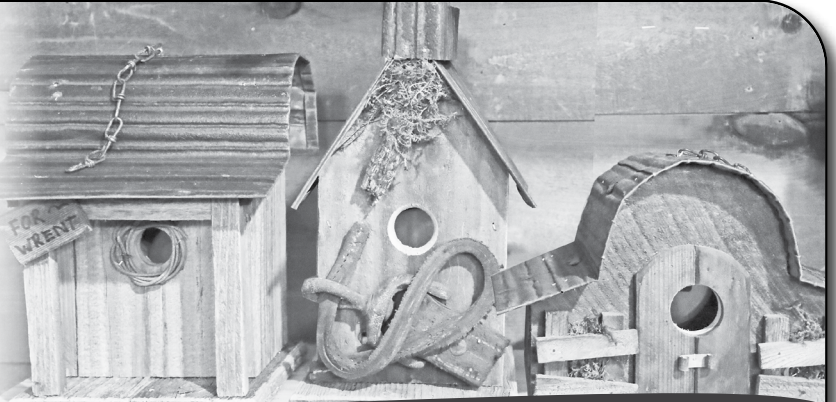




**Fall Seed Sale! October 1<sup>st</sup> -31<sup>st</sup>**

**News**  
from the bird store



*Call! Call!*

## Fall Seed Card Sale

The Seed Saver Cards will be on sale during the month of **October**.

From **October 1st through the 31st** you will be able to purchase a **SEED SAVER CARD** in any denomination that you choose.

The **SEED SAVER CARD** will be good for all **SEED** purchases throughout the year regardless of the bag size. All seed purchased with the **SEED SAVER CARD** will receive **15% off** up to the value of your card. The **SEED SAVER CARD** will not be valid with any other offers, promotions, discounts, or bucks.

You will have to purchase your card **in the store** or by **calling us during business hours at 508-347-2473**. **SEED SAVER CARDS** are not available on our web store.

 Please use the balance on your 2025 seed card by the end of September. Any remaining balance may be used toward the purchase of a 2026 seed card or as a regular gift card (no discount).



**SAVE THE DATE**   
**Friday, Dec. 4th • 6:30-9:00pm**  
**Night Owl Christmas**

**Our Night Owl Christmas Event is back!**  
**Music, food, and all the holiday cheer you can handle!**

Lori Brooks will be here once again with your favorite tunes.

Come relax, browse, and spend the evening with us. *It's our holiday party for you!*

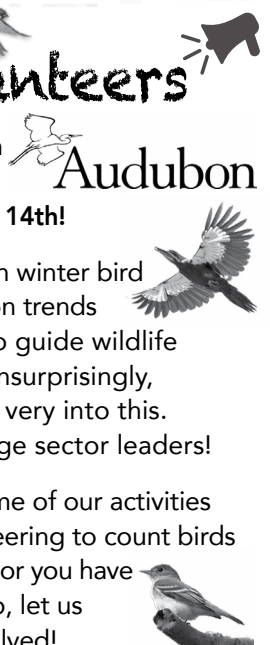


## Call for Volunteers

The 2026 National Audubon Society Annual Christmas Bird Count starts December 14th!

This annual, volunteer-driven winter bird census tracks bird population trends across the Americas to help guide wildlife conservation efforts; and unsurprisingly, The Bird Store and More is very into this. In fact, we are the Sturbridge sector leaders!

The exact date and time of our activities are TBD, but if volunteering to count birds for a day sounds like a hoot, or you have questions about how to help, let us know and we'll get you involved!



# Spring... uh, Fall, Cleaning?

It's been a while since the last newsletter; we've been busy bees here at the store! Cleaning, rearranging, getting the store ready for fall. Fall's our favorite, so we're excited to show you what we've been up to. Come on in, poke around the new layout, and see what's new!



# Exploring the More

Isn't that archway cool? The new one in the store? It came from Achla Designs, one of our favorite local vendors. We can make that happen for your yard too!

We're more than just birds; in fact, it's in our name!



We've been doing a lot of special orders lately, of all sizes. From birdbaths and garden statuary that fit in your car, to bear-proof feeder setups, to giant, special-ordered fountains fit for a botanical garden, we've helped our customers get the perfect piece for their space. Just let us know what you're looking for – or let us inspire you!



## Boxes, Boxes, Boxes!



**Owls** - Fall is actually the perfect time to get an owl box up. Not every owl will use a box - the most likely candidates are the Eastern Screech-Owl, the Barred Owl, and the Northern Saw-whet Owl. Look for whitewash - owl droppings - on tree trunks and listen for these owls, as this tells you which owl has been working that territory.

The box itself depends on the owl - each has their own size, mounting height, and location requirements. Note that it may take a year or more for an owl to find and start using a new box. Usually a family of mice or other rodents moves in first, and that's actually what attracts the owl.

**Roosting** - During the breeding season, birds become territorial. But come winter, birds drop the territorial act and start flocking together, often mixing species, to make it through the long, cold winter nights. Imagine sparrows, chickadees, nuthatches, and finches huddling together sharing body heat!



Your regular bird house isn't really built for this.

