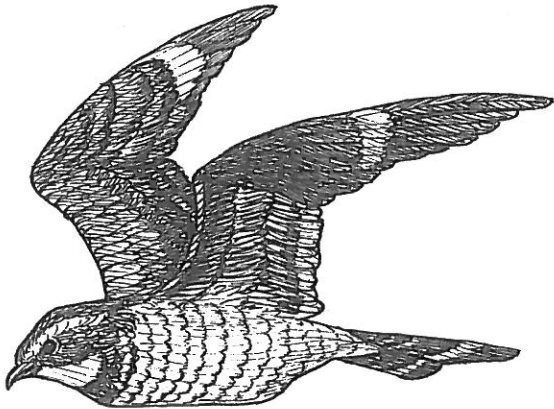


**BACKYARD BIRD NEWS  
WILDLIFE HABITAT  
AUGUST 2017**



**COMMON NIGHTHAWK**

This member of the Goat sucker family, is perhaps the most easily seen and recognized of the various species that comprise this family. It's close relatives in Iowa are the Poor-will and the Whip-poor-will. This bird is often seen in groups, lazily flying, swooping and darting through the sky, picking off many varieties of large and small insects. It's large gaping mouth sweeps them in with ease. The variety ranges from Grasshoppers and Beetles to flies and Mosquitoes.

The silhouette resembles that of a small hawk and thus it's name. Towards the end of it's pointed wing tips, is a bright white stripe, which makes it easy to distinguish from many other birds. It's flight is very moth like to me, as they glide and dart through the sky. On migration, both spring and fall, they may travel in

**YOUR COMPLETE BIRD STORE**

**GET READY FOR HUMMINGBIRDS  
BY THE MIDDLE OF THE MONTH**

**GOLD FINCH, WAXWINGS AND  
MOURNING DOVES WILL STILL BE ON  
THE NEST**

**TRY 'GOLDEN' SAFFLOWER, SOFTER  
SHELL, HIGHER PROTEIN**

**QUIET TIMES WILL SOON BE HERE  
AND THE BIRDS WILL BE IN FULL MOLT**

**FIERCE TERRITORIAL DEFENSE WILL  
COME TO AN END**

**MOST OF THIS YEARS "BABIES" WILL  
LOOK LIKE ADULTS**

**WE HAVE DOUBLE CLEANED NYJER  
SEED, IT'S REALLY CLEAN**

small to huge flocks. Occasionally they are high in the sky picking off their food and at other times, they may be brushing close to the ground in your backyard. As they fly along, they utter loud "peent" or nasal "veer" sounds, which must bounce off and help them locate their insect prey.

The spring arrival date in this area, is normally the month of May. Their nest consists of nothing more than a depression in the gravel or ground. A favorite and safe nesting zone, may be the flat roofs of various buildings. The female lays two creamy buff eggs, mottled with brown, which take twenty one days to hatch. She does most of the incubation, but the male feeds her on the nest and assists with the rearing of the young. There is usually just one nesting each year. These birds have an

ingenious way of controlling the heat of the eggs on the nest. If it gets too hot on the roof or other areas of choice, the bird hover over the nest fanning the eggs with their wings.

The feeding time for these birds, can range from daylight to night time. They can often be found throughout the Upper Midwest, around creek and river bridges that are lit, as this attracts many moths and other night flying insects. It is fun on a summer night, to just watch these aerial acrobats perform, their maneuvers, at a downtown bridge.

## AUGUST RAMBLINGS

This is the month that many of us, finally get to see the Ruby Throated Hummingbirds. They start their lazy migratory drift back down South, in August. If the weather has been dry, we will have a better chance of attracting them to our yards. There would then be a shortage of nectar in the wild flowers and because we water our garden flowers we will make up for this lack. It is then easy for us to attract them to these limitless sources of nectar, we call hummingbird feeders. Keep the feeders fresh and clean. The correct formula is four parts water and one part sugar. This should be refreshed each forty eight hours. You can get by with twice a week changing for the commercial type. Put in smaller amounts and you will have less to discard, as you keep it fresh and clean.

This is also the main month of two of our late nesters, the Goldfinch and Cedar Waxwings. The proper nesting materials are now abundant and of course the food supply is limitless. Berries and weed seeds are now in great supply. The other late nester is also an early nester and that is the Mourning Dove. I personally believe they nest at least five times before folding up the chairs.

By months end, most of our tropical birds will have departed or are gathering to do so. The Orioles, Rose Breasted Grosbeaks and Tanagers are a few of those who must get an early start. These little guys weigh a scant two ounces and travel to south America for the most part.

You may be noticing, it is harder now to tell the babies from their parents. Most of our birds will be starting to molt and this brings on a short period of silence among them. They will have lost a few tail and flight feathers, which deters their normal quickness. Predators are always on the alert, so their best defense in these conditions, are silence and stealth.

With the breaking up of the family units, the territorial defense disappears as well. They have no nest or mate to defend and thus, no necessity to be aggressive to that end. Most of our birds will soon be making up what we call "loose winter flocks" and will be more tolerant of their former competitors than before.

Those bald headed birds, who were the victims of feather mites will soon look normal once again as the new feathers push into view. It would be tough, going through a Midwest winter for a bald headed bird.

We will mention once again the attraction that shallow moving water has on our visiting Song Birds. Those of you who have this going now, know what I mean.

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