

What's on the Wing at Adkins Arboretum?



Baltimore Oriole—Maryland's State bird, the male Baltimore oriole is a handsome creature with its striking black and orange plumage and wide white wingbars. The bird will sip nectar from oranges when placed strategically in your back yard. Look for it in spring and summer at Adkins Arboretum in the tall trees and near the bridge over the wetlands. (Photo by Wayne Bell)



Northern Saw-whet Owl—The tiny saw-whet owl is seen during fall migration at Adkins Arboretum, when they are caught in mist nets, banded and weighed. Volunteers who are studying the saw-whet population are happy to have the public come and observe their work. Check the Arboretum calendar for this yearly event. (Photo by Wayne Bell)



Ruby-throated Hummingbird—You can observe the tiny ruby-throated hummingbird in the gardens at the entrance to Adkins Arboretum in summer, flashing its red throat while sipping nectar and searching for tiny insects. The bird shown here is probably a first-year male, and is headed for its winter home in Mexico. (Photo by Royce Ball)



Northern Bobwhite Quail—You will recognize the familiar song (call) of this bird ("bob- white") as it rings out over the meadow. The bird is in serious decline due to habitat loss and predation. Our dedication to habitat preservation at the Arboretum should help this species. Press number 2 on the audio tour provided by the Arboretum to hear its call. (Photo by Gary Smyle)



Indigo Bunting—The bunting you see in this picture is molting, a process many birds undergo in certain seasons of the year. In its full, breeding plumage, it is a brilliant blue. You can see by its large beak it is a seedeater. Look for it in the trees near the meadow, and listen for its complex song, a series of trills and warbles. (Photo by Wayne Bell)



American Goldfinch—This bird is present all year at the Arboretum, but in winter it sports duller, browner feathers. In late spring and summer both males and females have yellow plumage, but the male wears a black cap. The birds feed on the seed balls of the sweet gum tree, so look for them wherever sweet gum trees are present. (Photo by Royce Ball)

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Eastern Bluebird—The bluebird is a cavity nester, and finds holes for nesting in dead trees. They have also benefited from boxes set up on the edge of the woods. We see them often in the fields and trees near the meadow. They wear the lovely blue mantle even in winter, and enjoy a diet of insects. (Photo by Wayne Bell)



Song Sparrow—The stocky-striped song sparrow is widespread all over our area, and you can see individuals in any low, weedy or bushy habitat at the Arboretum. Enjoy its song with its clear, trilling notes. (Photo by Wayne Bell)



Red-winged Blackbird—The harsh, gurgling trill (kon-ka-reee) is a distinct feature of summer in wet, bushy areas of the meadow and wetland. It is the voice of the red-winged blackbird. In winter, they are heavily striped instead of the glossy black and white with red epaulets seen in the picture, and often move about in large flocks. (Photo by Wayne Bell)



Rufous-sided Towhee—The rufous-sided towhee is present at the Arboretum most of the year. It is a little smaller than a robin, and this colorful picture is a male. It has a distinctive song, often described by birders as “Drink your teeeee...”. Towhees are often seen and heard as you enter the Arboretum, on the right in the brush and shrubs. (Photo by Royce Ball)



Ovenbird—The song of the ovenbird is unmistakable in the Arboretum woods in spring as it increases in volume. This secretive ground dweller is a regular visitor here. It gets its name from the bird's habit of building small oven-shaped nests on or near the ground. The bird is a neo-tropical migrant and travels long distances to enjoy the woods of the Arboretum. (Photo by Wayne Bell)



Common Yellowthroat—The common yellowthroat male shown here has a distinctive black mask. It frequents the marshy wetlands in at the entrance to the Arboretum, but it can also be found at the woodland edge in low bushes. Its song is a loud “wichety, wichety,wichety”, with a lot of variations. (Photo by Wayne Bell)