



BACKYARD nature center News

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Don't help so much.....really



Baby-bird season brings a whole new dimension to the backyard, as the young literally spread their wings and learn to fly. The activity level soon reaches chaotic proportions, as frazzled parents work ceaselessly to keep their rapidly growing youngsters fed. New sounds echo through the woods and yards, as the adults announce their imminent arrival at the nest, and the young express their interest in being fed NOW.

And, inevitably, there are accidents. For one reason or another, young birds wind up on the ground and face a whole new set of challenges. Our dilemma is what we should do. How do we know if they are just learning to be birds or actually in need of help?

As a rule of thumb, if the bird is feathered and mobile, it is probably a fledgling on the ground on purpose. The young of many species, most noticeably robins, leave the nest before they are fully flight worthy. It's part of the process. Young birds are too crowded in the nest to develop the muscles they

need to fly, so mom and dad encourage them to take a first step that usually leads them to the ground. For a day or more, the youngsters will hang out on the ground or in low shrubs and trees and gather strength, while their parents feed and train them. And you needn't worry that falls from the nests will cause injuries: Baby birds have so little mass that they actually kind of bounce to the ground.



Birds grow rapidly, and the small songbirds that generally nest in our yards go from hatching to first flight in 10 to 21 days (depending on the species). Most young found on the ground are actually fledglings that are learning to fly. But if their eyes are still closed, or if there are few or no feathers, the bird is a nestling that has fallen from its nest. The best thing to do in this case is to put the baby back in the nest. The parents will continue to care for it, even if it has been handled by people, and the parents are best equipped to provide food on a schedule that maintains optimum health.

If you can't find the nest, or if

you can't reach it without threat to your life and limb, put the baby in a closed container with holes in the top (a shoe box is good) and take it to a licensed rehabilitator. Baby birds have specific food requirements and a daunting feeding schedule (every 20 minutes or so during daylight hours). No matter how good our intentions, the birds will be healthier and better adjusted if they are raised by someone who knows what to do and what not to. The right thing is sometimes the hard thing. So it is with baby birds. Our impulse is always to help them; but very often, the best way to help is not to help.



Quote for Our Time:

"We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives".

- John F. Kennedy

Clausen's Family Oriole Jelly Recipe

(High Fructose Corn Syrup FREE!)

3 cups Grape Juice
4 Cups Apple Juice
1 Cup Water
2 Boxes Sure Gel
12 Cups Sugar

Mix the grape and apple juice with the water and divide in two pans. Put on to heat. Add one box of Sure Gel to each and stir until dissolved. Bring to rolling boil and add 6 cups sugar to each pan. Stir until dissolved. When rolling boil starts, cook at low heat for 12 minutes. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Remove scum and pour into glass jars. Refrigerate. Makes 8 pints.

Enjoy.....

They will be here until mid-September!!!



Brown Thrasher & Female Baltimore Oriole

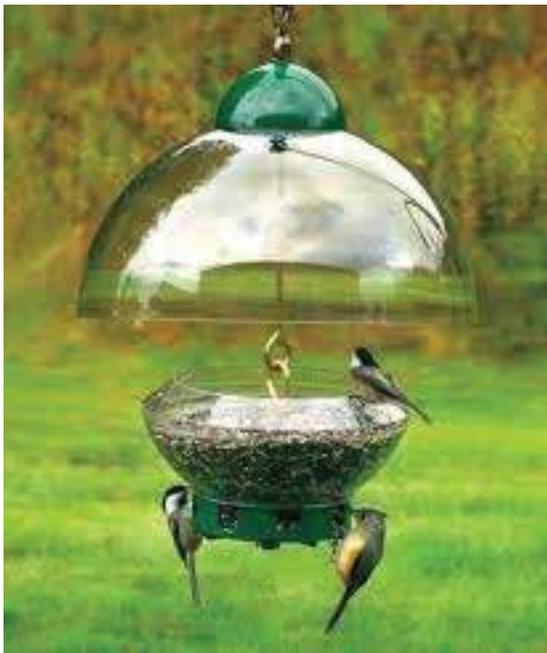
Summer Tips for Success



- 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!



Summer Feeding Problems?



Summer brings new birds and with them you can have new problems. In March, Grackles return in flocks and take over feeding stations, running everyone else away. They can become a real pain, but there are ways to minimize their impact. Just spreading your feeders out and not having all of them in the same area will lessen the impact of these big birds dominating all the area. They will tend to concentrate on the feeders with the most room that are easiest for them to use. Feeders with small perches will limit Grackle usage by not providing enough room to perch. Thistle feeders with small openings for the Goldfinch are almost impossible for the larger birds to use. They

can't get their beaks in the tiny openings. Another very effective solution is to use a feeder with a cage around it that keeps the larger birds out and allows finch sized birds access to the seed inside. But it will also keep out Cardinals, so many people switch to safflower seed at this time. The best thing about safflower is that Grackles and squirrels don't seem to like it, but Cardinals and House Finch will eat it. Grackles will pick thru it at first looking for other things and then tend to ignore it, leaving it for your other birds.

Another problem that occurs this time of year is the accumulation of shells and debris under the feeders. It can be unsightly and uneaten seed can sprout and grow. There is any easy solution: Patio Mix! Our Patio Mix is a combination of sunflower chips, millet and peanuts, all with the shells removed. This is an extremely bird attractive mixture that leaves no shell mess and the seed is less likely to sprout with the shells removed. The other advantage is that birds that normally don't eat seed because of the shell, like Eastern Bluebirds, or Carolina Wrens, that are insect eaters, can eat the seed when the shell is removed. The cost is a little bit more, but shells make up about 40% of the bag weight in most mixes. You get all food and no mess and the cost actually figures out to be less per pound when you buy Patio Mix!



The heat of summer also brings with it the return of insects. Ants and bees can become a problem on nectar feeders if you don't prepare for them. Ants are very easy to control with the addition of an ant moat. This is just a small cup like addition that you hang your hummingbird feeder from. You fill it with water and the ants will not cross the water to get to your feeder, therefore eliminating them. Bees are a little more difficult to control but adding a little salad oil to the area around the opening of the feeder will make it more difficult for them to hang on to. Using saucer shaped feeders make it very difficult to reach the nectar below but the hummingbirds have no problem.

Fun new feeder
for little birds ,



The Magnolia!

Remembering Ruby

Our dear store kitty, Ruby, passed away in May. Ruby was 18 years old and she had a wonderful life here at the store. Even folks who were not cat lovers sought her out to say hello or asked about her. Some even brought her toys, though her frisky days had gone by. Ruby and her brother Mobi were dumped behind the store at the tender age of 6 weeks old and with a loaf of torn up bread to sustain them. Can't imagine who would do a thing like that but we were so lucky to have them both in our lives for so long. The store seems empty for sure with no sweet tiny black kitty to greet us but she will hold a place in our hearts forever.



**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



Father's Day is June 21st
Don't forget Dad
on his day.

Take 20% off
one item

(seed and optics excluded)
To be used on "in stock" items only.
Coupon expires July 31, 2020.

