

# BIRD TRACKS

Published for the Customers of Wild Birds Unlimited in Etobicoke Winter 2012

**Birdfood on Sale Now thru Feb 29<sup>th</sup>**

## Birding in the City - Ducks along the Lakeshore



American Coot



Redhead



American Black Duck



Common Goldeneye



Hooded Merganser



Red-breasted Merganser

Our birding hikes are generally focused on forest, field and meadow but this time I thought a focused look at the local lakeshore would make for an interesting change of pace. The winter months do bring us some seasonal water based visitors which we will not typically see any other time of the year, and you can also see some surprises. On one of the few nice brisk winter mornings in January I went looking for ducks.

I started at one of our favourite local birding haunts, Colonel Samuel Smith Park (located at the end of Kipling Avenue). Starting from the east end of the free or most southerly parking lot I walked east past the frozen pond to the eastern shoreline of the park. In the small bay between Sam Smith and Rotary Park was a large sord of Mallard ducks (in flight called a flock but on the ground a sord). As I watched it became clear there was at least one different duck, although not a duck, an American Coot which is a member of the rail family. Not a common sighting in the winter months for our area.

As I continued my walk along the east shoreline there were quite a few female Bufflehead and Long-tailed Ducks but I did not see the males.

I cut across the park to the bay where the Lakeshore Yacht Club is located but I remained on the south side of the bay. This quiet bay was a good source of activity.

I located one Redhead duck but there were many American Black Ducks, Red-breasted Mergansers and Buffleheads. Out of this group the American Black and Redhead duck are here all

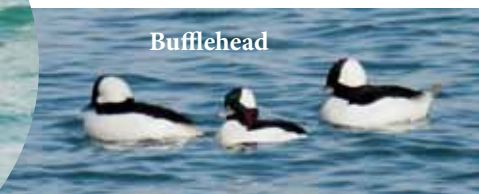
year round. The Merganser and Bufflehead are typically only here in the winter months. As I was in the area of the yacht club I took a quick look for the semi-regular Snowy Owl but no luck.

I continued my hike by driving a little further west along Lake Shore Blvd. to Marie Curtis park. I entered the park off of 42nd street, or you can drive a little further and enter directly into the park. I walked from the parking lot and followed Etobicoke Creek towards the lake. The creek had lots of little ice flows moving with the waves and in amongst the ice was a Common Goldeneye. This duck is another winter only visitor. A very short walk takes you right to the lake. Out in the lake roaming around the mouth of the creek was a Hooded Merganser. This pretty little duck is another year round resident.

Leaving Marie Curtis I decided to head back east although there are many other potential lakeshore locations further west. I retraced my trip along Lake Shore Blvd. and went to Humber West and East. These two parks are located at the foot of Park Lawn Road and are split by Mimico Creek.

I didn't stay long in Humber Bay West but at Humber Bay East there are some small ponds that allow some better close-up views of the ducks. I did get some good close views of Long-tailed Ducks and groups of Buffleheads. The Long-tailed Ducks are winter migrants from the far north where they nest.

Continuing a little further east you can stop at Humber Bay Shores. A great spring/summer/fall location for viewing butterflies, the Humber Bay Butterfly Habitat is in this park. In the winter you can see many species of ducks along the shore line. There were many Long-tailed Ducks, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye and Mergansers in the area. Dress warm and enjoy the ducks of the Toronto lakeshore.



Bufflehead



Happy Birding!

Long-tailed Duck

## The Backyard Birding Presentation Series

We will be presenting monthly talks on the various aspects of backyard bird feeding, local bird watching and any upcoming special nature related activities. The talks will be free and will take place in our store after hours. The presentations will generally start at 7:00 p.m. and take place mid-month.

The nights event will be approximately a total of two hours in duration. The two hours will include a visual presentation on the topic, a chance for questions and answers and an opportunity to shop with exclusive attendee only specials.

Topics will include: Creating the Four Elements of a Backyard Habitat, The Bird The Feeder The Food, Binocular Basics, Local Bird Hikes, Project Feeder Watch, Bird Identification and many others.

