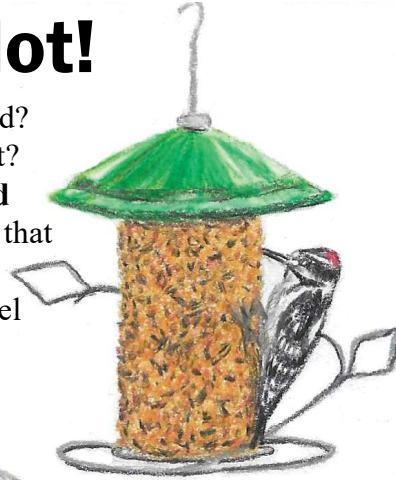


Some Like it Hot!

Tired of squirrels eating your bird food?
Do raccoons raid your feeders at night?
Consider switching to one of our **Wild Birds Unlimited** hot pepper products that include capsaicin (cap SAY ih sin).
Birds lack the capsaicin receptor to feel the painful heat of the pepper.
Mammals like squirrels and raccoons are not so lucky. One bite and they will be wiping their faces and dashing away!



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Critter Solutions

Join John Schaust and Brian Cunningham as they discuss summer critter solutions from outwitting ornery squirrels to techniques on taking the “nuisance” out of nuisance birds. This episode will go live on August 10th.



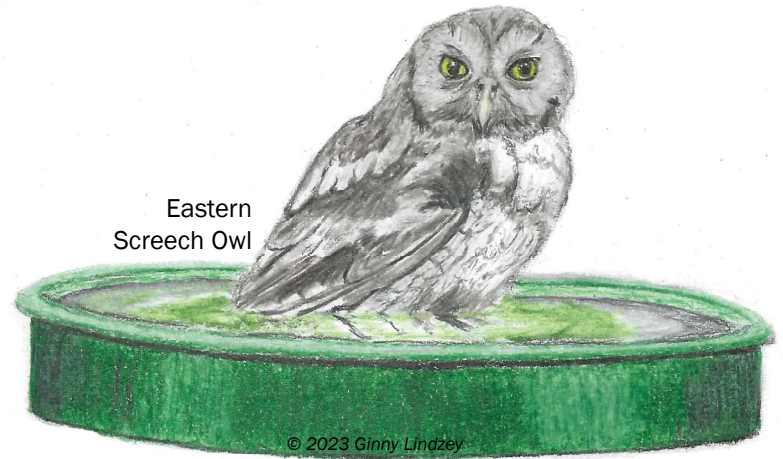
Nature Centered is a podcast from **Wild Birds Unlimited** about feeding the birds and enjoying nature right in your own backyard. Relax, enjoy the birds, and stay Nature Centered.

austinsouth.wbu.com/nature-centered-onewbu



August 2023

Keeping Cool



Eastern Screech Owl

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In this issue of Little Flyers:

- 3 How Birds Keep Cool
- 4-5 Color Me: Who's in your birdbath?
- 6 Molting & Feathers
- 7 Connect-the-Dots: Hummingbird Splash
- back Some Like it Hot
- back Nature Centered Podcast: Critter Solutions

Little Flyers & the Little Flyers Passport

This is our fifth issue of *Little Flyers*, a zine designed for kids. We provide fun information and activities on a monthly basis tailored to our seasonal focus.

Little Flyers is a unique program at the **Wild Birds Unlimited** South Austin located at 3535 Bee Caves Road in Westlake Hills. Come visit us in person or online at austinsouth.wbu.com for upcoming events, birding news, feeders, bird seed, nesting boxes, and more.

The *Little Flyers* zine is created and edited by Ginny Lindzey. If you are enjoying *Little Flyers*, let us know! You can contact Ginny at ginnylindzeywbu@gmail.com.

Upcoming Event: Merlin Bird ID

New to bird watching? Want to become better at identifying birds? Join us to learn how to use all of the features of the Merlin Bird ID app from the Cornell Lab. Whether you are a novice bird watcher or perhaps preparing for a bird watching trip to a new area, this presentation is for you.

