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## Birds & Butterflies

# NEWSLETTER

2007-2

The response to our first Birds & Butterflies Newsletter was encouraging, and we hope you will enjoy this second edition.

If you do not want to receive the newsletter please let us know by email at [birdsbutterflies@geopolus.com](mailto:birdsbutterflies@geopolus.com).

If you know anyone else who would like to receive the newsletter please give us their email address.

### NEW BOOK AVAILABLE



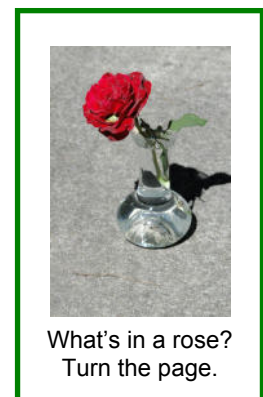
***Songbird Journeys – Four Seasons in the Lives of Migrating Birds*** by Miyoko Chu is now available at Birds & Butterflies. Ms. Chu is an ornithologist working at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Dori and I have read this book, and it is full of interesting information about bird migration. The Journal of Field Ornithology has said “This book will be of greatest interest to birders, but is also an informative good read for anyone interested in migrating birds.” The Pittsburgh Post Gazette said “*Songbird Journeys* is a fascinating introduction to bird migration.” The paperback book sells for \$13.95.

### WINTER RESIDENTS TO ARRIVE SOON

We have many songbirds that come to the Aiken area to spend the winter. Some have already arrived and others will be coming soon. Here is a list of some of the species you may see this winter:

White-throated Sparrow	Chipping Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Dark-eyed Junco	Fox Sparrow
Swainson's Thrush	Cedar Waxwing
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Hermit Thrush	

We have seen all of these species in our backyard during the past 5 years.



### SONG BIRD COFFEE



Birds & Butterflies is now selling **Song Bird Coffee**. **Song Bird Coffee** is “Shade Grown Coffee”. On most traditional coffee plantations in South and Central America, large areas are completely cleared of trees and other vegetation so the coffee can be grown in full sunlight. This requires massive amounts of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizer. These plantations provide very little habitat for the native bird species and many of our bird species that spend the winter in that area. Shade grown coffee is grown underneath the canopy of existing trees and other vegetation providing far greater habitat for birds. “Studies in Colombia and Mexico found 97% fewer bird species in sun grown coffee plantations than in shade grown plantations” (The Rainforest Alliance).

Stop by the shop and sample our **Song Bird Coffee**. It is available in several flavors and comes in both regular and decaffeinated.

## 2008 NATURE SERIES SEMINARS AND FIELD TRIPS

We are working on the 2008 schedule of seminars and field trips and should have it completed in the next couple of weeks. We appreciate your support for the 2007 Nature Series. More than 750 individuals attended the 2007 series.

## AMERICAN GOLDFINCH

The American Goldfinch is the largest native finch in the U.S. The goldfinch does not migrate to Central and South American like many bird species do. It is present in the U.S. year round. Our part of South Carolina is on the edge of the goldfinch breeding and wintering range. Most of the bird field guides show a line running through the middle of South Carolina, with year round (including breeding) range running just north and west of Aiken and winter range in the remainder of the state.

When we moved to the area 18 years ago very few goldfinches were seen here during the summer. They usually appeared in mid- to late November and stayed here until sometime in May. This is still true, but in recent years we are seeing greater numbers of goldfinches in the Aiken area during the summer, which means they are breeding here. This past September a nestling goldfinch was rescued after it left the nest prematurely. We have had numerous reports of goldfinches at Aiken feeders throughout the summer, but numbers should increase dramatically in the next couple of months. Most winters it is not unusual for us to have 25-100+ goldfinches at our feeders on a daily basis. Nyger seed and sunflower meats are their favorite food at feeders.



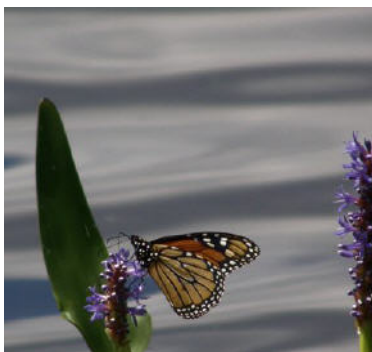
Remember, male goldfinches molt their brilliant yellow feathers during fall and the birds you see in winter will be a more drab green with black wings.

**QUESTION:** Sometimes I see fewer birds at my feeders during October, November, and early December. Am I doing something wrong?

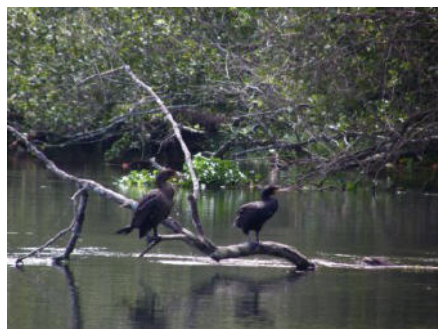
**ANSWER:** No, you are not doing anything wrong. During these months the seeds and berries of many plants and trees are maturing and become available to the birds for food. When natural food is in abundance birds will use your feeders less often.

Some years the decrease in feeding activity is more pronounced, if there is a bumper crop of seeds and berries. Other years, when seeds and berries are scarce, we do not see a decrease in feeding activity. Just continue to keep your feeders full and when the natural food is exhausted the feeding activity will increase again at your feeders.

If you would like to submit a question please email it to [birdsbutterflies@geopolus.com](mailto:birdsbutterflies@geopolus.com).



Monarch on Pickerel Weed



Cormorants on Augusta Canal

## PHOTO SECTION



**What's  
in  
a  
Rose?**

My wife and I were in the kitchen having a fairly intense conversation while she was putting some climbing roses I had cut into a vase. All of a sudden this "leaf" in amidst the petals caught my eye. Then I saw it wasn't a leaf.

Submitted by Bruce & Carolyn Hart

If you would like to submit photos for inclusion in future Birds & Butterflies Newsletters please send email them to [birdsbutterflies@geopolus.com](mailto:birdsbutterflies@geopolus.com). Please include a short description of the photo and your name. We can't promise to use all of them but we will try.