



BACKYARD nature center News

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I'm Seeing Fairies

I have a fairy garden...no really...there are magical fairies all over my yard that draw me in like a magnet. My granddaughters and I turned a half whiskey barrel on it's side in their old sand box, filled it with rich potting soil, added green moss and a miniature pink ceramic fairy bungalow with two little winged fairies to reside there. The girls then created a reflection pond from an old mirror and some aqua blue glass stones, planted some ferns and bright pink Vinca to mimic a whimsical forest, added winding stone pathways and viola....a magical place where two little girls can transport themselves into the world of tiny winged creatures that know a kinder/gentler world filled with laughter and mischief.

As I view my yard through the eyes of my two granddaughters, I realize that Nick and I have done the same thing. We've created a habitat for tiny winged creatures to safely live, raise a family



and carry on for generations to come. There is so much magic and wonder in this one little wooded acre. The life and drama that goes on in a 12 x 20 foot gold fish pond that Nick dug 25 years ago, is alive with five dollar Koi and bait store goldfish, with beautiful fanned tails, who've grown

to a foot long now, raised families, attracted bright green leopard frogs, bullfrogs and dragonflies to their world, their community. With a handful of floating fish food, I'm greeted by gaping mouths and swishing tails that seem happy too that summer is finally here.

Each berry producing shrub or perennial we've planted has invited over 150 species of beautiful songbirds to dine, nest and socialize. Creating new feeding stations throughout the yard, each having its own viewing vantage point, has been a fun challenge too! With the change of seasons, I look through the "feeder stash" for hummingbird feeders and oriole jelly bowls and ant moats. Summer is time to prepare the sticky stuff! Yum! Peanut feeders are welcomed by the Downy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers as they



bring their young back and show them the ropes. The loving way an adult feeds its full-sized baby who is begging pathetically for mom to place that peanut in his beak when they are a half inch from his face! Parenting is exhausting.

We are stewards of this address and feel a connection, a responsibility, for the health and

well being of the creatures we've invited to reside here. Planting wild-flower gardens for songbirds, swallowtails, painted ladies, honeybees and hummingbirds is a joy. Gardening and bird watching go hand in hand. When you're outside, digging or planting or just enjoying a glass of tea, you can't help but admire the beautiful song of a cardinal or the flutter of tiny wings past your head. It is amazing and somewhat magical. Ask yourself...was it the undulating flight of a chickadee, the whirr of tiny hummingbird wings, the gentle buzzing of a honey bee busily moving from flower to flower, or was it..... a fairy?



Summer Tips for Success

- Fighting wasps that take over your nest box? Coat a hefty amount of Vaseline along the inside of the roof. Wasps use saliva to attach to the top and hang their nest down from there. There's no stick with the petroleum jelly and it's harmless.
- Want to see hummer's all summer? Change your 4-1 water and sugar nectar at least two times a week or it will ferment.
- Having trouble keeping your birdbath clean? Use "Birdbath Clear". It is an enzyme that eats algae and it's organic!
- Hang an ant moat above your hummingbird and oriole feeders. Filled with water, it simply creates a barrier that ants will not cross. Easy breezy!



- Remove old nest material from your nest boxes after each brood has fledged. Doing so removes and eliminates creepy-crawly nest mites (lice) that are unhealthy for the next brood of young.

- Are the birds hitting your windows because they see the

yard and think they can fly through? Static cling window decals are ultra violet, which birds can see. The leaf designs are attractive and certainly minimize bird strikes.

- Purchase only the freshest seed, keep it cool and in a tightly closed container. Our seed is packaged for us weekly. It is organic; no pesticides are used in the fields. You'll go through more seed during the summer due to the lack of natural seed and the intense activities of nesting and feeding young.
- When planting annuals and perennials, consider zinnias and coneflower! Goldfinch, chickadees, house finch and downy woodpeckers love them!



Best New Product

This artistically carved water feature is designed to mimic a fish swimming upstream. The textured granite boulder is drilled up through the center allowing water to stream down the furrowed rock to give a realistic rushing water effect around the polished stone fish. The water feature is complete with a basin, pump and polished stones and can be buried flush with the ground.

