



NEWS RELEASE

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Birds Fly Out as Fall Rolls In

More than 300 bird species found in North America during the summer will make their way to Latin America and the Caribbean, some covering distances of nearly 7,000 miles. That's the equivalent of a person running 266 official marathons.

Parks, backyards and nature refuges across the country will host these winged visitors for the next few weeks as the birds make their way to their fall and winter destinations. This is a very exciting time for bird watchers and bird feeding enthusiasts because they will have the opportunity to see many bird species that are not native to their regions.

"Migration is a fascinating part of bird behavior," explained John Schaust, Chief Naturalist at Wild Birds Unlimited. "Besides the amount of daylight, it appears that age, sex, weather and the availability of food, water and shelter are the major factors in migratory behavior."

While migration is still not completely understood, it appears that some birds orient themselves by the stars on clear nights while others seem to have a built-in magnetic compass. Some birds travel over large bodies of water, and birds commonly lose one fourth to one half of their body weight during over-water migration.

In order to survive their grueling trip, birds accumulate fat prior to migration. This physiological change helps the birds maintain their energy reserves.

"Not only can we enjoy migrating birds as they pass through our area, but, we can also play a role in their survival by providing food, water, habitat and/or shelter to help them conserve and replenish their energy supply during their journey," stated Schaust.

Wild Birds Unlimited is the original and largest franchise system of backyard bird feeding and nature specialty stores with more than 275 locations throughout the United States and Canada. Wild Birds Unlimited specializes in bringing people and nature together with bird feeding and nature products, expert advice and educational events. Visit our Web site, and shop online at www.wbu.com.

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