

WHIDBEY
WILD BIRD



September 2010 Newsletter

from Whidbey Wild Bird

In This Issue

September News
Product News
Seed, Seed, Seed
EVENTS
Black-headed Grosbeak
Quote of the Month

Sign Up

SIGN-UP!

Whidbey Island Community
Wildlife Habitat Project
Whidbey Audubon Society



Where in the world have we been? It seems like forever since our last newsletter, way back in June in fact. Phil has had surgery and been laid up for a while and as soon as that was healed managed to mangle a rotator cuff in his right shoulder. Lydia continues her battle with RA. Getting older is definitely not for sissies. Thank goodness for the rest of our employee crew, who keep us going.

After Labor Day we will be closed on Sundays until Thanksgiving. Our hours remain 10:00 - 5:30 Monday through Saturday.

As you know from our previous newsletter, the store is sadly for sale. We will continue our business until we find a buyer, or our lease expires in 2012.

We have had two very interested buyers, but we are seeing that the "Pioneer Way Redevelopment Project" is not a plus when selling a business. This is bad timing for us. This street project will be hard enough to survive, and we are hoping the city will do all it can to help, although this has not been the case so far. Businesses downtown are being asked to survive losing most of their income for 8-10 months ... could anyone survive that big of a loss of income these days?

We are thinking creatively and will be sending you a survey to get your input as soon as the construction plans are finalized by the city. We will need your support more than ever this coming year, so we hope you will take the time to fill out the survey and help us with ideas of how we can serve you and keep your business during the construction.

We still think this is a great business for someone and are doing all we can to promote it and find you a new owner. We have gone national on BizBuySell.com and are keeping our fingers crossed.



SEPTEMBER NEWS

* September Sale * Off to our Show in Spokane * Kite

Festival

September will be a busy month. We will have summer garden items on sale in the store (see Product News). Then it will be off to our show to find new things for Winter and Spring. And don't forget to come in and get a kite and join the fun at the Kite Festival (see Events).

Now that the Rufous hummers have departed and the Gold Finches are dwindling it is time to enjoy watching our winter birds come in. It will be nice to see the Junco and Towhee in such great abundance again. Our Great Horned Owl has been putting on a show for us lately. We see him daily and were entertained when he decided to take a bath the other morning.

We have had a great year for fledglings at our house this year. More Chickadees (Chestnut and Black Capped) than we can count, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers and Northern Flickers and Towhee galore. I think this year our favorite must be the large number of Black Headed Grosbeaks.



PRODUCT NEWS -

Out with the Old SALE!!

This month we have some of our summer garden items on sale. We have just four of the large Vietnamese pots left in the store. These big pots make a real statement in your yard and we have them at an additional 20% off. Also

the trellis' and wire wall art are 20% off, as well as T-shirts, solar lights and a few other goodies.

In with the New ... New wind spinners and kites are arriving almost weekly of late. The small baby birds and bug spinners are great for that little spot that needs dressing up.

There are more new **Folkmanis Puppets** to choose from. Also, a new **Bird Bath Raft** that floats in any "too-deep-for-the-birds" water feature. A great way for the birds to get a drink or bath.

Several new feeders have arrived and they look to be some real winners. More recycled products and finally a wire caged feeder for either Safflower or hulled sunflower hearts.

The winter cloisonne' order has gone in and there will be some great new hummingbirds, dragonflies, frogs, and butterflies, as well as a new quail and owl. These will be a limited quantity, so come check them out in mid-September.

SEED, SEED, SEED

Now is a great time to get your feeders down and give them a good cleaning. Also, open those nest boxes and clean out the nesting material. Leave the side open so the birds can roost during the winter.

With the arrival of our fall rainy season this would be a good time to try our **All Weather Blend** that was designed by us. A great blend

for the damper days ahead. Also make sure you have enough winter feeder covers.



Also, this is a good time to be thinking about a ground feeder for our winter birds and the abundance of California Quail that are around.

If you aren't feeding suet already, now is a good time to start offering it in your yard. Our Chickadees, Woodpeckers and Grosbeaks can't seem to get enough lately, and it is a great high-energy treat for cold nights. A case of our Nutty Treat is **25% off** right now.



EVENTS

PHYSIOLOGY OF MIGRATION - Thursday, September 9, 2010, 7pm Dr. John Bower of Western Washington University will be presenting a program that he developed especially for Whidbey Audubon.

Birds migrating long distances need more than strong flight muscles and a sense of

direction. It's almost miraculous, when you consider that a hummingbird weighing an eighth of an ounce can fly to Mexico and beyond.

Come learn all about it Thursday, September 9th at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation 20103 Hwy 525, North of Freeland on the West side of the road.

WHIDBEY ISLAND KITE FESTIVAL

September 26-27 at Fort Casey

Schedule and Details at: <http://www.whidbeykites.org/>



Black-headed Grosbeak

The Black-headed Grosbeak, *Pheucticus melanocephalus*, is a medium-size seed-eating bird in the same family as the Northern Cardinal, the Cardinalidae. It is sometimes considered conspecific with the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, *P. ludovicianus*, with which it hybridises on the Great Plains. The 19 cm long, 47 g weight Black-headed Grosbeak is a migratory bird, with nesting grounds from southwestern British Columbia, through the western half of the United States, into central Mexico. It occurs as an accidental further

south in Central America.

The Black-headed Grosbeak's approximate length is 18-19 cm or 6-1/2 to 7-3/4 inches in length; it is similar in size to a Common Starling. As per its name the male has a black head. It also has black wings and tail with prominent white patches. Its breast is dark to tawny orange in color. Its belly is yellow. The female has a brown head, neck and back with sparrow-like black streaks. She also has white streaks down the middle of her head, over her eyes and on her cheeks. Her breast is white and her wings and tail are greyish-brown with two white wing bars and yellowish wing edges.

The Black-headed Grosbeak prefers to live in deciduous and mixed wooded areas. It likes to be in areas where there are large trees as well as thick bushes, such as patches of broadleaved trees and shrubs within conifer forests, including streamside corridors, river bottoms, lakeshores, wetlands, and suburban areas. It also seems to avoid coniferous vegetation.

The Grosbeak's song is a rich warble that is similar to that of an American Robin but more fluent, faster, softer, sweeter and mellow with rising and falling passages that make the song much longer than the Robin's. The note is a sharp ik or eek. Both the male and female sing, but have different songs.

The Black-headed Grosbeak eats pine and other seeds, berries and insects, spiders and

fruit. During the summer months it mostly eats spiders, snails and insects. It is one of the few birds that can safely eat the poisonous monarch butterfly. In their wintering grounds this grosbeak consumes many monarchs and many seeds. It will come to bird feeders for sunflower and other types of seed, and fruit.

"Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge: it is those who know little, and not those who know much, who so positively assert that this or that problem will never be solved by science."

Charles Darwin



THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP: Thanks to those of you who continue to bring in your old useable feeders. We have placed feeders at several locations. We have some feeders ready for nursing homes, hospitals or schools, so let us know of other places that may be interested. For every feeder you bring in you can save 20% on the purchase of a replacement feeder. Please help support this great cause!! Helping educate is one of our main goals, so please use the bird store for a source of information if you have any questions. And if you have special tips of your own, pass them on. Again, thank you for your support over the past 6 years. We hope to continue to help bring enjoyment to your favorite hobby.

Good Birding - Phil & Lydia



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