Summer Hummers!

We often hear from people that they got discouraged when trying to get humming-



birds to come and so they took their feeders down. We can understand. It is tough to keep changing the solution when there are no takers, but we would like to make this quick suggestion. Start up again mid-July. This is when the hummer population in our area explodes. The babies are out and everyone is just feeding up for the migration south that takes place in September. We promise you will be rewarded!



Happy Anniversaries Celebrated this year!

Milestones have been reached this summer! The store is 25 years old, and..... Nick and I are celebrating 40 years of marriage. Could it be that moving in the same direction, like ducks, is a good thing? Your friendship, support and love of birds have made our little business and our life a success! It's an incredible feat these days, and we have you to thank! What's that old saying "If you do what you love.....you never work a day of your life!"



PURPLE MARTIN UPDATE FROM NICK

The first martin male and females arrived as expected on March 17th. Wet weather kept them from starting to build nests. It was a struggle for the birds to find food to just to survive. It



is not the cold temps that stress them; it's the lack of food. All it takes are three days of cold wet weather, with no flying insects, for an adult martin to starve to death. Placing a small cup with live mealworms in the compartments can save their lives. It is difficult for them to resist the wiggly little worms, even if they are not of the air born variety.

Finally, the last week of May the weather broke and the martins began laying eggs. Weekly nest checks will keep you involved and up to date and allow you to deal with any sparrow or predator problems in a timely manner. I can't stress the importance of being involved. Throw out any egg that's not pure white. It is not a martin egg. It's fun and beneficial and if you keep track of when the young start hatching you'll know, approximately, when the young

birds are ready to leave the nest. Stop lowering the house during that last couple of weeks. You don't want a youngster to leave the nest before he is fully flight ready. As of May 27th there were 35 eggs in 22 compartments. I think they're making up for lost time.

Once the eggs start hatching and they start feeding young, offer the meal worms by attaching small cups to the outside perches. The adults will use them for supplemental feeding of their young. It's so handy, how could they resist.

Get to know the amazing monarch butterfly



- Monarch Butterflies have been known to travel as much as 5,000 miles in a year! They're also one of the few insects that are capable of making a trans-Atlantic crossing.
- Milkweed

contains a chemical that tastes disgusting to birds. If birds didn't associate that taste with the Monarchs, the butterflies would be nearly defenseless against them.

- During the larval state of their lifetime, the Monarch Butterfly is completely dependent on milkweed.
- It's believed that the Monarch Butterfly uses the Earth's magnetic field to find the town of Angangueo, Mexico where it spends the winter avoiding the cold.

Great reasons to add beautiful butterfly milkweed to your garden!

GIVE DAD THE BEST!

FREE seed tray
w/purchase of a
Droll Yankee or
Aspect feeder

C061601; Expires 7/31/16. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Not to be used on seed or seed accounts. One per family please.

GET THE BEST VIEW!

10% OFF
Alpen binoculars or
spotting scopes
(in stock only)

C061602; Expires 7/31/16. Cannot be combined with any other offer. One per family please.

15% OFF
Garden Art poles
Decorate your garden with
2 to 6' colorful Art Poles by
Magnet Works

C061603; Expires 7/31/16. Cannot be combined with any other offer. One per family please.

**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–Friday: 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sunday: 12 noon–4 p.m.

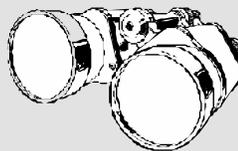
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
WWW.BACKYARDNATURECENTER.COM

Remember to Recycle



**DON'T FORGET DAD ON
HIS DAY—SUNDAY, JUNE 19!**

Show Dad you love him with a gift from the Backyard Nature Center. We have many special Father's Day gifts to choose from. Here are some quick suggestions:



binoculars • spotting scopes • bird guides • birdbaths
birdhouses • squirrel-proof feeders • bat houses



Tammy, Cathy, Nick
and Mary.
We look forward to
helping you!