

Birding in the City - Rouge Park



Local interesting summer bird hike locations are often the hardest to discover. The Summer is not one of the prime times for birding but if you go out with intent to bird but have the flexibility to just go for an enjoyable nature hike then you won't go wrong.

Lynda and I were discussing possible birding hikes when we saw a magazine article referring to the Rouge Park as Canada's first officially designated national urban park. We thought a bird hike into the "premier urban wilderness park" would be the perfect summer hiking experience.

The Rouge Park is in the area of the Toronto Zoo. Taking the 401E to Meadowvale, it took us about forty-five minutes. Prior to our trip we checked out the very informative park website, www.rougepark.com, to get trail information and maps.

There are eight existing trails ranging from 250 metres to 5.5 km and more trails are on the way. The trails take you through various habitats including forest, meadow, marsh, lake and numerous creeks and rivers including the Rouge and Twyn Rivers provide additional habitat areas. Lynda and I sampled parts of the Cedar, Orchard, Glen Eagles Vista, Woodland and Rouge Beach Trail.

The trail portions we walked were all easy hiking, these are not difficult trails. The trails are adequately marked with white blazes indicating the main trail and turns but we would have preferred a few more indicators. A few times the trail direction was questionable, this is probably due to people familiar with the area creating a few shortcuts.

As we expected the birding was a little slow. We did see some of the summer basics: King-

birds, Goldfinch, Cedar Waxwing, Cardinals, Black-capped Chickadees, Least Flycatcher and a lot of Robins. It wasn't until we went to the Rouge Beach Marsh that we saw something a little different. There was a large colony of Cliff Swallows nesting under a bridge. We also saw the odd Bank Swallow.

This hike was definitely more about the other intriguing aspects of nature. The insects, spiders and flowers. I quite liked this aspect of the hike but Lynda was not quite as thrilled. Creepy crawly things are not her favourite.

We did find the Orchard Trail was the best for the insects where parts of the trail (a side trail? - that trail blazing issue) paralleled the Little Rouge Creek. I could have spent my day photographing insects and spiders in this area (I wish I had brought my macro lens, but I was hiking with only my 100-400mm telephoto) but Lynda, who enjoyed the buzzing dragonflies and damselflies, was not quite as enthusiastic about the spiders. The insect, spider and flower photos were mainly taken in this area.

The Orchard, Cedar and Glen Eagles Trails are located in the middle of the Woodland Trail and Rouge Beach Trails so a little bit of driving is required to check out these various trails. Other than the hike itself there is another really good reason to travel up to the Woodland Trail, you pass right by Whittamore's Farm, www.whittamoresfarm.com. We stopped in at the Farm Shop to check out what was available. Strawberries were in season and we picked up a large container and we treated ourselves to a strawberry-rhubarb crumble and raspberry coconut tarts. The strawberries and the baked goods were excellent. Now that we have found Whittamore's we will definitely return.

Overall it is a great area to hike right in the city and not too far from the west end of the GTA.

Happy Birding! or Happy Entomology hike!





Photos

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American Goldfinch, Eastern Kingbird, Bee-like Flower Scarab, Field bindweed, Widow Skimmer (dragonfly, female), Widow Skimmer (dragonfly, male), Flower Crab Spider, Jack-in-the-pulpit, Six-spotted Tiger Beetle, Mourning Cloak caterpillars

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Ebony Jewelwing (damselfly, male), Spiderwort, Question Mark butterfly, Common Eastern Bumblebee, Flower Crab Spider with June Beetle, Paper Wasp, Cliff Swallow, Bank Swallow

Amazon Lights - Stopping mosquitoes and helping people



Please note: due to availability some items may not be available until mid-July.

The mild winter and now the hot ending to spring has given mosquitoes a chance to get an early start on producing lots of offspring. Luckily we put in an early order for a summer supply of Amazon Lights products.

The Amazon Lights line of products are not new to our store but the inventory has been a little harder to come by in the past couple of years due to the products increasing popularity. The Amazon Lights product line is an excellent all natural mosquito repellent.

A blend of the aromatic essential oils of Brazilian andiroba with citronella, rosemary and

thyme make Amazon Lights a premium outdoor product. The secret to the success of these products is the andiroba oil and the ten percent essential oils used in the product versus the typical 2% used by many other products.

Lynda and I have used the Amazon Lights products on our camping trips to allow us to sit outside in the evening to enjoy the night sky, a nice fire or a game of crib and whenever the mosquitoes made their presence known we used an Amazon Lights product to continue our enjoyment free from the swatting at biting pesky mosquitoes.

We are also happy to sell these products because it is another product that is natural, sustainable and supports local community trade.

