



News
from the bird store

Back Cover: **NEW Nesting Balls**
from Living the Dream Alpaca Farm

Take a Walk this Spring

The Bird Store and More has lots of Spring Walks scheduled. Take a look! Complete information can be found at thebirdstoreandmore.com/events/

INTERESTING FACT

A Belgian racing pigeon called Armando has sold at auction for nearly \$1.5 million, more than three times the world record.

It's The Season of Singing

For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

Song of Solomon 2: 11-12

While many versions of these verses can be found they all point to one thing, glory and rebirth. Throughout history poets, musicians, artists, and scholars have sought to evoke the unique joy of spring. Whether in airy tunes or warmth of color, sounds and smells they struggle to encompass the essence of spring.

Then, with just three notes the lowly Robin sings the symphony of spring. Nothing elicits the joy of spring like the thrill of hearing the birds sing. The cheery *cheerily, cheer up*, aria gives rise to the grand symphony of springtime song.

It starts slowly as winter wanes with the thin fee bee of a chickadee or the *birdie, birdie, birdie* of the cardinal announcing that spring will soon be on its way.

As spring advances and the insects emerge they herald the returning flycatchers and warblers that will fill the symphony with joyous song. Returning birds sing to announce their intention to set up housekeeping.

Birds sing to both attract a mate and to ward off potential competitors in their chosen territory. Lets face it a bird without a song is a bird without a mate, so they sing their heart out, the glorious song of rebirth, and a salve to our winter weary souls.

We miss the song, and the sound of the outdoors while we are tucked in our insulated winter world.

The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come....

- ▶ **Weekday Walks Enjoying The Grand Trunk Trail**
7-9:30 am
4/17, 4/22, 5/1, 5/8, 5/15
- ▶ **Hope & St John's Cemetery Spring Migration Walks**
7-9:30 am
4/26, 5/3
- ▶ **New Swedish Cemetery Walk**
7-9:30 am
4/27
- ▶ **Westville Dam Spring Birding**
7-9:30 am
5/2
- ▶ **Newton Hill Birdwatching**
7-9:30 am
5/4

- ▶ **Skinner Mountain Warbler Walk**
6:30 am
5/10
- ▶ **Yale State Forest Birdwalk**
7-9:45 am
5/11
- ▶ **Opacum Land Trust Walk at Mashapaug Woods**
9-11 am
5/18
- ▶ **Wells State Park Birding**
7-9:45 am
5/25

Did you know Big Bird is a canary

In Big Bird's Bio (in Sesame Street Unpaved an official Sesame publication) it has his Scientific Name as *Bigus canarius*



Spring Reminders

Hummingbird Feeders should go up on April 15th

It is important keep you're Hummingbird feeders clean and the nectar fresh. Change your nectar every couple of days or sooner as the weather turns warmer.



Oriole Feeders should go up around April 28-30th

Orioles will be returning during the first few days of May.

The Orioles like Birdberry Jelly and Oranges best. Birdberry Jelly is a

combination of grape and blackberry jelly. The Orioles love it. You will find it at The Bird Store.



Nest Boxes should be cleaned and repaired by now

The Bird Store has cleaners, resizing holes and nesting materials to help your birds make a new spring home. Need a new nest box? We have plenty to choose from.



Clean your feeders

There are many birds that are only here in the summer, why not enjoy them. This is a good time to clean the feeders up for the spring.

Need a Bear Proof pole?

We have them, and we can tell you from personal experience over the past five years that the bears don't bother when they find they cannot get to the food. It's not worth their effort and they move on. Bear tested from New England; bear country in Pennsylvania through the Carolinas and westward to Washington State. It's worth it if you enjoy your birds.



Designed by Bill and tested right here at the bird store.

\$695.00
plus installation

Swallows! What they eat is as Important as



how much they eat

Swallows are one of the most steeply declining groups of birds in North America, Six of North America's eight swallow species are declining. Swallows and swifts are aerialists; they "hawk" for insects, twisting and turning high in the air or low over meadows to nab their prey. And they're incredibly good at it.

Swallows use incredible reflexes every day to find flying insects. Any shift in temperature, air pressure, or wind speed can change how many insects are aloft and where they are. The aerial environment changes like the weather because that's what it is.

Andrew Dreelin spent a summer putting data loggers on swallows and martins. These tags record the air pressure surrounding the bird once per minute, and let him calculate their altitude, helping to understand the aerial behavior of each species.

Dreelin's analysis suggests that swallows and martins divide up the aerial environment into distinct bands like layers on a cake. Barn Swallows fly lowest, Tree Swallows in the middle, and Purple Martins highest. Just as flycatchers, nightjars, and swallows claim different parts of the airspace, these swallows subdivide their portion of the sky. This may even mean they have different diets, since many insects are also distributed in altitudinal bands in the air.

