Wilcox Nursery & LANDSCAPE

Gardening for Birds by Season

The lifecycle of birds is very closely linked to insects, especially caterpillars. Insects are the most important food source for nest- ing songbirds. They provide the necessary fat, protein, and nutrition to get babies through the most vulnerable life stage and out of the nest. We will be highlighting our favorite bird-friendly plants that sup- port birds year-round, season by season.







Winter

In addition to the typical Florida “snowbirds” that spend their cold months here, our avian friends come down to escape the freezing weather. Winter residents live and nest further north during the warmer months. These birds include Gray Catbirds, Black and White Warblers, American Robins, and many species of shorebirds, including SnowyPlovers and American White Pelicans.

Spring

Spring birding in Tampa Bay offers some of the best birding in the country. Migratory birds are moving from their winter locations in South and Central America and the Caribbean up to their breeding grounds. This epic journey can be thousands of miles and requires massive amounts of energy. You are likely to see and hear birds such as Blackburnian Warblers, Swallow-tailed Kites, and Blue - headed Vireos in large groups as they make their way north. Our year-round and summer resident birds also start courting and nesting during this time.



Summer

Summer is the season of love in Florida! Birds will be territorial as they protect their nests and fledglings. Nestlings need lots and lots of insects. Caterpillars make an excellent meal for baby birds. You are likely to see Northern Mockingbirds, Blue Jays, Boat-tailed Grackles, and Carolina Wrens during this time of year.

Fall

Fall migration is more of a trickle than spring migration. As birds come through, they are looking for fuel for their trip south. This is the first migration for birds that hatched over the summer. Birds are less territorial and tend to move in mixed species flocks for safety. We will see kettles of hawks, murders of crows, and bouquets of warblers moving through starting in August. Some birds, like American Robins, only migrate as needed to follow food sources and escape freezing temperatures.