



CELEBRATE URBAN BIRDS

With their brilliant orange-and-black plumage, **orioles** are eagerly awaited by everyone each spring migration. Both the Baltimore Oriole in the East and the Bullock's Oriole in the West will visit sugar water feeders and orange halves placed on trees or balcony railings. Orioles may also take nesting material, such as string or yarn, if placed in open areas. Bullock's Orioles especially prefer red yarn and will readily incorporate it into their nests.



When feeding their nestlings, **Barn Swallows** carry several insects at a time to the nest, packing them together into a ball that they carry in their throats. A pair of swallows may bring up to 400 meals per day to their nestlings.



The **Peregrine Falcon** can reach a speed of 200 miles per hour when it dives for prey. The name "peregrine" means wanderer or traveler. Traveling up to 15,500 miles in a year, the Peregrine Falcon has one of the longest migrations of any North American bird. It was nearly exterminated from eastern North America by pesticide poisoning in the middle 20th century, but restoration efforts have made it a regular, if still uncommon sight in many large cities.



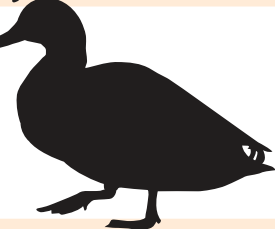
Mourning Doves are hunted heavily throughout most North America, yet they remain among the 10 most abundant birds in the United States.



A female **Brown-headed Cowbird** doesn't make a nest of her own. She lays her eggs in the nests of other bird species, which then raise the young cowbirds.



On average only 40 percent of **American Robin** nests successfully produce young. Only 25 percent of those young survive to November. Only about half of the robins alive in any year will make it to the next. A lucky robin can live to be 14 years old.



Mallards pair up in the fall, but they court each other throughout the winter. The female makes the nest by forming a shallow bowl on the ground in the moist earth. She only uses nesting material that she can reach with her bill while sitting on the nest. She may arrange tall plants overhead to hide herself and the nest. Only the female incubates the eggs and takes care of the ducklings.

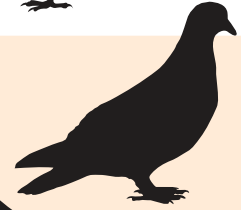


House Sparrows nest in cavities and will sometimes build their nests directly on top of active nests of native birds with live nestlings.

The **European Starling** is not native to North America. A group that wanted to introduce all birds mentioned in Shakespeare's writings to North America released about 100 starlings in New York City's Central Park in 1890-1892. There are now more than 200 million starlings across most of the continent. They will destroy eggs and nests of native birds to use their nesting cavities.



Homing Pigeons are the same species as ordinary city pigeons. They can find their way home from hundreds of miles away, and have been used in war to deliver messages across enemy lines. Both male and female **Rock Pigeons** produce "pigeon milk" which they feed to their hatchlings.



To eat road kill, **American Crows** have to wait for something else to tear open the body or for the body to decompose and soften, since a crow's beak isn't usually strong enough to tear open the dead animal's skin.



The **Cedar Waxwing** depends on fruit for food. Cedar Waxwings may become drunk (and may even die from alcohol intoxication) after eating fermented fruit in the spring.



Killdeer nest on the ground in open areas with little or no surrounding vegetation. Gravel rooftops attract Killdeer for nesting but they can also be dangerous. If there is little food, chicks will need to leave the roof quickly after hatching to survive. Chicks may fall from rooftops and die when lured off the roof too early. Green roofs may help chicks through this sensitive period if they attract invertebrate prey, such as earthworms.



The red or yellow color of a male **House Finch** comes from pigments that it gets in its food. The more pigment in the food, the redder the male.



When hunting for fish, **Black-crowned Night-Herons** dive feetfirst, or plunge headfirst into the water. They generally sleep during the day except when they need the daylight hours to feed their young. Young Black-crowned Night-Herons may aggressively defend their nests, regurgitating and defecating on human intruders, squawking with wings outstretched and beak wide open!





URBAN
BIRD
TALLY
SHEET