HOW TO HELP URBAN BIRDS
WE WILL START AT 6:30, PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF IN THE CHAT!

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Northern Cardinal (female)
Introductions

- **Michelle Serreyn** (WSU student & DA Safe Passage/ peregrine monitor volunteer)
- **Ava Landgraf** (Research Coordinator- Detroit Audubon)
- **Brittany Leick** (Program Coordinator- Detroit Audubon)
What are Urban Birds?

Urban birds are species of birds that have adapted to living in areas with higher populations of humans.

What defines an area as Urban?:
- More densely populated by people
- Tend to have taller buildings
- Buildings closer together
- Less greenspace
- More impervious surfaces - sidewalks, roads, parking lots

Range Types:
- Resident (Year-round)
- Breeding (Summer)
- Non-breeding (Winter)
- Migratory (passing through) - Spring/Fall
Challenges for Urban Birds

- Increased competition
- Higher rates of predation
- Increased chances of disease transmission
- Increased dangers such as cars, buildings and power lines
- Noise and light pollution
- Resources may be polluted, hazardous
Common Natives

Year-round:

- **Backyard Birds:**
  - American Robin
  - Mourning Dove
  - Black-capped Chickadee
  - Downy Woodpecker
  - Northern Cardinal

- **Waterbird species:**
  - Ring-billed Gull
  - Canada Geese
  - Mallard Duck

- **Birds of Prey:**
  - Cooper’s Hawk
  - Eastern Screech Owl
  - Great Horned Owl
  - Red-tailed Hawk

- American Goldfinch
- Blue Jay
- House Finch
- White-breasted Nuthatch
- American Crow
Seasonal Common Natives

Summer:
- House Wren
- Red-Winged Blackbird
- Common Grackle
- Turkey Vulture

Winter:
- White-Throated Sparrow
- Dark-eyed Junco
Common Non-natives

What are Non-natives?

- Non-native vs. Invasives:
  - **Non-native** - An introduced species that does not cause harm to local/native species
  - **Invasive** - A species that outcompetes other species for food and nesting spaces and/or causes damage to an ecosystem

Year-round:

- House Sparrow
- European Starling
- Rock Dove (Pigeon)
- Ring-necked Pheasant
Unique Natives

What does it mean to be a Unique Native Species?

Make use of specific elements in urban environments

Year-round: Peregrine Falcon

Summer: Chimney Swift
North American Migratory Flyways
“Cool” Migrants

“Cool” migrants that often pass through this area (southeastern lower Michigan) and use greenspaces due to migratory route(s):

- Northern Oriole
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- Various Warblers (in particular Common Yellowthroat, Overbird)
- Sparrows (Song Sparrow, Field Sparrow, White-crowned)
- Thrushes (Swainson’s) and relatives
WSU Urban Birding Hotspots

- Gilmour Mall & Max Jacob House
- Lot 12 bioswale & research gardens
- iBio bioswale
- Old Main peregrine nest and roosting areas
- Biological Sciences “woodland” & “grassland”
Backyard Bird Feeders

- Placement from a window
  - Less than 3 ft
  - More than 10 ft
  - More than 30 ft
- More than 6 ft off ground
- Bird Safety
  - Plant shrubs nearby
  - Clean feeders regularly
- Seeds/Food
  - No-Mess Blends/Shell-less seeds
  - Thistle and/or Safflower
  - Suet (Hot pepper variety)
- Hummingbird Feeders
  - No Red Dye
  - Keep Clean
Backyard Birding

Water source(s):

- Avoid glass bird baths
- Rocks/stones in bath help small insect pollinators
- Clean regularly
  - Avoid chemicals
  - Helps reduce mosquitos

City Ordinances:

- Crime (1x- Misdemeanor)- baiting of deer
  - Felony- 3x occurrences
- Check in with your local ordinance about rats
# Bird Houses

Optimum birdhouse dimensions for cavity nesting birds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird Species</th>
<th>Entrance Hole Size</th>
<th>Entrance Height*</th>
<th>Mounting Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bluebird</td>
<td>1.5” (3.8 cm)</td>
<td>6” (15cm)</td>
<td>4-6’ (1-2m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickadee</td>
<td>1.25” (3.2cm)</td>
<td>6” (15cm)</td>
<td>5-15’ (2-5m)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flicker</td>
<td>2.5” (6.35cm)</td>
<td>4” (10cm)</td>
<td>6-10’ (2-3m)</td>
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<td>House Finch</td>
<td>2” (5.1cm)</td>
<td>4” (10cm)</td>
<td>5-10’ (2-3m)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>House Sparrow</strong></td>
<td>1.75” (4.5cm)</td>
<td>6” (15cm)</td>
<td>10-15’ (3-5m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kestrel</td>
<td>3” (7.6cm)</td>
<td>9” (23cm)</td>
<td>10-20’ (3-6m)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nuthatches</td>
<td>1.25” (3.2cm)</td>
<td>6” (15cm)</td>
<td>10-15’ (3-5m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple Martin</td>
<td>2.5” (6.35cm)</td>
<td>1.5” (3.8cm)</td>
<td>10-15’ (3-5m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Swallow</td>
<td>1.5” (3.8cm)</td>
<td>4” (10cm)</td>
<td>5-10’ (2-3m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warbler</td>
<td>1.25” (3.2cm)</td>
<td>4” (10cm)</td>
<td>5-10’ (2-3m)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Woodpecker</td>
<td>1.25” (3.2cm)</td>
<td>7” (18cm)</td>
<td>10-20’ (3-6m)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wren</td>
<td>1.25” (3.2cm)</td>
<td>4” (10cm)</td>
<td>6-10’ (2-3m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Planting/Providing Habitat - Know Your Birds!

