

Bird Feeding 101



Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary

Backyard Bird Feeding

- Why feed birds?
- Foods to offer
- Feeder options
- Unintended visitors
- Creating bird friendly yard
- Climate change etc.
- Resources



Why Feed Birds?



- Feeding birds brings them into your yard
- Feeding birds is fun and engaging
- Birds **do not** need the food we provide
- Birds **do** need us to protect and provide usable habitats

Foods to Offer



Black-oil Sunflower



Nyjer – thistle



Suet



Peanuts –
whole or shelled



Millet



Corn –
whole or cracked



Mealworms



Fruit



Nectar

Foods Not to Offer



White or Red Milo



Standard Seed Mixes

Tube Feeders



Suet Feeders



Hopper Feeder



Platform Feeder



Nyjer (Thistle) Feeder

Invent Your Own



Choosing a Feeder

- How easy is it to fill?
- Can food levels be easily seen? How much does it hold?
- Does it drain water?
- Is it well built? Does it come from a reputable manufacturer with a good warranty?
- How easy is it to clean?



Feeder Maintenance & Hygiene

- **Disinfect your feeder and/or birdbath**
 - Immerse feeder or birdbath in a 10% bleach solution - 9:1 water to bleach
 - Disinfect at the start of the season or 1-2 times a year; more if you notice mold or other issues
 - If you feel that you have diseased birds – stop feeding for awhile
- **Discard old seed and hulls**
 - Remove old seed or hulls when you fill your feeder
 - Rake or sweep up uneaten seeds or hulls on the ground
- **Avoid overcrowding**
 - If possible, provide more than one feeder and spread them out



Potential unintended feeder visitors ...



