

## Upcoming Events with WBU Woodbury:

**July  
12th**

### **BIRD WALK with the WBU Team**

Tamarack Nature Preserve – Woodbury, MN

**8:30am**

Meet near playground

Join us for a Bird Walk around one of the best bird habitats in Woodbury!

Binoculars and cameras encouraged. A limited number of Vortex brand binoculars will be available to borrow on a first-come first-served basis.

**Please see our Facebook event page for more details.** Facebook RSVP requested, not required.

This is a FREE event and open to the public.

**July  
26th**

### **BIRD BINGO**

In-store at WBU Woodbury

**2:00pm – 4:00pm**

Open house style, come anytime!

Join us for an afternoon of playing **Bird Bingo!** Kids are encouraged to play; all ages are welcome. Bookmarks, stickers, and other prizes will be available for participants.

Stop by the store any time between 2pm - 4pm, multiple rounds will be played throughout the afternoon.

This is a FREE event and open to the public.

## What to Watch for This Month in Nature:

- American Goldfinches, some of the last birds in Minnesota to nest each year, exclusively feed their nestlings seed matter (no bugs!) which is rare in the bird world! They wait until thistle begins to seed in July to ensure enough food supply for their young before nesting.
- Cicada males singing with their loud, continuous buzzing calls, but only when the temperature is above 72 degrees (F).
- Mallards and Wood Ducks molting into their “eclipse” plumage. Most birds molt once a year, but the Mallards and Wood Ducks molt twice! In late summer they drop many of their bold feathers in exchange for a more camouflage look, returning to their brighter plumage before next breeding season. During this eclipse molting period they will be flightless for several weeks.
- Listen for young Great Horned and Barred Owls screeching and hissing from tree limbs, begging mom and dad for food. They will continue relying on mom and dad to feed and train them on hunting until fall, when they'll venture out to find their own territory.

**July is a great time to continue providing HIGH PROTEIN food options for the birds!** Most songbirds leave (fledge) the nest with a temporary set of feathers. Soon the young birds, along with the adults, will begin growing an all-new set of feathers that must last through next summer. Feathers are made up of ~90% protein, and birds need to consume a lot of protein in their diet to grow those feathers! Healthy feathers are critical to ensure the birds can fly fast and strong, keep warm through winter, and to attract a mate next spring. Birds that consume enough protein will have brighter plumages come springtime, showing potential mates that they are strong, healthy birds that are capable in finding good food sources - an indication they will be a good provider to future offspring. **Ask us about our FeatherPro SuperBlend next time you're in-store!**

## Bird of the Month: Bald Eagle

The Bird of the Month for July, the Bald Eagle, is one of the most recognizable and beloved birds in North America. While the United States is home to a second eagle species, the Golden Eagle, we will focus on the Bald Eagle when referring to “eagles” in this writing.

The eagle has been the national emblem of the United States since 1782, but they have been a spiritual symbol for many native cultures for much longer than that. Their iconic white head and tail are easily spotted while perched or soaring overhead, but eagles don't obtain their fully white feathers until they've reached breeding age at about five years old.

The white head of an eagle can give it an appearance of being bald, but appearing bald is not the reason for the name. In the Middle English times (500+ years ago) the word “*ballede*” was synonymous with “white,” not hairless.

Until eagles are old enough to breed they spend the first several years of life in nomadic fashion, sometimes flying hundreds of miles a day exploring and looking for food.

An eagle's diet consists of about 90% fish, but they are also known to eat a wide variety of other foods such as rabbits, reptiles, and other birds. Eagles are also known to steal meals from other eagles, Ospreys, and other predators, as well as feasting on roadkill and carrion. Eagles can be susceptible to vehicle collisions for this reason.



Adult Bald Eagles are generally non-migratory birds, although that does vary by region and based on the availability of food, not just cold weather. Most Bald Eagles here in Minnesota will leave their territory as lakes and rivers begin to freeze, generally migrating only as far as necessary to find open water for catching fish. They typically return to their nesting territory around January.

Some eagles will temporarily move south, but hundreds will flock along the river valley between Red Wing and Wabasha where there are often stretches of open water year-round.

The Bald Eagle is a wonderful example of a conservation success story. Once abundant across North America, their numbers plummeted from an estimated 100,000 nesting pairs in 1782 down to just over 400 pairs in the lower 48 states by the mid-1900s, in large part due to DDT (pesticide) poisoning that caused reproductive failures. The banning of DDT in the United States (1972), the introduction of the Endangered Species Act (1973), along with other conservation efforts has led to a major rebound in their numbers.

Some recent estimates put their total population at well over 300,000 individuals, a strong sign that the Bald Eagle will be around to inspire us for generations to come.

**Approx. (3) year  
old Bald Eagle**



Eagles build massive nests, some of the largest in the bird world, out of sticks and moss and return to the same nest each year. Some eagle pairs will reuse the same nest for decades, adding new material each spring with some established nests weighing over a metric ton!

Eagles are known to “pair bond” with a mate and continue breeding with them year after year, but their bond is more to the territory and nest itself, rather than their actual mate. Some pairs will mate together for life, but they may split up should their breeding efforts be unsuccessful.