



Tailor's Tales



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Bird Feeder Woes

This summer was no different than most...but the weather was spectacular!! As weather goes, we could not have had a nicer summer ! And nicer weather provides more opportunity for wildlife to enjoy getting out and taking advantage of all they can get. One of the most common calls during the summer months is from bird enthusiasts who enjoy their seasonal visits from different varieties of birds not normally seen all year around. An issue they found frustrating was seeing rats partaking at their bird feeders. Everyone is used to seeing their neighborhood pesky squirrels attempting to steal the daily bounties laid out, but RATS, this was disconcerting to them. What can we do? This has no easy answer. Obviously, putting out pesticides and traps is not the way to go. Reason is, using poison you can kill any other type of animal that frequents your yard, even domestic pets, and you can cause a second party poisoning as well. This meaning you poison the rat, a hawk, owl or cat sees the rat staggering figuring its an easy meal, grabs the rodent and is now second hand poisoned and facing certain death. Trapping can also provide you with an innocent bystander. When seeds fall to the ground as birds feed at the feeders, this is a free for all opportunity for our ground dwellers, rats/ mice being one of them.



The Feeder and the Location

Beyond suggesting that you stop feeding birds altogether during the summer months as there should be adequate natural resources for birds to enjoy, there are various ways to prevent attracting the unwanted. The idea is to limit/prevent the food from falling to the ground. The ideal bird feeder to use is one with a dish at its base. The dish also provides a second opportunity for the birds to feed from the feeder. The next thing you need to do is keep a clean environment around the feeder. Sweep up at least twice a week all the excess food droppings under the feeder. The best scenario is to hang/place your bird feeders away from your home - this will prevent attracting any mice/rats and discouraging them from finding any weak areas to enter your home.



Bird Food Ideas

There are bird foods that claim to reduce the amount of waste that's dropped (thereby reducing the temptation for rodents). Options are hulled seeds, sunflower hearts, shelled peanuts, and hulled millet. You can also try suet, nectar, thistle, or

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The Hummingbird

The picture you see here, depicts most hummingbird feeders you see. However, most people don't know that it's not advised to add red food coloring or any type of coloring to foods prepared for hummingbirds. There are no definitive answers to why, but most stated reasons are that it could be harmful to the bird. It is suggested that you refrain from adding the red coloring as the bird feeder itself should have enough red on it (the attractant for hummingbirds) to bring them to it. Or others suggest tying red ribbons at the top or hanging a few from the bottom of the feeder. The consensus is, nectar is not red, its clear and its what they feed on. Bacteria and mold grow in sugar water, and sugar ferments, so hummingbird water should never be left out for more than two or three days, and changed daily in very hot weather and if possible hang the feeder in the shade rather than in direct sunlight.



Myth: Hummingbirds suck nectar.

Fact: Hummingbirds do not suck nectar. They place their open bill into the feeder and lick up the nectar at a high rate of speed.

The Beautiful and the Elusive Fox



It's that time of year when we receive many calls about fox seen visiting yards, sitting in driveways or visiting businesses. People are alarmed and concerned about seeing them, however, others are quite taken with their beauty and tend to take advantage of these rare sightings and use them as photo opportunities to document their unexpected visits. It is **NOT** unusual to see fox during the daytime. The red and gray fox are abundant and widespread in Connecticut. They can be active

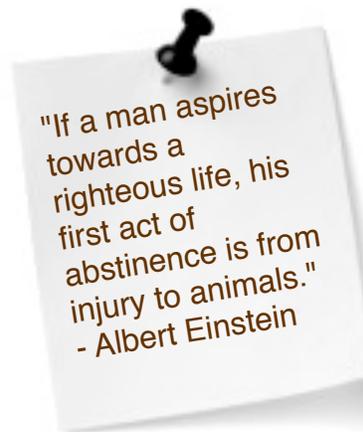
any time of the day, but hunt most often around dusk and dawn. The Red fox tends to be solitary and usually hunts alone. Foxes remain active all year and do not hibernate. Foxes can also be quite vocal, perhaps you've heard their calls and never realized what you were hearing? Their calls can vary from a short, sharp "yap" or bark, followed by a "yap, yap," to a combination of screeches, yells, and long howls. Click on link to hear: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6NuhlibHsM>

The Gray fox is not observed as frequently as the Red fox due to their reclusive nature and more nocturnal habits. They will readily climb trees, jumping from branch to branch while hunting or for protection.

Nectar Recipe

- 1 Part Sugar
- 4 Parts Water
- Boil 1-2 Minutes
- Cool & Store In Refrigerator

Never use honey or artificial sweeteners! Honey ferments easily, and can cause sores in a hummers mouth.



"If a man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals."
- Albert Einstein



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The Beautiful and the Elusive Fox

Fox are important predators of prey species like mice, voles, moles and rats just to name a few. Adult foxes have few predators, although coyotes likely will not tolerate foxes within their territories. With the recent growth in population of coyotes throughout Connecticut many fox have been displaced from much of their prime habitats.

SOME FACTS:

- The breeding season for fox is January thru March, while mating season is during the winter months. Fox tend to be monogamous with both partners playing a roll in raising the young.
- The normal home range for a fox is about 2 to 4 square miles, but it can vary depending on the abundance of food.
- Foxes commonly live in close association with human residences and communities where they can find plenty of food, water, and cover. They frequent yards, parks, golf courses especially those that adjoin undeveloped habitats.
- The mere presence of a fox should not be perceived as a problem and foxes need not be feared.
- Healthy foxes pose virtually no danger to humans.

While it would be our wish to say that all the calls we receive about fox are from those who relish seeing these beautiful creatures, it is sad to say many are from people who are concerned for the health of those they see. Sarcoptic mange is often seen in fox and can be deadly to them if left untreated.. It is caused by a microscopic mite that lives in the skin. Animals with mange lose hair and weight; their skin becomes cracked and encrusted with heavy scabs. Infected foxes usually die from the affliction within 2 to 4 months. It is a very slow and painful way to die. Many rehabilitators can offer advice on what you can do to help in these cases, as can we at Tailor's Wildlife and we hope you will take the time to call us if you should come across such cases. Sarcoptic mange is treatable with medication which can prevent an untimely, unnecessary and painful death.

Without a doubt it is also known that fox are of the RVS species (Rabies Vector Species) although Raccoon rabies is the most common strain of rabies found in Connecticut. Most foxes die from rabies too quickly to spread the disease to other animals or humans. Nevertheless, animals that appear sick or are acting abnormally should be avoided. The following symptoms may indicate the presence of rabies or other neurological diseases in mammals: unprovoked aggression, impaired movement, paralysis or lack of coordination, unusually bold behavior, and disorientation. Your local animal control officer or police should be contacted if you see signs of concern.



PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE TO DISCOURAGE WILDLIFE FROM VISITING YOU:

- **PETS :** Although fox normally do not prey on cats or small dogs, its always best to keep your pets inside and under close supervision while outside in order to prevent unwanted confrontation with wildlife. Feeding your pets outdoors or leaving uneaten food available can also act as an attractant for unwanted wildlife.
- **CLOSE OFF CRAWL SPACES UNDER DECKS AND SHEDS:** All types of wildlife including foxes will use these areas for nesting and raising young.
- **FEEDING FOOD:** It is usually advised to refrain from feeding wildlife as this can desensitize them to humans; encourages them to frequent the area and exhibit bold behavior over time. If using bird feeders, keep the area clean by removing any bird seed waste from below feeders.
- **GARBAGE:** Secure garbage in animal proof containers and store in a garage or shed.



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