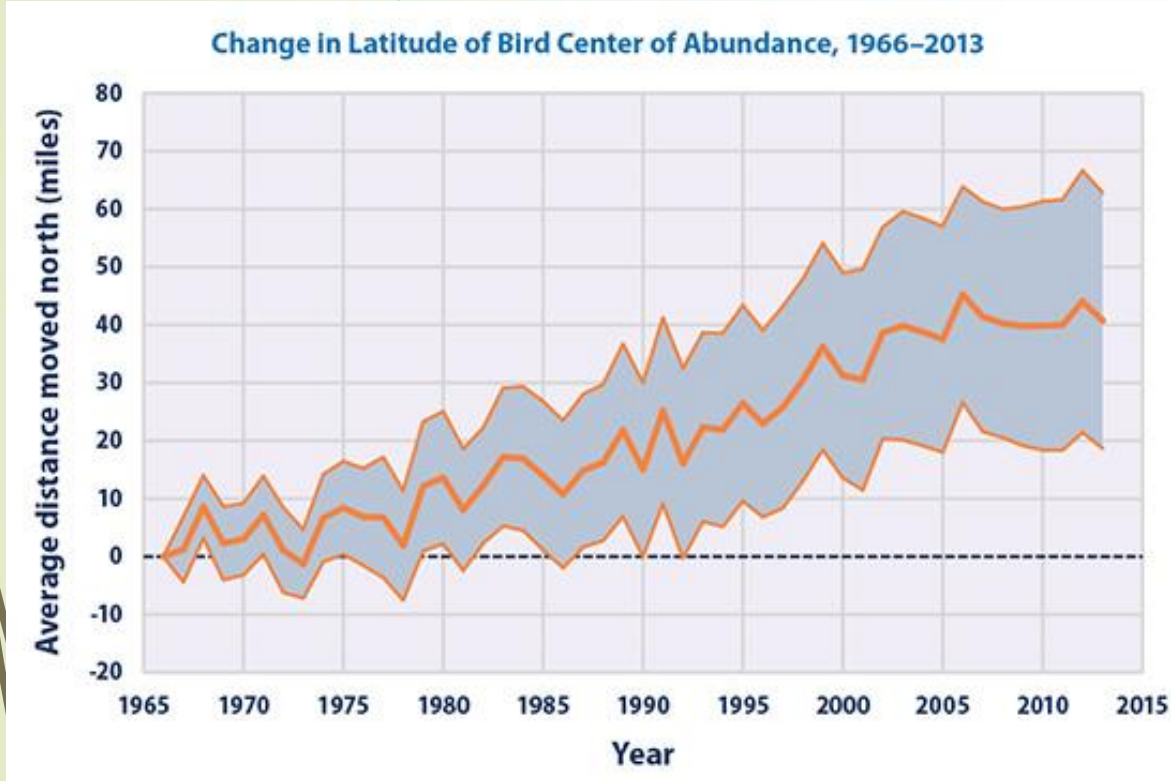
Bird Friendly Yard



- Year-round cover
 - Safety from predators
 - Protection from weather
- Nesting sites
 - Open, cavity, boxes
- Water
- Native plants
 - Variety of food sources
- Keep cats indoors
- Mitigate window strikes



