. How do they deal with lack of oxygen at higher elevations?

According to findings published December of 2016 in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*. The researchers used mist nets to capture birds and then collected a drop of blood from each bird, allowing them to study the birds' hemoglobin—the molecule in red blood cells that carries oxygen from the lungs to the muscles. The blood sample gave them two key measurements: the volume of the blood made up of red blood cells (hematocrit) and the hemoglobin concentration in the blood, measured using a handheld monitor.

They tested both resident birds and migrant birds at elevation and discovered that different birds had solved the hypoxia problem in different ways. The researchers found the migrant species respond to hypoxia just as most humans do when moving from sea level to higher elevations by increasing their oxygen transport with a greater number of red blood cells. This works but also has a downside: thicker blood and a higher risk of clots and blocked blood vessels. And it only works for a limited time. The migrant species have found a short-term solution that allows them to survive at high elevation for long enough to complete the nesting season. This quick fix also has the benefit of being reversible, allowing their blood composition to revert to normal when they return to lower elevations.

The resident species had all independently evolved a different technique to increase their oxygen uptake, one that doesn't come with a time limit. The resident birds do not increase the number of red blood cells instead; they increase the amount of hemoglobin inside each cell, which carries more oxygen with out having to build all the other parts of a red blood cell.

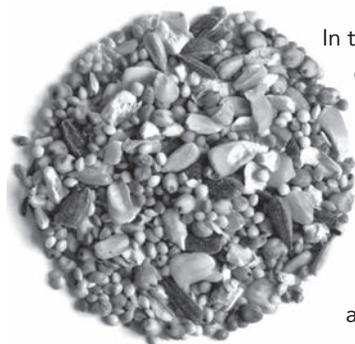
Some high elevation hummingbirds in the Andes can increase the oxygen-carrying ability of individual hemoglobin molecules in order to increase the oxygen levels.

It's fascinating to learn how birds and animals adapt humans could take a lesson.



FALL Seed Sale

This year we are doing something different!



In the past we have had you pre order your seed, and we would bring in anywhere from 13 to 20 pallets of seed (26,000 – 40,000 lbs) which is subject to the weather, the Bird Store resident critters, (which are in huge abundance this year), and our aching backs. Hey, we are getting older you know!

Storing all that seed is a problem for us if you don't pick it up and for you if you don't use it up and the moths hatch. About those moths, the moths lay their eggs on the seed when it is in the field and in the right conditions, mostly time and warmth they will hatch. Our seed company does not treat their seed with pesticide (moth inhibitor) like a lot of seed companies do. It's not good for the birds or the environment; you don't need poison in your yard, right!

That said we are changing our seed sale to a new format. From October 1st through the 31st you will be able to purchase a 'SEED CARD' in any denomination that you choose. Your SEED CARD will be effective immediately and will be good for all SEED purchases through September 30, 2018 regardless of the bag size. All seed purchased with the SEED CARD will receive 15% off up to the value of your card. You will EARN Bucks but will not be able to use them in conjunction with your SEED CARD. The SEED CARD will not be valid with any other offers, promotions, discounts, or bucks.



What the seed card does for you:

- You don't have to store your seed; it will be fresh when you want it.
- You are not limited to certain size bags— Some of you like your seed in smaller bags and had not participated in the sale in the past.
- All seed is available for purchase on your seed card, not just specific types.
- You can purchase it when you need it, and don't have to buy large quantities.

The rules:

- You must purchase your card between October 1st -31st. This is the only time that a SEED CARD will be available for purchase.
- You will have to purchase your card here. We don't have the cards available on our web store.
- You must present your card prior to your purchase so that we can apply your discount.
- The SEED CARD cannot be combined with any other offers, promotions, discounts or bucks.
- The SEED CARD can be used on any size bag of seed.
- The SEED CARD gives you a discounted price off of the regular retail price. If prices go up or down the discount will be off of that price.



If you are planning to pick up a large number of bags please check with us first to make sure they are available.

Did You Know?



Birds have 3 sets of eyelids! An upper lid resembling our human eye lid, a lower lid that closes when a bird sleeps, and a third lid called a nictitating membrane that sweeps across the eye sideways from near the beak. This is a thin translucent fold of skin that moistens and cleans the eye and protects it from wind and bright light. After all they can't rub their eyes like we can.



ARE YOU GETTING THE LATEST UPDATES?

If you haven't signed up for our e news you are missing out on the specials, events, and Monthly News reminders that are sent by email in between our quarterly newsletters.

If you want the most up to date information, specials, and reminders join our mailing list at www.thebirdstoreandmore.com

We are also on FACEBOOK, click the link on our store web site or search for The Bird Store and More.



Details Inside!

Seed cards for our seed sale, more options, more benefits for you!

Bird Store Hours:
10:00am-6:00pm Monday - Saturday
11:00am-5:00pm Sunday

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 736, Fiskdale, MA 01518

Phone: (508)-347-BIRD

www.thebirdstoreandmore.com

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NEW Seed Saver Card

Details inside!



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