



Wake  
AUDUBON

# Common Birds of Wake County

Birds Commonly Seen Around  
Your Neighborhood

# American Robin

- Dark gray back and a brick red breast



- Song is a clear caroling of short phrases often very long in duration. Calls are a *tyeep* and *tut-tut-tut*.
- Very common bird found across the US often seen standing upright on lawns

# Eastern Tufted Titmouse



- Small gray colored bird with a tufted crest.
- Readily uses sunflower seed feeders
- Song is a clear, whistled cadence that sounds like *Peter, Peter, Peter*

# Carolina Chickadee



- Black cap with a white cheek patch and black throat
- Song says four syllable *fee-bee, fee-bay*
- Often found in mixed flocks with tufted titmouse

# Northern Mockingbird/ Gray Catbird



- Mockingbird is a slim gray bird with white wing bars
- Catbird is a slate gray bird with a black cap and chestnut vent
- Both birds can imitate other bird songs or a variety of sounds
- Catbird can mew like a cat while the mockingbird makes a tchack call



# Northern Cardinal



- An all red bird with a large crest and a black patch around a large reddish bill
- Female is similar to male except it is buff brown with some red on the wings and tail
- Varied song is a series of clear loud notes sounding like *what-cheer*, *what-cheer* or *birdy-birdy-birdy*



# Blue Jay



- Crested jay with bold white spots on the blue wings and tail and a black necklace
- Call is loud *jay* or *jeeah* and a musical *queedle, queedle*
- Moves in social groups, alerts to your presence
- Northern migrants replace the local birds during the winter.

# Eastern Bluebird



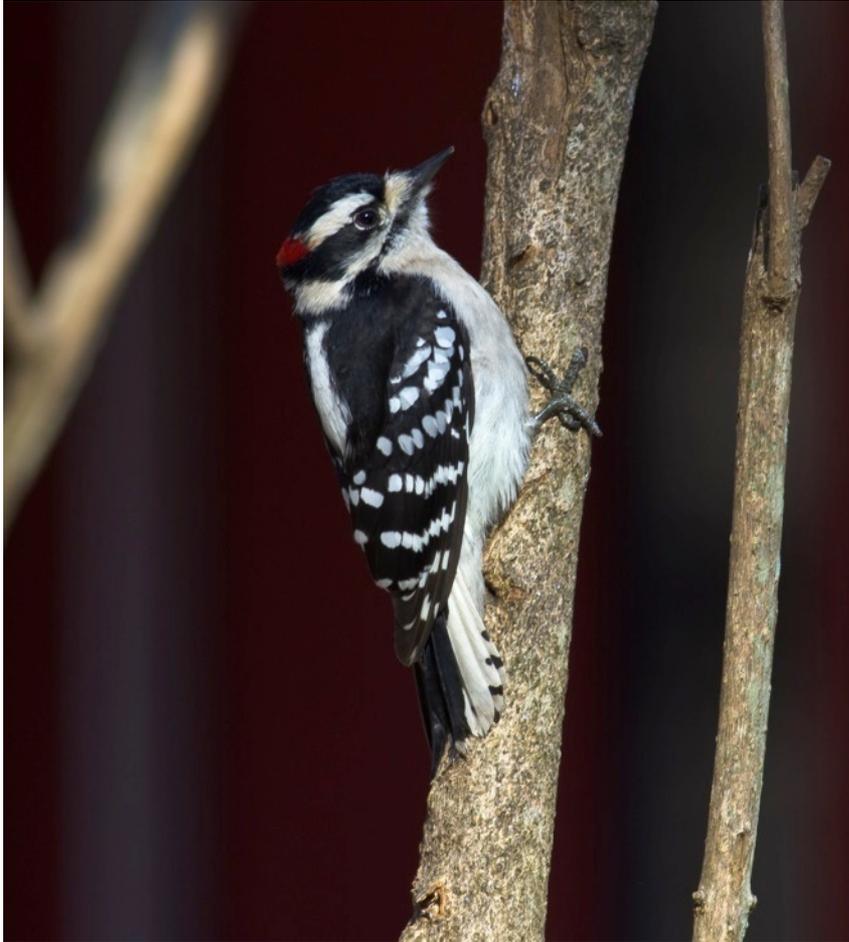
- A blue bird with rusty orange breast
- Song is 3 or 4 gurgling notes, Call is a musical *chur-wi*
- Nests readily in nest boxes.
- Can lay up to 3 clutches in a breeding season.

# Brown-headed and White-breasted Nuthatches



- White-breasted has a black cap with black eye on a white face.
- Brown-headed is smaller and has a brown cap.
- Brown-Headed sounds like a “squeaky toy”. The White-breasted has a nasal song on one pitch like *whi whi whi whi*.
- Birds feed on insects found hiding on the bark of trees.
- BHNU prefers pines, WBNU prefers hardwood species.

# Downy Woodpecker



- A small black and white woodpecker with a small sharp bill.
- Makes a *pick* call and a series of whinny notes
- Climbs trees to drill for insects by using its stiff tail feathers and gripping feet.
- Quite similar to the Hairy woodpecker which is not often found at feeders.

# Red-Bellied and Red-Headed Woodpeckers



- Red-heads are a black/white woodpecker with an entirely red head. Red-bellies have a red toupee and black/white ladder pattern back.
- Red-heads say a loud *queer, queeah*. Red-bellies call out *kwirr* or *churr*.
- Woodpeckers can absorb the pounding with built in shock absorbers.