Climate Change and Birds



➤ Changing weather patterns

- Changes in precipitation
- Increase in storm intensity

➤ Forest change

- Northern hardwoods will lose advantage over southern species

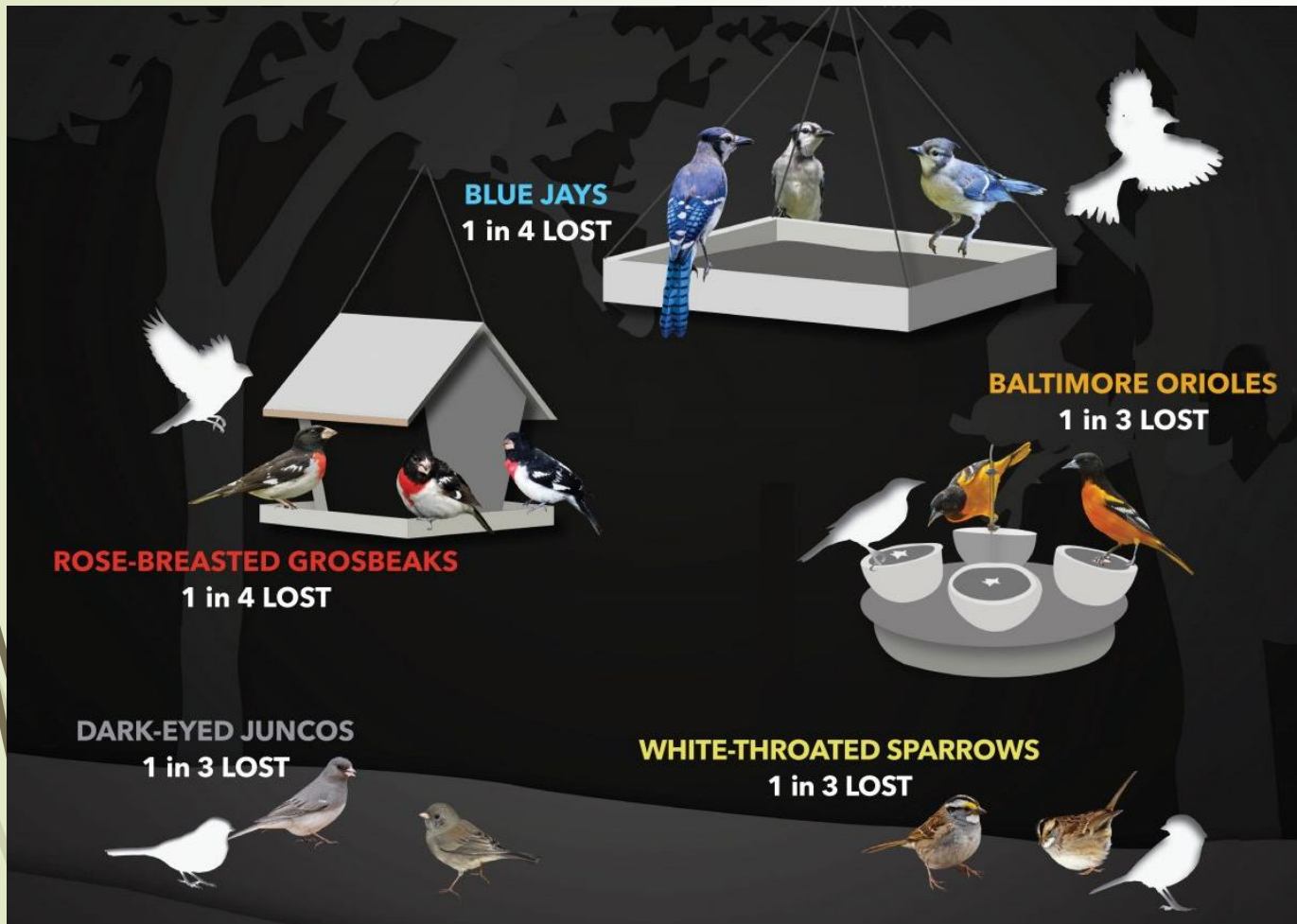
➤ Sea level rise

- habitat loss

➤ Phenology and migration

- Changes in flowering and fruiting

Bird Losses



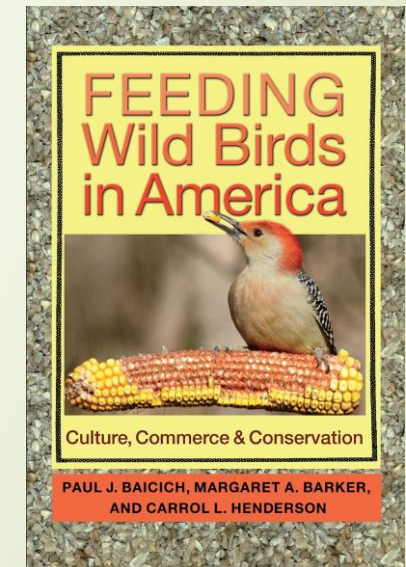
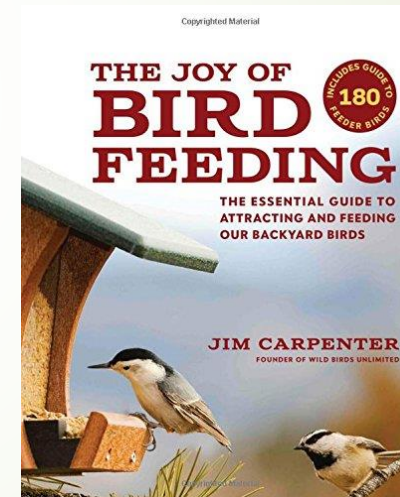
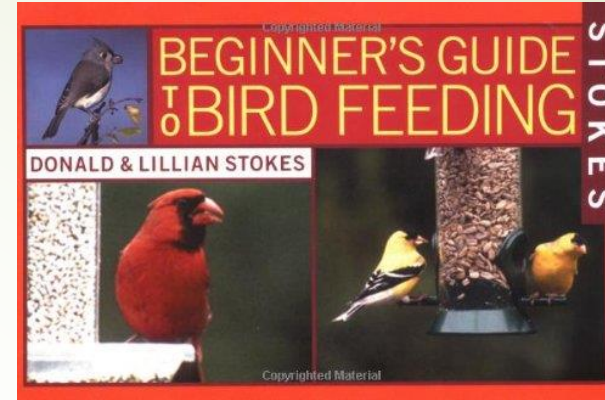
7 SIMPLE ACTIONS TO HELP BIRDS

- Do Citizen Science
- Make Windows Safer
- Keep Cats Indoors
- Reduce Plastic Use
- Use Native Plants
- Drink Shade-Grown Coffee
- Avoid Pesticides

Resources

Books

- ***Stokes Beginner's Guide to Bird Feeding.*** Donald and Lillian Stokes. Little Brown and CO. 2002
- ***The Joy of Bird Feeding.*** Jim Carpenter. Scott & Nix CO. 2017
- ***Feeding Wild Birds in America.*** Bacich, Barker & Henderson. Texas A&M University Press. 2015



Resources cont...

Web Sites

- <https://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds>
- <https://www.massaudubon.org/our-conservation-work/climate-change/effects-of-climate-change/on-birds>
- <https://www.massaudubon.org/get-involved/take-action>
- <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/vanishing-1-in-4-birds-gone/>

General Bird Guides

- ***The Sibley Guide to Birds.*** David Allen Sibley. Knopf. 2014
- ***National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America.*** Dunn and Alderfer. National Geographic. 2011