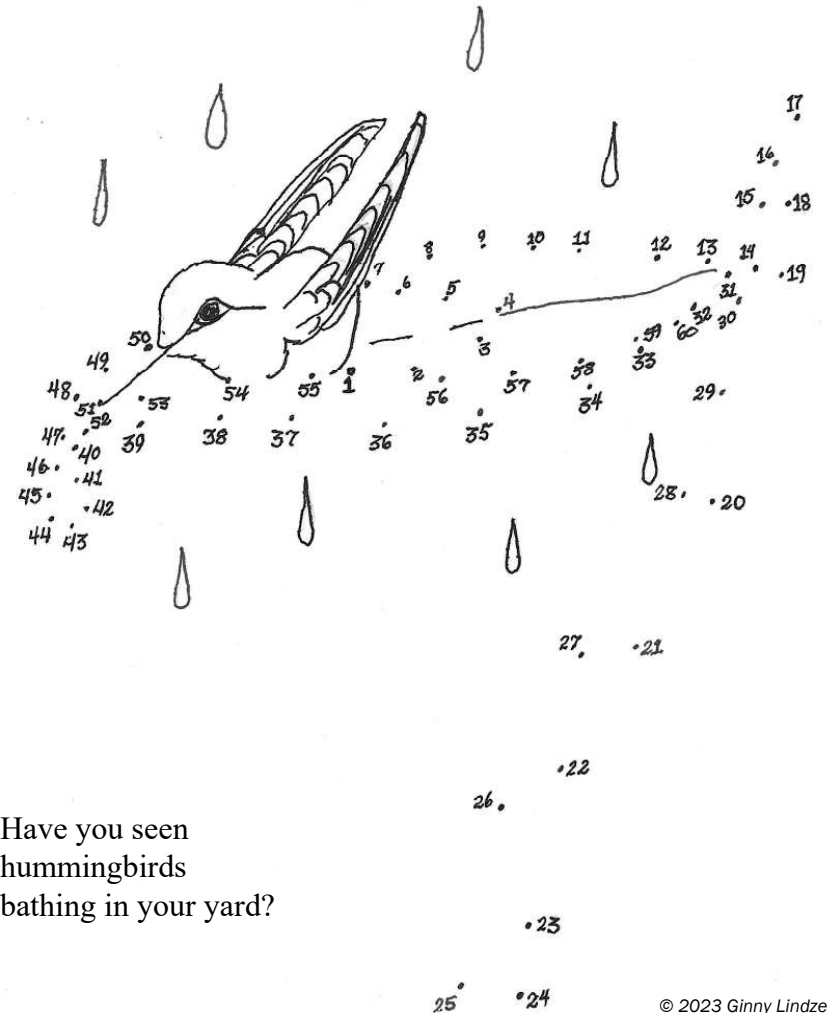
Date: Saturday, August 26

Time: 2 PM

Place: Wild Birds Unlimited at 3535 Bee Caves Road

Hummingbird Splash

While hummingbirds may visit your birdbath, they actually prefer to fly through the sprinklers or a mister to clean their feathers. Or you may find them making use of other wet surfaces, such as what is hidden here in this connect-the-dots. (*The number 1 dot is in the center near the hummingbird.*)



Have you seen
hummingbirds
bathing in your yard?

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Molting & Feathers



molting Northern Cardinal

Have you seen a bald Northern Cardinal in your yard? It's not sick or injured. It's just molting!

By this time in the Austin area, most birds are finished with parenting duties and are preparing for the winter, which may seem odd to us in this heat. But birds are losing old, worn out feathers and growing new ones. While some birds only lose a few feathers at a time, Northern Cardinals will lose all of their head feathers at once!

Have you seen any interesting feathers on the ground? It's amazing to consider that just one bird has several types of feathers which look and function differently. For instance, fluffy feathers usually help with insulation while more rigid ones with a short side and a long side are wing feathers.

It's very tempting to collect feathers that you find on the ground. Unfortunately collecting feathers in the United States is illegal under the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918*, which prohibits the possession of feathers. This law was put into place to protect birds at a time when bird numbers had plummeted due to people hunting them to use their feathers in ladies' hats and fly-fishing lures.

But that doesn't mean that it's impossible to enjoy a feather-finding hobby. Drawing feathers, like this wing feather, can be fun. Or take a photo! The iNaturalist app has a "Found Feathers" project where you can upload photos and get help with IDing them.



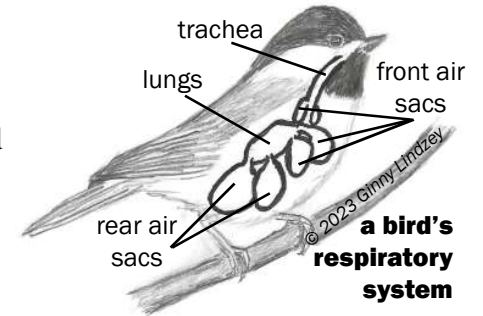
wing feather

Go to foundfeathers.org to learn more!

How Birds Keep Cool

Keeping cool in this summer heat isn't easy for birds. While splashing about in a birdbath does help them cool off, it's not enough.

Instead of sweating like we do, birds mainly lose heat through their respiratory system, consisting of lungs and a system of air sacs attached to the lungs. So not only are they breathing, they are also expelling heat.



a bird's respiratory system



House Sparrow panting

When birds get too hot, they begin to pant with their beaks open, increasing their respiratory rate to expel heat faster. Some birds will vibrate their throat membranes as well, which is called *gular fluttering*.

All of this panting does tend to dehydrate birds more quickly so it is very important to have clean, fresh water available for them to drink.

Birds can fluff up their feathers to allow excess body heat to escape. By lifting their feathers and holding their wings out, air can reach their skin and carry away some of their body heat.



Blue Jay lifting its feathers

What are your birds doing to stay cool this summer?

Who's in your birdbath?

Color me!

While we are in the hottest days of summer, you can best help birds and other critters outside by providing a birdbath with fresh, clean water for drinking and bathing. If possible, place the birdbath in a shady spot or provide shade for the birds with a beach umbrella.