The topic of the month will be communicated through

in-store signs, email, posted on our facebook page and on our website ([www.toronto.wbu.com](http://www.toronto.wbu.com)). You can sign up to attend one these free presentations in store, send us an email ([wildbirdsunlimited@rogers.com](mailto:wildbirdsunlimited@rogers.com)) or call us at the store (416-233-3558).

To kick off this new and exciting series of talks we will be presenting how to offer "High Energy Foods for Winter".

Creemore Bird Friendly coffee and light snacks will be available free of charge. We hope to see you at our first

## High Energy Foods for Winter

**When:** Thursday, February 16, 2012

**Where:** Wild Birds Unlimited in Toronto

**Time:** 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Sign-up:** email - [wildbirdsunlimited@rogers.com](mailto:wildbirdsunlimited@rogers.com)

call - 416-233-3558

## The Great Backyard Bird Count - [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)

Wild Birds Unlimited is a major sponsor of the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). It has been one of the mainstays of the citizen science programs for the past fifteen years. Locally administered by Birds Studies Canada and in the United States it is jointly administered by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Audubon society. The information gathered by citizen scientists during the GBBC is very important because "Bird populations are dynamic; they are constantly in flux. No single scientist or team of scientists could hope to document the complex distribution and movements of so many species in such a short time."

The GBBC is "an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds."

Wild Birds Unlimited in Toronto will be sponsoring a GBBC count on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. We will be using a Traveling Count, this is a count based on a birding hike.

We invite you, your family and/or friends to join us for these fun and participative hikes where we will all count the birds. A Wild Birds Unlimited representative will record and then later submit the observations.

As a bonus for any of you shutterbugs there is photo contest sponsored by the GBBC with prizes in six different categories. Photos must be taken during a count. You are welcome to bring your cameras. All students of any age will receive a

certificate of participation ready for framing.

### GBBC Schedule

All counts start at 9:00 a.m. and will last approximately two hours.

#### Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> - Lambton Woods

Meet in the James Gardens parking lot

Directions: parking lot is located off of Edenbridge, south of Eglinton, west of Scarlett Road, north of St Clair

#### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> - Humber Arboretum

Meet in Humber College parking lot #1

Directions: enter the college through entrance A or E off of Humber College Blvd, located south of Finch Avenue West, west of Hwy 27, follow the road to the back of the college.

Don't forget your binoculars and dress for the weather. Lynda and I hope to see you there!

**GBBC Special**  
**Tilley hats and**  
**socks will be on**  
**sale for 25% off**  
**now until**  
**February 19<sup>th</sup>.**

(in stock merchandise only)

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT



**FEBRUARY 17 - 20**

Your Counts Help Us Answer Many Questions.

For more information, visit [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)

# Bird Food Sale!

Now thru Feb. 29<sup>th</sup>

## Wild Birds Unlimited Blends

*The best quality seed blends in Ontario*

*Formulated for the birds of the Eastern Region*

### WBU Deluxe Blend

Black Oil Sunflower, white millet, safflower, striped sunflower

40lb \$40.01 DSC \$38.01 20lb \$22.61 DSC \$21.48

Our most popular all purpose blend

### WBU Supreme Blend

Black Oil Sunflower, safflower, sunflower chips, striped sunflower

40lb \$47.84 DSC \$45.45 20lb \$26.09 DSC \$24.79

Our best blend for tube feeders

### WBU No Mess Blend

Hulled sunflower, hulled millet, roasted peanut halves

40lb \$70.46 DSC \$66.94 20lb \$36.97 DSC \$35.12

No shells guarantee a neat lawn and garden

### WBU Choice Blend

Oil & striped sunflower, safflower, peanut halves, sunflower chips

40lb \$55.67 DSC \$52.89 20lb \$30.44 DSC \$28.92

Our Supreme blend with roasted peanut halves added

### WBU Select Blend

White millet, cracked corn, black oil sunflower

40lb \$29.57 DSC \$28.09 20lb \$16.52 DSC \$15.70

Best blend for ground feeding

## Mix And Match Specialty Bird Food Sale

Purchase four of our specialty bird food items at regular price and get the fifth one free!

DSC members receive 15% off regular prices.

(Lowest value item is free)

Specialty food items include: suet cakes, seed cylinders, stackables, bark butter tubes, suet bits, mealworms and more.



