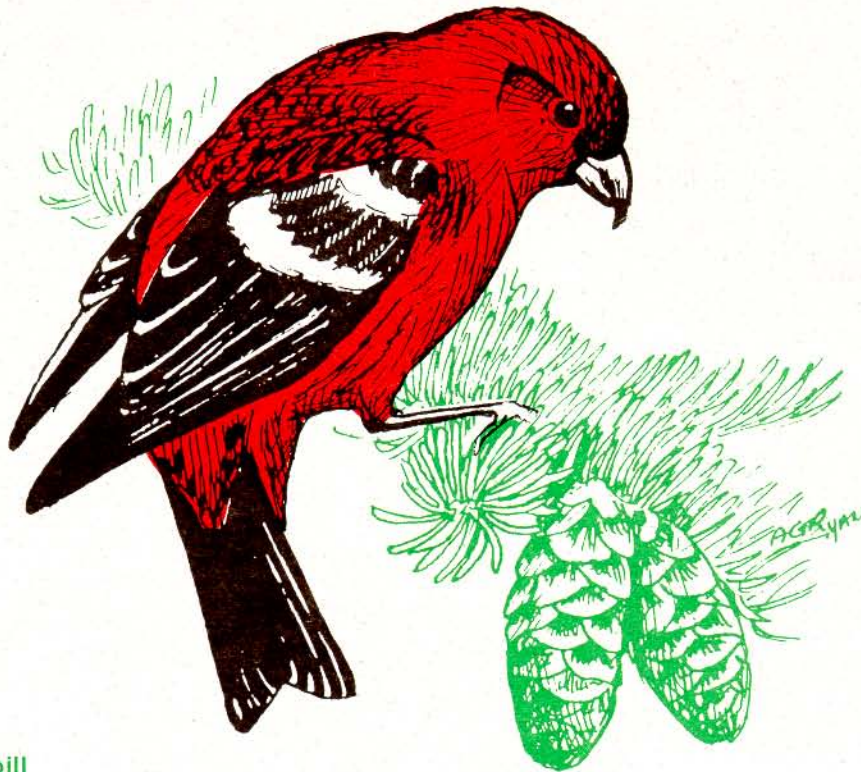


Our Feathered Friends



White-winged Crossbill

The Woodland Birds of Provincial Parks and Reserves

DID YOU KNOW?

That to many birders, the melodic call of a Fox Sparrow is the first sign of spring. These foxy-red birds migrate in large numbers to nest in Newfoundland. Since Fox Sparrows are not nearly so common in southern Canada, their abundance in Newfoundland often fascinates visiting birders.

That the Bald Eagle is not really bald. Its feathers are quite heavy - they make up 1/6th of its total weight!

Woodland birds make their homes in parklands across Newfoundland and Labrador. From small day-use parks, to large wilderness reserves, protected areas provide important habitat for birds and other wild creatures.

Parks and reserves offer wonderful opportunities for birdwatching. A summer symphony of bird song will greet you as you awaken in a campground, walk along woodland trails or canoe around a pond. Flitting from tree to tree, the birds will fascinate you with their beauty. Come visit a provincial park and experience the natural wonders of our birdlife.

The White-winged Crossbill

The White-winged Crossbill is the symbol identifying park interpreters. This locally common woodland bird lives and breeds in coniferous forests across north-central Labrador and insular Newfoundland. Crossbills are quite tame. When they are close, you can see the distinctive crossed bill used for prying seeds out of cones. From a distance, the bird is best identified by broad white wing bars. In addition, the adult male is a pinkish colour.

Birds in Danger

DID YOU KNOW?

That the Harlequin Duck and the Piping Plover are two birds found in this province which are endangered in Canada (they are at risk of being eliminated throughout all or part of their range due to human activity). Recovery teams have been established in an attempt to prevent the loss of these two species from their Canadian range.