This can also have an effect on the chicks. Studies have shown that what a swallow chick eats can be more important than how much it eats. Further research by other undergraduate students at Cornell suggests that the chicks need lots of Omega 3 fatty acids, which have been found in flying insects that, as larvae, live in the water—such as mayflies, caddisflies, and dragonflies. These stream-living species contain more fatty acids than terrestrial insects do. Studies were performed on other insectivorous species such as Phoebes and the findings were if the birds need to provide their chicks with lots of omega-3s for them to develop properly, they probably need to catch a lot of aquatic insects. In that case, declines in wetlands and stream health could reduce aquatic insect populations and thereby bring down the breeding success of aerial insectivores as the insect species will be harder to find in the altitudinal bands in which they fly.

More research needs to be done, but what does that tell you about pollution in wetlands and streams and spraying to control insect populations. In my opinion spraying and pollution isn't arbitrary it just kills everything.





To Bee or not To Bee

A very good question indeed. Are we going back to our roots? Many of us, myself included are growing gardens and flowers or even participating in local CSA's. Feed local, eat local, garden yourself. People often ask me why I bother spending days in August canning tomatoes. Have you ever opened a jar of your own canned tomatoes on an icy winter day in February? It smells like the summer sun! And I know where it came from, and what went into it. And Bill knows its going to be really good pasta for dinner!

this means they will not become invasive, and they do not induce anaphylactic shock and they rarely sting.

One hive-less bee like the mason bee has the pollination ability of 100 honey bees. They are better able to distribute the pollen flower to flower than honey bees because of the way they carry dry pollen on their body. Honey bees dampen the pollen with their saliva so it sticks to its hind legs and can be carried back efficiently to the hive,

feeding thousands of bees. Hole-nesting bees, on the other hand, don't have a hive to worry about and they lay around 20 eggs in their lifetime.

Solitary Bee House

The best way to introduce these beneficial bees to your yard is by setting up a solitary bee house. Both Mason and Leafcutter bees can be purchased and will ship directly to your home. Put them out and watch the magic happen.

Come see our selection of solitary bee homes and supplies and get pollinating!



Social bees make up only about 10% of the world's bee population and honeybees make up only 7 species. Bumblebees are also a social bee. Bumblebees are native to North America Bumblebee colonies are much smaller with a peak population of around 200 flying adults. Bumblebees have evolved to shake hidden pollen loose from tomato, eggplant, potato, blueberry, and cranberry flowers with a specific vibration called buzz pollination. They are a native beneficial pollinator in your garden



Hive-less bee raising! Mason bee and leafcutter variety nesting pack

The rest of the world's 90% of bee species live a solitary lifestyle and around 30% of bees live in pre-existing cavities like old beetle holes, or hollow empty stems of reeds or grasses. Most hole-nesting bees are too small or not strong enough to drill new holes into wood and they cause no damage to homes. Hole-nesting bees are great candidates for managed pollinators because we can duplicate their nesting homes, raise them in one location, and place them elsewhere nearby as needed.

That said, with the continuing problems in the honeybee population many people are turning to native bees for pollination. Hive-less solitary bees like the mason and leafcutter bee, are gentle, easy to raise and are amazing pollinators. They pollinate up to 100 times more effectively than honeybees. They are easy to raise by anyone and require far less maintenance than honey bees. Not to mention, they are fun for kids and adults! They are native to North America,



Carpenter Bees

These bees look similar to Bumblebees but they are mostly solitary and drill perfectly round holes in soft wood to excavate their nest. They are often found in forested areas with adjacent wildflower populations. These bees are beneficial pollinators and you can encourage their presence by providing blocks of wood with various size holes drilled into them. These bee blocks will help improve your garden and keep bees away from wood structures on your house.



Did You Know that a Great Horned Owl can eat a raccoon.

New Product: Nesting Balls

from Living the
Dream Alpaca Farm

Birds love to forage for things for their nests and these balls give an all natural safe and soft option for them. Hang outdoors and birds will fly back and forth picking from the ball time and time again.



Each grapevine ball is filed with 100% Alpaca Fiber and handmade in Vermont. There are also very generously sized refill packages available for your nesting balls. Give your birds a soft nest this year.



OUR ANNUAL Baby Bird Reminder

It is the nesting season and every year we receive numerous calls about baby birds that are on the ground. Please be kind, these little fuzz balls are fledgling birds and the parent bird is usually around and will continue to feed the baby on the ground as well as helping it learn to fly. If you think the baby bird is in jeopardy take a basket, fill it with grass, then place the baby in the basket and hang the basket on a tree branch close by but away from danger. The mother bird will find and feed the baby. Don't take it home, to us, or the vet. The baby is usually fine (it just hasn't quite got the hang of flying yet) and the mother bird will be quite upset if her baby goes missing.

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

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Shop.thebirdstoreandmore.com

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