- Food (adults and nestlings)
- Shelter
- Timing

White-throated Sparrow

Overview  ID info  Life History  Maps

Listen  ID Info

Adult

Adult
Woody Plants

- Food (fruit, nuts/seeds & insects)
- Shelter (weather, predators and nesting)

Serviceberries

Oaks

Chokeberry

Spruces
Herbaceous Plants

- Food (insects, nectar, seeds, fruit)
- Nesting material

Clockwise from above: Coreopsis, Sunflowers, Goldenrods/Asters, Grasses, Coneflowers
Other Needs

- Multi-level Habitat
- Leaf litter
- Brush piles
- Snags
Protective Measures - Cats Inside

- Number one direct human cause of bird population decline in US and Canada
  - Cats kill 2.4 billion birds/year
- Cats do not hunt only when they are hungry
- Fledglings are especially vulnerable
- Protects and extends the life of your cat
  - Indoor cats - 10-15 yrs vs Outdoor cats - 2-5 yrs
Protective Measures - Bird-Safe Windows

- Windows kill around 600 million birds a year in the US
  - 40% are killed by residential building windows
- Windows can be made bird-safe with:
  - Paint/soap, Feather Friendly Dots, CollidEscape, Acopian BirdSavers
Protective Measures - Dark Skies

- Many birds navigate by moonlight and starlight
- Especially during migration, birds confuse the light from stars and buildings, commonly causes them to fly around buildings until they crash or die or exhaustion
- **Reduce artificial lighting at night to prevent confusion and disorientation**
Protective Measures - No Pesticides

- Pesticides kill the insects that birds need to eat
  - 96% of terrestrial birds feed their young insects
- Pesticides directly kill millions of birds every year in the US
- Herbicides and fertilizers can also possess harmful chemicals
Current Programs - Urban Bird Treaty

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Urban Bird Treaty Program supports partners in U.S. cities to:
  - Conserve urban bird habitats
  - Reduce urban bird hazards
  - Educate and engage urban communities in bird appreciation, recreation, and conservation

- 30 UBT cities in USA
Current Programs - Detroit Bird City

- Transforming unmaintained city parks and their neighboring vacant lots into Detroit Bird City parks
  - Native flower meadows with components to welcome and engage residents
  - Partnership with City of Detroit and several community organizations
- At each park we are applying:
  1) Community engagement and planning
  2) Restoration through the planting of native species
  3) Installation of signs, benches, and pathways
  4) Educational programs and conservation events
Current Programs - Safe Passage at Wayne State

- Monitoring for last 3 yrs/collect data on campus building window strikes
- Averaging around 50 each migration period
  - Mostly warblers (ovenbird #1), sparrows (white-throated #2) and thrushes
- Building “hot spots”
  - New initiative to mitigate bird window strikes @ WSU
  - Map generated through Global Bird Collision Mapper
Resources

- Birdscaping in the Midwest, Mariette Nowak
- Two Thirds for the Birds
- Cornell’s All About Birds
- Audubon Plants for Birds

Previous webinars:
- How to Make a Bird-Friendly Space
- Native Plants for Birds
- Native Plants for Birds: No Bugs, No Birds

Places to purchase Native plants:
- Potager Detroit
- Keep Growing Detroit
- Detroit Abloom
- Wild Type Nursery, Mason
- Garden club hosted sales
Field Trips

**Special Urban Birding Field Trips:**
Tue. Apr. 26 @ 9am - Wayne State Urban Birding Field Trip (for Students & Teachers Only)
Sun. May 15 @ 8am - Wayne State Urban Birding Field Trip

**Webinar:**
Thu. Apr. 21 @ 7pm – MI Dark Skies & Bird Migration Webinar
Tue. May 10 @ 12pm – Trees are for the Birds Webinar

**Volunteer Events:**
Sat. Mar. 12 @ 10am – Callahan Park Cleanup
Sat. May 28 @ 11am – Bryant-Vermont Park Cleanup

**Other Upcoming Field Trips:**
Fri. Mar. 25 @ 6pm - Woodcock Watch
Sat. Mar. 26 @ 8:30am - Kensington Birding Walk
Sat. Apr. 9 @ 8:30am - Pheasant Walk

To register for these events, check us out at [Detroitaudubon.org](http://Detroitaudubon.org) or on our Facebook page at [facebook.com/detroitaudubon](http://facebook.com/detroitaudubon/)
Thank you for joining us today!

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