# Northern Flicker



- Large brown backed woodpecker with a white rump patch.
- Calls loudly *wick, wick, wick*, or a loud *klee-yer*
- Will feed on ants on the ground
- Eastern birds have yellow feather shafts on the wings while western birds are red shafted.

# Red-Tailed and Red-Shouldered Hawks



- Red-shoulders are a medium sized hawk with black and white bands on the tail, red shoulders and breast. Red-tails are a larger hawk with a white front with a streaked belly band and orange-ish-red tail. Immatures look quite different.
- Red-shoulders call is two syllable *kee-yer!* Red-Tails is a raspy scream, *keeer-r-r* .
- Red-shoulders often nest in forested communities. Red-tails nest in more open county in large trees.

# Turkey and Black Vultures



- Turkey Vultures are large birds with a two tone wings seen soaring in a shallow V wings. Black Vultures are smaller with white palm patches on the wing.



- Away from the nest, vultures are generally silent with an occasional *hiss*.
- Eat dead or dying animals

# House Finch and Goldfinch



- Male House Finches are reddish with dark streaks on the sides. Male Goldfinches are bright yellow with a black cap and wing.
- House Finches have a song that often ends with a *wheer*. Goldfinches seem to say *po-ta-to-chip* when flying.
- House Finches have been introduced from SW U.S. Goldfinches molt into a dull brown olive color in the winter.



# American and Fish Crow



- American Crows are large, chunky, dark birds. Fish Crows are almost identical but are smaller and slimmer.
- American Crows call the familiar *caw, caw, caw* while the Fish Crow is more nasal *car* or *ca* or *ca-ha* (*sounds like uh-uh*).
- Crows are social birds and are very intelligent.

# Ruby Throated Hummingbird



- Male has a fiery red throat with an iridescent green back with a forked tail. Females lack the red throat and forked tail.

- Chase calls are high and squeaky.



- Hummingbirds are attracted to some flowers for nectar and will feed at sugar water feeders. Their diet includes 50% arthropods.

# Mourning Dove

- A slender dove with a brown and gray body with a long pointed tail with white on the outer tail feathers.
- Doves sing a mournful series of *coah, coo, coo, coo*.
- Mourning Doves build a crude stick nest to raise their young. Sometimes they will nest several times in a season.



# Chimney Swift



- A blackish swallow like bird. Often described as a flying cigar.
- Chimney Swifts emit a very rapid chittering call in flight.
- Chimney Swifts have adapted to roosting and nesting in open chimneys instead of large hollow trees.

# Carolina Wren and House Wren



- Carolina Wrens are a large brown wren with a white eyebrow stripe. House Wrens are a smaller gray-brown wren.
- Carolinas sing tea-kettle, tea-kettle, tea-kettle but it quite variable. House Wrens sing a long rapid gurgle of notes.
- Both birds prefer to nest in tight cavities.

# Dark Eyed Juncos



- A hooded gray and white sparrow with white outer tail feathers.
- Song is loose trill and its call is a *smack* sound.
- Fall migrants are sometimes called snow birds.

# Song & White-throated Sparrows



- The Song Sparrow is a medium sized bird with a long rounded tail with heavy breast streaks. White-Throated Sparrows have a white throat and a yellow lore.
- Song Sparrows sing a sweet sweet sweet with a musical trill. White-Throated Sparrows sounds like *Poor Sam Peabody, Peabody*
- WTSP have a tan/white and black/white forms.

# Barn and Tree Swallows



- Barn Swallows have deeply forked tail with white spots. Male tree swallows are steely blue tinged with green.
- Barn Swallows nest in mud cup nests in barns and under bridges. Tree Swallows nest in tree hollows and nest boxes.
- Swallows feed on insects on the wing.



# Eastern Kingbird



- Eastern Kingbirds have a white band across the tip of the tail.
- Their song is a series of buzzy notes like *dzee-dzee-dzee*.
- This flycatcher eats insects and seems to prefer bees

# Brown Thrasher



- Brown Thrashers are larger than a robin with bright red-brown above with heavy streaking below.
- Thrashers sing a series of paired phrases that imitate other birds. Its call is a harsh *chack!*
- Often seen flying between bushes. Eat cracked corn and suet.

# Eastern Towhee



- The male is a black backed rufous sided bird with a long tail edged in white. Female is a browner, duller version.
- Bird seems to say *Drink-Your Tea*. Call is a *gu-ee*?
- Bird is often seen scratching through the leaf litter.

# Eastern Phoebe



- A grayish sparrow sized dark headed bird without an eye ring or strong wing bars.
- Sings its name *phoe-be* or *fi-bree* over and over.
- Has a habit of tail bobbing and often nests on ledges on buildings near people.

# Pine Warbler



- The male is yellow throated with a olive green back and white wing bars. Female is less conspicuous.
- Song is a trill like the chipping sparrow but more musical.
- This warbler is a year round resident of the pine forest.

# European Starling, Common Pigeon, House Sparrow



- All three birds are exotics (introduced) and are considered pests.
- Increased competition for food and nest sites with the native bird populations
- Alternative measures to help native bird are used when possible.

# Contributing Photographers

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