



Backyard Bird Tracker

BY MIDWEST BIRDS

FIRST
EDITION

Tiny wings. Big wonder.

*Some moments stop you
in your tracks. A flash of
green. A hum in the air.
A tiny visitor that feels
like a little piece of magic.*

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

Scientific name: *Archilochus colubris*

- Arrives in Wisconsin: late April-early May
- Departures: mid-September
- Length: 3-3.5 inches
- Wingspan: 4 inches
- Weight: less than a nickel
- Color: iridescent green back, grayish white underside
- Diet: nectar, tiny insects

A summer favorite in my Waukesha, WI backyard.

Birdwatching doesn't require faraway places or fancy equipment. It just takes a little time, a curious heart, and a place to notice.

This is my kind of paradise.

BACKYARD MOMENTS I CHERISH

- Morning coffee on the patio
- Hummingbirds at the feeder
- Woodpeckers on the suet
- Watching fledglings grow
- Sunset in the garden
- Quiet. Birds. Peace.

Look for...

Emerald flashes in the sun.
The quick hum of wings.
A bold little spirit with
a gentle heart.



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See who
visits today.



Welcome.

Birdwatching doesn't have to mean expensive gear, rare species, or traveling hundreds of miles. Sometimes the most rewarding birds are the ones that visit your own backyard every day.

This Starter Kit is designed to help you slow down, notice more, and create a lasting record of the birds that share your everyday life.



Grab a cup of coffee.



Find a comfortable chair.



See who visits today.

*Let's make everyday birding a little more intentional,
a little more joyful, and a lot more you.*

— Gary ♥ Midwest Birds



A little reminder

You don't have to see
everything. You just have
to start noticing.
That's where the joy begins.





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My Backyard



Every backyard is unique. Yours has its own character, its own rhythm, and its own birds. Take a few minutes to get to know the place where you birdwatch and relax.



WHERE I LIVE

City / Town _____

County _____

State _____ Zone _____



WHAT BEST DESCRIBES MY YARD?

☐ Suburban ☐ Rural ☐ Small Lot

☐ Wooded ☐ Open Field Nearby

☐ Other _____



FEEDERS I USE

What feeders do you have?



TREES & SHRUBS

What trees or shrubs do you have?



WATER IN MY YARD

Do you have a birdbath, pond, or other water source?



MY FAVORITE PLACE TO SIT

Where do you like to sit and watch birds?



WHAT MAKES MY BACKYARD SPECIAL?

Anything else about your backyard that makes it a great place for birds?



Pause & Notice



Take a moment to look around.

What do you hear? What do you see? What catches your attention?





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Midwest Backyard Bird Checklist



*Use this checklist to keep track of the birds
you see in your backyard throughout the year.*

You don't have to see them all! Every visit brings
something new to notice and enjoy.



✿ RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD ✿

YEAR-ROUND VISITORS

- ☐ Black-capped Chickadee
- ☐ Downy Woodpecker
- ☐ Northern Cardinal
- ☐ Blue Jay
- ☐ American Goldfinch
- ☐ Mourning Dove
- ☐ Other _____

WOODLAND VISITORS

- ☐ Red-bellied Woodpecker
- ☐ Hairy Woodpecker
- ☐ White-breasted Nuthatch
- ☐ Tufted Titmouse
- ☐ Carolina Wren
- ☐ Eastern Towhee
- ☐ Other _____

GARDEN VISITORS

- ☐ American Robin
- ☐ Gray Catbird
- ☐ Northern Mockingbird
- ☐ Cedar Waxwing
- ☐ House Finch
- ☐ Song Sparrow
- ☐ Other _____

WATER & WETLAND VISITORS

- ☐ Great Blue Heron
- ☐ Mallard
- ☐ Wood Duck
- ☐ Green Heron
- ☐ Red-winged Blackbird
- ☐ Belted Kingfisher
- ☐ Other _____

OCCASIONAL VISITORS

- ☐ Wild Turkey
- ☐ Osprey
- ☐ Pileated Woodpecker
- ☐ Western Meadowlark
- ☐ Eastern Phoebe
- ☐ Great Crested Flycatcher
- ☐ Other _____

SPECIAL VISITORS

- ☐ Northern Flicker
- ☐ Baltimore Oriole
- ☐ Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- ☐ Indigo Bunting
- ☐ Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- ☐ Eastern Bluebird
- ☐ Other _____



What was the most surprising bird you've seen so far? _____

Which bird would you most like to see in your backyard? _____

What patterns are you starting to notice in your bird sightings? _____





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First Sighting of the Year



There's something magical about that first bird that signals a new season.

Use this page to celebrate the first time you see or hear each of these seasonal visitors.



AMERICAN ROBIN



HOW TO USE THIS PAGE

As you spot or hear a bird for the first time each year, write the date below.

Add notes about where you were, what you were doing, and anything special about the moment.

Tip: Keep this page handy during early spring—those first sightings come fast and can be easy to forget!