Blackpoll Warbler

Habitat is Where It's At

That the "northern penguin", or Great Auk has been extinct since 1844. The largest colony of these birds was on the Funk Islands, off the coast of north-eastern Newfoundland. They were hunted for their flesh, fat and feathers.

That we know very little about the Labrador Duck, a bird which was extinct by 1878. It may have become extinct because its eggs were collected for food and its feathers for the fashion industry.

All animals, including humans, need a home. An animal's home is usually outdoors and is called its habitat. The habitat must provide the animal with food, water, shelter and a place to live. Different animals need different kinds of food, water, shelter and different amounts of space.

Most birds share their habitats with many other species. To live side by side, they must use different parts of the habitat. For example, a single spruce tree, may provide food for five kinds of wood warbler, each searching for insects in a different part of the tree. While many birds, such as robins, build nests on the limbs of trees and shrubs, others like chickadees nest in tree cavities. Woodpeckers need woodland with lots of dead trees in which to probe for insects and excavate their nesting cavities.

The populations of many birds, particularly songbirds, seabirds and birds of prey are in decline. Of the main threats to birdlife, habitat destruction is by far the most significant.

Principle Threats to Birdlife	
Habitat destruction	60%
Hunting	29%
Competition from introduced species	20%
International trade in rare birds	9%
Pollution	4%
Wetland drainage	4%
Fishery by-catch	1%

Because birds migrate across international boundaries, they are susceptible to these threats in their summer and winter habitats. Provincial parks and reserves protect important bird habitat in Newfoundland, but the felling of tropical and temperate forests, and the continued use of dangerous pesticides in developing countries, has significantly reduced the populations of many songbirds. Birds such as the White-throated Sparrow, Blackpoll Warbler, Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrushes, American Redstart and Northern Waterthrush, though presently common in the woods of this province, are known to be in decline across North America - evidence of why we must think and act globally as well as locally.



American Redstart

Some Common "Woodland" Birds of Provincial Parks and Reserves

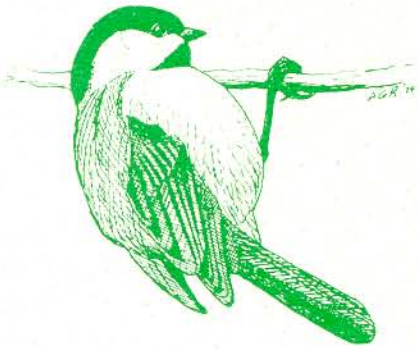
The following birds are likely to be seen or heard daily in the appropriate season.

Ruffed Grouse
Downy Woodpecker
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
American Crow
Boreal Chickadee
Gray-cheeked Thrush
American Robin
Magnolia Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Mourning Warbler
Lincoln's Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Purple Finch

Common Snipe
Hairy Woodpecker
Tree Swallow
Common Raven
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Swainson's Thrush
Tennessee Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
Wilson's Warbler
Swamp Sparrow
Rusty Blackbird
Common Redpoll

Belted Kingfisher
Northern Flicker
Gray Jay
Black-capped Chickadee
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Hermit Thrush
Yellow Warbler
American Redstart
Northern Waterthrush
Fox Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
Pine Grosbeak

Beneficial Birds



**Black-capped
Chickadee**

DID YOU KNOW ?

That most birds have an oil gland at the base of the tail which they use to preen their feathers and keep them supple and waterproof. Birds such as herons do not have an oil gland but produce a "powder puff" which they use to groom their feathers. A special "comb" on one of their claws removes any clogged powder.

Our feathered friends help us in many ways;

Many birds naturally control pests. Insect-eating birds, such as warblers and flycatchers, regulate many of the insect pests which eat our crops, strip our forests and irritate us with their bites. Pesky rodents are kept in check by owls and hawks, and weed seeds are the favourite foods of birds such as sparrows.

Many tourists come to Newfoundland and Labrador to see our globally significant seabird colonies and abundant birds of prey. Tourism is the province's fourth largest industry and contributes some \$600,000,000 to the economy.

Birds are important indicators of environmental health; just like the miner's canary, which was once used to indicate unsafe gas levels, birds are often the first victims of the abuse of toxins such as pesticides. In the 1960's, the widespread death of songbirds and the failure of birds of prey to breed successfully was traced to the use of DDT, an insecticide now banned in Canada.

Birds have long played an important role in cultures around the globe, and are used as symbols of peace, power and beauty. Many societies depend on birds for food; Newfoundlanders' traditional use of seabirds is reflected in the terms of confederation with Canada. A special clause permits us to hunt seabirds. Bird faeces, or guano, is a rich fertilizer which is harvested in some parts of the world.

The presence and beauty of birds contributes to our sense of well being, and, for many people, birdwatching is an absorbing and rewarding hobby.

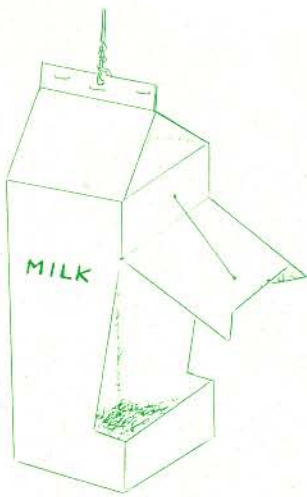


Fox Sparrow

What You Can Do

For the Birds!

Many seed-eating woodland birds overwinter in this province. You can feed them to help them survive. A simple seed feeder can be made out of a 2 litre milk carton. Draw the opening with a pen and then cut it. Tie the roof open with a piece of string attached to paper clips. Make some small holes in the bottom of the carton for drainage and reseal the carton with a stapler. Use wire to hook through the top of the feeder and to hang it on a tree. A fat feeder can be made by simply tying suet into an old onion bag and hanging it from a tree. Make sure you hang your feeders away from the reach of neighbourhood cats. Once you begin to feed birds, you must feed them regularly throughout the winter because they become dependent on the food you provide.



DID YOU KNOW?

That avid birdwatchers are sometimes called twitchers because they get so excited about seeing rare birds. Birdwatching is an exciting, rewarding and inexpensive hobby. All you need is a pair of binoculars, a notebook and a pocket reference book such as the Peterson or Golden Fieldguides.



Common Flicker

DID YOU KNOW?

That dawn and dusk are the best times to see birds.

That birds are more active in the breeding season (spring) than in nesting season (summer). Some are more active again in autumn as they prepare to migrate.

Different birds prefer different foods -

Birds	Favourite Foods
Blue Jay, woodpeckers, Red-breasted Nuthatch, kinglets, chickadees.	Suet
Finches, chickadees, Blue Jay, nuthatch, grosbeaks, junco.	Sunflower seeds. Greasy crumbs.
Purple Finch, Junco, sparrows, jays, chickadees. Hermit thrush, finches, Snow Bunting, Horned Lark, Pine Siskin, Pine Grosbeak, sparrows, junco. Ruffed Grouse.	Small mixed seeds. Large seeds (wheat, corn etc).
Grosbeaks, nuthatch, woodpeckers, chickadees, jays, finches, sparrows, redpolls.	Peanut butter

It's Up to Us!

We share our environment with birds and all other living things. It is up to us to care for it. Learn what you can do to help, such as:

Garden naturally, avoiding pesticides.

Reduce, re-use and recycle

Join a conservation/environmental organisation.

Let your elected representatives know you care about endangered species and the environment!

For further information about birds contact;

Parks and Natural Areas, Dept. of Tourism, Culture & Recreation, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NF, A1B 4J6. Tel. (709) 729-2424.

Wildlife Division, Dept. of Forest Resources & Agrifoods, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NF, A1B 4J6. Tel. (709) 729-2817.

Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada, P.O. Box 21276, St. John's, NF, A1A 5B2. Tel. (709) 772-5585.

Natural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, P.O. Box 1013, St. John's, NF, A1C 5M3. For sightings, contact Bruce MacTavish at (709) 722-0088.

