

Steve & Regina Garr are the owners of **Birds-I-View** and have spent many years committed to helping others enjoy and learn more about the Native Wild Birds that can visit their “space”. They have been presenting programs on attracting Backyard Wildlife for decades, **with a special emphasis on attracting desirable wildlife to almost any setting.**

Steve spent nearly nine years as a monthly columnist for the **Nature Society News**, and has been a frequent guests on many radio and television programs promoting birding and wildlife gardening. Steve & Regina are also co-founders of two separate State Bluebird Societies, and Steve is a Life Member and past President of the North American Bluebird Society. The Garrs are proud to be Board Members of their local Audubon Society Chapter: **River Bluffs Audubon Society.** This organization is a great asset to their community and Steve & Regina strongly encourage you to check them out! The info for their organization is always on display at Birds-I-View.



Adult male Eastern Bluebird



Juvenile Eastern Bluebird

Most “baby” birds at your feeder (even those begging to be fed) will be about the same size as the adults!

A few “immature signs”:

- Muted /unfinished Plumage
- Different bill and mouth area from adults (especially the “gape” area of mouth)
- VERY excited to be at the food!

“Baby Bird” Identification

It is always more fun when you can identify what you are seeing. See the resource list in this brochure!

Female Northern Cardinal

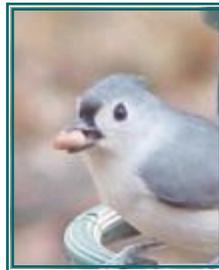


Adult Male Northern Cardinal



All Photos by Steve Garr

Left: Juvenile Cardinal (note the darker colored bill and the “unfinished” plumage!)



RIGHT: Juvenile Tufted Titmouse preparing to leave the nest box. **LEFT:** Adult Tufted Titmouse; Note the dark patch between the eyes & the completely dark bill lacking on the Juvenile bird.



Above Left: Adult male Baltimore Oriole



Above center: Adult female Baltimore Oriole



Above Right: Two juvenile Baltimore Orioles try out the jelly feeder! Live mealworms are also a favorite food for Orioles and a good alternative to jelly if bees are an issue.

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Juvenile or Immature??

Strictly speaking, “baby birds” still in the nest are referred to as *nestlings*, young birds still in their very first set of feathers are *Juveniles*, and *Immature birds* are those which have not yet attained full adult plumage but are capable of being on their own for food and shelter and may be capable of reproducing. And of course, all of these would technically be “immature birds” since they are not yet fully matured. **For the most part**, it is acceptable to refer to any birds off of the nest as “immature” until they have achieved their complete Adult Plumage. This process of molting into adult plumage varies from species to species: Bald Eagles will not attain adult plumage for years—other birds do so in months.

Provide Attractive Nesting Habitat

The addition of **supplemental nesting material** into the habitat is a good thing! Try to use natural fibers (like cotton, wool, pet & people hair) and keeping the material covered & protected from rain is even better!



About Baby Birds on the Ground: Baby Birds on the ground are usually supposed to be on the ground. Many “open-nesting” birds have their babies leave the nest MUCH sooner than we humans often think they should. But the birds know what they are doing—the nest is where the babies are most vulnerable. Even though the babies often cannot fly when they leave these nests, they are safer being shuffled around on the ground and in low shrubs by the adults than in their nest. Consider interfering only if the birds are in direct danger from a cat, car, or some other unnatural threat. (and even then, please try not to take the bird away from the general area where it was found).



Orchard Oriole Nest



Provide proper (safe) Nest boxes that protect birds from predators. **Ask us how!**

While it is a myth that parent birds will abandon young if you touch the nest, it **IS wise** to avoid leaving your sent near nests for predators to discover.

Great Resources for learning more:

Please check out : www.wildbirdrehab.org, particularly for terrific advice on when to intervene with baby birds you find, and when to help them by leaving them alone.

We certainly recommend the use of a **variety of Field Guides**, particularly when it comes to identifying immature birds. Even with the online resources available, (which we use and enjoy) there is still a significant need for Field Guide Books in your library! We can advise you on several of our favorites. In addition to Field Guides however, these sources are very helpful :

- **Lives of North American Birds** by Kenn Kaufman
- **Birds in Missouri** by Brad Jacobs (great for many areas East of the Rockies, not just Missouri)

Please also check out the other Birds-I-View Educational Brochures for more details on specific topics mentioned in this brochure!

Provide Water

There is probably no better way to expand the variety of desirable song birds coming to your space than the addition of fresh, clean water -particularly moving water. Whether it is waterfalls, drippers, misters, or “wigglers”, moving water is a real boon to any Wild Bird Habitat.

Provide a dependable water source **all year long**— water in the **winter time** can be particularly difficult for birds to find.



Above: An immature Bluebird cools down in a summertime bath

Left: An immature Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at a heated waterfall bird bath in January.



Cleaning Bird Feeders & Baths

We are very pleased with some of the **Natural Enzyme Products** that are currently on the market for cleaning bird feeders and bird baths. Most come in ready to use spray bottles or concentrates and do a very good job. **Safe for the feeders, safe for people, and safe for the birds!**

An alternative, but less targeted recommendation is using a solution of 1 3/4 cup of bleach per gallon of water. It may be advisable to test areas of certain decorative feeders/baths, such as glass or ceramic, or feeders/baths with glazed finishes, before immersing the entire feeder in a bleach solution.

Provide “baby bird” food stuffs

The greater variety of foods offered, the greater variety of birds you’ll see & enjoy!

- Nectar-producing plants will attract insects which adult birds will use to feed babies.
- Berry producing plants, especially those that produce berries in the summer are good food sources for young birds



Above: a Carolina Wren gathers a mouthful of mealworms to carry to feed babies!

Great Food Stuff Options:

- Nothing beats a worm!(esp. a LIVE mealworm)
- Suet & suet products
- Sunflower hearts & chips
- Jelly, fruit & sometimes nectar
- Peanuts (shelled)
- Recipes on our website!

Offering Suet & Live Mealworms inside many of the new “caged” feeders gives young birds added security from competition by large bird species.

Offering food stuffs suitable for immature birds allows the chance to watch a host of different activities by the birds: *Courtship, feeding a mate on the nest, feeding nestlings, carrying food off to hidden fledglings, and FINALLY bringing the babies to the feeders to teach them where and how to get the food !*



Immature Red-bellied Woodpecker on its own at the suet feeder!

Steve & Regina Garr
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512 Ellis Blvd/ Jefferson City, MO 65101

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