**Bird seed** - all blends, seed types all bag sizes - 13% off our regular price  
**DSC members receive an additional 5% off the sale price.**

(Prices listed below reflect our sale discount of 13% and the additional DSC discount of 5%)

## Popular Seed Types

*Premium quality*

### Premium Black Oil Sunflower Seed

Double cleaned and 99% dust free

44lb \$33.05 DSC \$31.40 22lb \$18.26 DSC \$17.35

The basic seed for all songbirds

### Nyjer Seed

50lb \$60.89 DSC \$57.85 20lb \$29.57 DSC \$28.09

The American Goldfinch favourite

### Safflower Seed

50lb \$50.45 DSC \$47.93 20lb \$23.92 DSC \$22.72

Squirrels, Starlings & Grackles do not eat safflower

### Medium Hulled Sunflower Chip

50lb \$85.25 DSC \$80.99 20lb \$40.88 DSC \$38.84

The neat alternative to nyjer seed

### White Millet

44lb \$21.74 DSC \$20.65 22lb \$13.04 DSC \$12.39

A ground feeding birds favourite

### Roasted No Shell Peanut Halves

Always offer roasted peanuts to your birds versus raw

44lb \$61.76 DSC \$58.67

Woodpecker's, chickadee's & nuthatches love peanuts

### Roasted In Shell Peanuts

50lb \$86.99 DSC \$82.64 25lb \$45.24 DSC \$42.98

The blue jay favourite

### Cracked Corn

44lb \$20.87 DSC \$19.83 22lb \$11.30 DSC \$10.74

Great for waterfowl, game birds & deer

### Whole Corn

44lb \$21.74 DSC \$20.65 22lb \$12.17 DSC \$11.56

Great for waterfowl, game birds & deer

### Multifinch Seed Blend

Nyjer, white millet, red millet, canary seed

44lb \$41.75 DSC \$39.66

Great for finch feeders





# BIRDFOOD SALE

**Contact us:**

Call - 416-233-3558;

Email - [wildbirdsunlimited@rogers.com](mailto:wildbirdsunlimited@rogers.com)

Website - [www.toronto.wbu.com](http://www.toronto.wbu.com)

**Location:**

4 lights east of the 427, west of Kipling;

NE corner of Dundas & Shaver

**Hours:**

Mon to Fri 10-6; Sat 10-5; Sun 12-4

**Bird Food on SALE!**

**Bird seed save 13%**

**Ask us how to save an additional 5%!**

**Mix & Match Specialty Foods**

**Buy 4 & get the 5<sup>th</sup> free!**

## Photography Workshops

**Presented by Max Skwarna**

**Sponsored by Wild Birds Unlimited**

In 2011 we sponsored birding photography workshops facilitated by Max Skwarna owner of Ashley and Crippen Studios. Now in 2012 Max is taking his unique hands on approach to teaching photography to the next level. The workshops are now better than ever.

The workshops are now limited to a maximum of six photographers. This guarantees you get one on one attention.

Each workshop starts with a review of the correct camera settings, camera techniques, understanding backgrounds and composition, natural versus artificial lighting and much more. During the actual photographing of the birds, Max will review your pictures for composition, camera angle, lighting, etc. and provide immediate feedback.

Max is one of the most sought after photographers in Toronto and with more than forty plus years of experience his knowledge and teaching skills are unsurpassed.

As workshops are developed the subject, date, time and cost will be posted on Max's website, [www.maxskwarna.com](http://www.maxskwarna.com) or you can link to the workshops through our website, [www.toronto.wbu.com](http://www.toronto.wbu.com). We will also send email updates regarding workshops. The workshops do fill up quickly so if you find one you like sign up quickly to avoid disappointment.

## DAILY savings CLUB<sup>®</sup>

Ask us about  
this great  
new club!

**FREE gift for joining**

**15% off regular,  
every day bird and  
wildlife food prices**

**5% off sale prices of  
bird and wildlife food**

**\$10 Bird  
Buck for every  
\$200 dollars  
you spend**

**Club-member-  
only specials**

**Annual Fee of \$25**

### Frequent Seed Rewards

February 29<sup>th</sup> is the last day that previously accumulated frequent seed rewards can be used. After February 29<sup>th</sup> any outstanding balance will not be available.