BIRD	DATE OF FIRST SIGHTING	WHERE WERE YOU?	WHAT WERE YOU DOING?	NOTES
 American Robin (Spring)				
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird (Late Spring)				
 Baltimore Oriole (Spring)				
 Indigo Bunting (Spring)				
 Chimney Swift (Late Spring)				
 Eastern Bluebird (Spring)				
 Other _____				



Which first sighting were you most excited about? _____

How does this year compare to last year for your first sightings? _____

What does the return of these birds mean to you? _____





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Monthly Backyard Bird Log



Bird activity changes throughout the year. Use this page each month to track the birds you see, how often you see them, and what's happening in your backyard.



❧ DOWNY WOODPECKER ❧



MONTH & YEAR

Month _____ Year _____



NOTES ABOUT THIS MONTH

Weather, changes in your yard, anything interesting?

BIRD SPECIES What did you see?	HOW OFTEN? (Rare, Occasional, Common, Frequent)	BEHAVIOR & NOTES What were they doing?	WHERE IN YOUR YARD? (Feeder, Tree, Garden, Lawn, Pond, etc.)
❧ <i>Example: Downy Woodpecker</i>	<i>Frequent</i>	<i>At the suet feeder, pecking and hanging upside down.</i>	<i>Back deck suet feeder</i>
❧			
❧			
❧			
❧			
❧			



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

Any new birds? Favorite moments?





Pause & Notice



What patterns are you noticing in your bird sightings this month?





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Seasonal Arrival & Departure Tracker



*Birds come and go with the seasons.
Tracking their arrivals and departures helps you
see the rhythms of migration in your own backyard.*

Use this page to record the first arrival in spring
and the last departure in fall for the birds you notice.



🌿 CANADA GOOSE 🌿



TIPS FOR TRACKING MIGRATION

- 🌿 Watch regularly and note the dates.
- 🌿 Pay attention to weather patterns.
- 🌿 Different birds—and even individuals—may vary by a few days or weeks.

Remember:

*Every date you record adds to
your understanding of the natural
world right outside your door.*



BIRD SPECIES What did you see?	FIRST ARRIVAL Date (Spring)	LAST DEPARTURE Date (Fall)	NOTES Anything interesting?
🌿 <i>Example: Canada Goose</i>	<i>March 12</i>	<i>November 18</i>	<i>Large flock overhead in the morning.</i>
🌿			
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🌿			



Which bird's arrival are you most excited to see in the spring? _____

Which bird's departure makes you feel fall is really here? _____

How do the migration patterns in your yard change from year to year? _____





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My Favorite Backyard Birds



Every bird has something to love—its colors, its song, the way it visits, or the joy it brings. Use this page to celebrate the birds that make your backyard special.



NORTHERN FLICKER

HOW TO USE THIS PAGE

Choose up to five of your favorite backyard birds. Draw them, write about them, and remember what makes each one special to you.

Tip: There are no wrong choices!

Your favorites are the birds that bring you the most joy.



1 MY FAVORITE

Why I love this bird:

2 MY FAVORITE

Why I love this bird:

3 MY FAVORITE

Why I love this bird:

4 MY FAVORITE

Why I love this bird:



5 MY FAVORITE

Why I love this bird:



What do your favorite birds have in common? _____

What do they add to your days? _____





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My Notes & Observations



Use this space for your thoughts, questions, and discoveries.
Every note you make helps you connect more deeply with
the birds and your backyard.



Note to Self



Notice the little things.
Ask questions.
Stay curious.
Enjoy the journey.



NOTES



What surprised you this week in your backyard? _____

What do you want to learn more about? _____

What are you looking forward to seeing? _____





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Continue the Journey



*Your backyard is full of wonder—
and this is just the beginning.*

Every time you step outside, you have a
new opportunity to connect, learn, and
make a difference for birds.

Keep exploring. Keep noticing.
Keep caring for the birds you love.



KEEP GROWING AS A BIRDWATCHER



LEARN MORE

Explore field guides, books,
and local resources to
expand your knowledge.



CONNECT

Join a local birding group
or online community.
Share sightings and stories!



CREATE HABITAT

Add native plants, water
sources, and shelters to
make your yard a haven.



KEEP TRACKING

Use this tracker year after
year to see how your
backyard changes.

YOUR NEXT STEPS

☐ Spend more time watching
at different times of day.

☐ Learn to identify new species.

☐ Try bird photography
or journaling.

☐ Share your love for birds
with a friend or family
member.



What has been your favorite discovery so far? _____

How has birding in your backyard changed the way you see nature?

What do you hope to learn or experience next?



Thank you for being a friend to the birds.

Your curiosity, care, and compassion help create a better world—one backyard at a time.

KEEP LOOKING UP. THE BIRDS ARE GLAD YOU'RE HERE.





Every backyard has a story.



Thank you for letting
Backyard Bird Tracker
become part of yours.



See who visits today.



MIDWEST BIRDS
» WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN «

