



**JUNE
2026**

What's Happening in Our Community?

**JUNE
7th**

BIRD WALK with the WBU Woodbury Team Grey Cloud Dunes Scientific & Natural Area **Meet at 8am – North end parking lot**

Our April Bird Walk at Grey Cloud Dunes was cut short due to rain, so we're going back for round two! There are dozens and dozens of migrating bird species in town now that were not around earlier in the spring, and we can expect to see many of them at this wonderful piece of habitat.

Binoculars and cameras encouraged. A limited number of Vortex brand binoculars will be available to borrow on a first-come first-served basis. **See Facebook event for more details.**

This is a FREE event and open to the public

**JUNE
13th**

ASK A MASTER GARDENER 11am – 3pm - Open House Style (*come any time!*) **In-store at WBU Woodbury**

Would you like to know which native plants and flowers help attract birds and butterflies to your yard? Are you having issues with bugs or critters messing with your garden? Are you curious which plants and flowers grow best in sunny or shady areas of your property?

Volunteers from the Washington County Master Gardener program will be on-site to answer those, or any other questions, you may have on your garden plants!

Photos of your yard/garden may be useful for the Master Gardeners to best diagnose your issue and come up with the proper solution.

This is a FREE event and open to the public

What to Watch for This Month in Nature:

- June is peak bird nesting and breeding season in Minnesota! Watch for mom and dad making quick trips to and from food sources as they bring meals back to their nestlings
- Some bird parents lead their youngsters around teaching them how to find food. You may see the parents carrying food just a few feet from your feeders to feed their offspring waiting nearby
- Recently hatched Wood Duck and Mallard ducklings out and about, following around Mom and Dad as they learn foraging and survival skills
- Bird migration finishes in June. The birds that are still here will be around to nest and raise young
- White-tailed Deer fawns continue being born through mid-June
- The first fireflies of summer flickering in our backyards
- Canada Geese begin their molting period mid-month, shedding their old wing feathers and replacing them with brand new ones. During this time, they cannot fly and are often seen hanging out near bodies of water where they can swim away to avoid predators

- **Keep your birdbaths and nectar feeders fresh and clean for your birds!** -

As temperatures continue to increase through the summer, birdbath water and hummingbird/oriole nectar can quickly spoil, causing more harm for the birds than good. The amount of bird activity, exposure to sun/weather, and tree debris falling from above can all play a factor in how often to refresh these items. Birdbath water can often need changing every 1-2 days. Nectar in feeders should be changed every 3-5 days, more frequently when temperatures are above 90 degrees.



Bird of the Month: Downy Woodpecker

The Downy Woodpecker, our June Bird of the Month, is one of North America's most numerous woodpecker species and for many of us they are the most common woodpeckers to visit our yards. They are non-migratory birds that can be found year-round across most of North America, from California to Newfoundland and Florida to Alaska, often preferring areas with deciduous (leafy) trees.

Downy Woodpeckers are cavity nesters that usually build their own nest site by excavating a hollow pocket in a dead tree or limb. The male normally chooses the location, then the male and female downy will both excavate the cavity over a 1-3 week period. No outside material is added to the nest; the cavity is lined only with woodchips left over from the building process.

Although the downy is known for constructing their own nest cavities, they do sometimes use man-made nest boxes if the entrance hole is 1.25" or larger. Since they typically custom build their nest cavity, some like to make a nest box "their own." If you find that your nest box entrance hole was suddenly chipped away and enlarged, or there is damage on the inside walls of your nest box, you may have a local downy pair looking to move in to raise their family.

In nearly all bird species, the female handles the overnight incubation duties, but not with the woodpeckers. The male will take some incubating shifts during the day to allow the female to stretch, defecate, or grab a bite to eat. Come nighttime, dad takes over primary incubating duties and gives mom a chance to rest.



Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers are very similar looking birds with nearly identical plumage, but there are a few tricks to telling them apart. Hairy Woodpeckers are quite a bit larger than the downy, especially noticeable when side by side.

Downy Woodpecker bills are about half as long as a hairy's bill, and the downy also has a few black spots on the side of their white tail feathers that the hairy does not have. The black spots are not always visible on the downy, but if the woodpecker does have the spots, it's a downy, not a hairy.

Woodpeckers can strike a tree up to 100 times per minute at speeds of 15+ mph per blow; that's about 10G's of force with every hit! That's like a marathon runner charging headfirst at a tree trunk – now imagine doing that day in and day out, all day long!

To help survive those repeated blows, woodpeckers have several amazing adaptations:

- The bones between the bill and skull are joined by a flexible cartilage to help cushion each strike
 - Their skull is made of a spongy, air-filled bone and the brain is packed very tightly into the brain cavity, leaving little room to rattle around during impacts
 - The shear force from each blow is directed downward towards their strong neck muscles that act as shock absorbers, not directed towards the brain
- And many, many more!

The main source of food for woodpeckers are insects, but they are regularly attracted to yards with feeders that offer suet, peanuts, or tree nuts. Once they find your feeders they are often some of our most loyal and consistent visitors through every season.