It's got ventilation slots, a cleanout, and is sized for a pair on a nest. Roosting boxes are designed for many birds to keep the heat in and often come with perches. The whole point is to trap the warmth of a dozen or more birds pressed together in a dark tight space.

**Bats** - Bats require the most patience. A bat house can sit empty for up to five years before a colony decides it's home. You want at least twelve to fifteen feet of clear, open space under the exit so the bats have room to drop and get their flight going. East or southeast-facing is ideal, with at least seven hours of solar exposure. Keep branches and clutter away from the box.



Where you mount it matters almost as much as where you point it. A pole beats a tree, because trees block the flight path and give owls and raccoons a direct route to the door. A building wall with appropriate clearance is even better. Wood, stone, and brick act like heat sinks, soaking up warmth during the day and radiating it back at night. If you're going the pole route, consider two boxes back-to-back on either side of the same pole. It gives the bats a choice of microclimates.

We've got owl boxes, roosting boxes, and bat houses all in stock. Come lean on our wisdom to make a wise choice.

**Safety First** - One last thing on keeping the boxes and their occupants safe. Mount them out of reach of outdoor cats and please don't use rodenticides around your property. The creatures that eat the poisoned rodents get sick and die. Instead, use safer methods like Mouse Magic or humane traps if necessary.



## Did You Know?

The rough interior surface of a bat box isn't just a construction choice. Bats roost under tree bark in the wild and they need that texture to grip with their claws.

## Marshmallow's Musings You're Eating What??



Hi, this is Marshmallow the Cockatiel. I have a confession. I am a very picky eater. I like my noodles. I like my pellets. I like the pieces of chicken and bread and chips that Dezeree slips me from her lunch. Some days I think I am the pickiest bird alive.

But then I look at my feathered friends and I think... wow. You guys are really trying everything.

Here's what I've been hearing from my friends about what they're eating this time of year.

My goldfinch friends are busy. Really busy. They're eating all the thistle seeds and nyjer they can find. But here's the thing: they're not just eating for themselves. They swallow the seeds and the seeds get all soft and mushy in their crop, and then they fly back to the nest and regurgitate this milky paste for their babies. It's like seed milk! I asked one of my goldfinch friends about it and she said it's very protein rich. I said "that sounds gross" and she said "you're a cockatiel, you eat noodles." Fair enough!

My swallow friends and my friend the Eastern Kingbird? Bugs. Lots and lots of bugs. Flies, beetles, moths. They catch them right out of the air. I once watched a swallow do a little mid-air twist to grab something and I thought that was very impressive.

My woodpecker friends dig into the trees for ants, beetles, and grubs. They peel back the bark and go to work. I think that sounds exhausting. One of my woodpecker friends told me he also likes tree sap. I asked if it was sweet - as if we can even taste it!

And my cedar waxwing friends, they are the show-offs. Right now they're eating berries, like serviceberries and juniper. They come in big flocks and just eat all of them. They also catch insects out of the air, same as the swallows, but they do it in a much more dramatic way. Like a little aerial ballet. I would try it but I would probably just fly in circles.

Finally, Dezeree wanted me to tell you something. She says you humans have been calling the store to ask where your chickadees went. She says don't worry. They're out in the woods eating all the bugs and living the hippie lifestyle. She says to just give them a little space and they'll be back at your feeder when the natural food runs low.

**Love, Your Friend Marshmallow**

# Bears and Bear Poles

## Bear Market

Black bears in our area are in full "fall flush" mode right now. They're eating up to 20,000 calories a day (their normal is around 4,000) and can pack on 40 to 100 pounds in just a few months to prepare for winter. They're looking for anything high-calorie they can find - which means your trash cans, suet and seed feeders and those big decorative pumpkins on the porch are all on the menu.

## Bear Proof Poles

We've been getting many inquiries on bear proof solutions. Some of you have seen and asked about the bear proof pole that Bill shared online years ago. That setup is no longer available, but bear with us - we have plenty of solutions!

The first thing we often set customers up with is a pole attached to a patio base, using quick-connect, twist-on hooks to hold the feeders. If a bear attacks this setup, the damage is minimized since the pole is not anchored into the ground and does not bend or snap - it simply gets

knocked over. The arms are designed to detach from the pole and again often survive without issue.

Pair this with a robust feeder & some spicy seed and suet in the feeders - which the mammals hate - and you've got a setup that a bear doesn't want and can't really destroy.

But if you're looking for a truly bear proof solution similar to the previous bear pole, we have partnered with Hilltop Specialties on a great setup to fill this need. Dezeree has been using it as her main feeding setup for a few years now and it totally foils bears and other mammals. We're proud to announce that we can order this setup for you - some customers have already taken the plunge and are very satisfied!

So stop in and let us help you stop the bears from bullying your birds!



## Bird Store Hours:

10:00 am-6:00 pm Monday - Saturday  
Closed Sunday

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 736, Fiskdale, MA 01518

Phone: (508)-347-BIRD

[thebirdstoreandmore.com](http://thebirdstoreandmore.com)

Sturbridge, MA 01566  
(Route 20, Cedar Street Intersection)  
4 Cedar Street,



Night Owl Christmas

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