Amazon Lights is available as a 28 hour burning candle, a tube of twelve incense sticks that burn for a total of 30 hours or a can of fifty incense cones that burn for a total of about 21 hours. These products retail for **\$16.99**. New this year a set of three mini candles. Each mini candle burns for 13 hours and the set retails for **\$24.99**. For more info check out their website - www.amazonlights.com.



Summer Bird Seed Sale - July 1st to July 31st

Nyjer - No Mess Blend - Sunflower Chip - Safflower

20% off Nyjer

Bag Size (lb)	Regular Price	Sale Price @ 20% off	DSC @ additional 5% off
50	\$69.99	\$55.99	\$53.19
20	\$33.99	\$27.19	\$25.83
10	\$18.49	\$14.79	\$14.05
5	\$9.49	\$7.59	\$7.21

15% off No Mess Blend & Sunflower Chip

No Mess	Regular Price	Sale Price @ 15% off	DSC @ additional 5% off	Sunflower Chip	Regular Price	Sale Price @ 15% off	DSC @ additional 5% off
Bag Size (lb)				Bag Size (lb)			
40	\$80.99	\$68.84	\$65.40	50	\$97.99	\$83.29	\$79.13
20	\$42.49	\$36.12	\$34.31	20	\$46.99	\$39.94	\$37.94
10	\$26.99	\$22.94	\$21.79	10	\$28.99	\$24.64	\$23.41
6	\$17.49	\$14.87	\$14.12	5	\$14.99	\$12.74	\$12.10

15% off Safflower

Bag Size (lb)	Regular Price	Sale Price @ 15% off	DSC @ additional 5% off
50	\$57.99	\$49.29	\$46.83
20	\$27.49	\$23.37	\$22.20
10	\$14.99	\$12.74	\$12.10
5	\$8.99	\$7.64	\$7.26

Specialty Bird Foods - buy 4 and get a 5th one free

Includes suet, seed cylinders, stackables, bark butter, meal worms and Jim's Birdacious products.
(lowest cost item is free)

Goldfinch - backyard gold

- Because goldfinches are known to be picky eaters, there are several important things to remember:
- Keep seed fresh and dry inside the tube. Shake the tube periodically to make sure that the seed inside the tube feeder is dry. Make sure the seed does not stay in the feeder uneaten for more than a month (two-four weeks in wet climates).
- Place your tube feeder away from the feeders where larger birds are feeding. This allows the smaller birds access to the finch feeder without being harassed by larger birds.
- It is not recommended to put a tray on the finch feeder, unless placing it over a porch, deck or flower area. A tray allows larger birds easier access to the feeder and can intimidate the smaller birds.
- New feeders sometimes take a while to attract goldfinches. It may take birds a while to get used to a new feeder, even if you have previously fed the birds.
- You may notice that birds are waiting to get on the feeder. Add a separate perch to your bird feeding setup to get a better view of these patiently waiting birds.
- Because goldfinches move around often, there may be quiet times at the finch feeders. Watch for goldfinches on your seeding flowers and plants later in the year. At these times you may notice less activity on your feeders which is perfectly natural. Be patient.



No Mess Blend and Sunflower Chip

Why buy seed without Shells?

You love watching your birds, you love the constant activity and bird song in your yard but you and/or your partner don't love the mess under your feeders. The shells keep piling up, one more job on the list to do and what happened to my grass - It's gone!

There is a solution. Seed without shells. Shells are acidic and over time the shells decompose and leach into the soil, causing a lower pH. This causes your

grass and some garden plants to die.

No Mess Blend is a regionally formulated blend of bird seed without shells. A blend of hulled sunflower, no shell roasted peanuts and hulled white millet. Sunflower Chip is a great alternative. Just sunflower without the shells.

No shells equals a beautiful lawn while enjoying your birds.



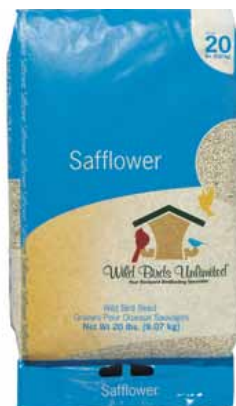
Safflower

The problem solver

If squirrels, Grackles and Starlings are interfering with your bird feeding enjoyment, then safflower might be the answer.

Squirrels, Grackles and Starlings do not eat safflower but our other songbirds will eat this healthy natural nutritious seed. No need to buy new feeders, no need to use or add harmful capsaicin treated products. All you need is patience.

Safflower is the healthy safe alternative for you and your birds.



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Follow us on [facebook](#) - Wild Birds Unlimited in Toronto

Location Information:

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