



# GREAT BIRDING PROJECTS



An approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing

10 May 2012

## Spring Opportunities

*IMBD and lots more...*

It's early May, and lots of folks are out in the field. For many, this is the perfect time to enjoy a period of serious bird migration.

So, let this serve as a simple reminder to enjoy - and share - the wonders of migration that spring has to offer. Of course, those in the south - Florida, Texas, and Southern California, for example - may have already seen a peak of migration. And those in the north - up to Alaska, have yet to experience the migration that may be expected.



Still, it's a great seasonal opportunity!

This year, for example, International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) is celebrating 20 years of activity. Created in 1993, the event is now held at over 500 sites throughout the Western Hemisphere, reaching hundreds of thousands of young people and adults. The official date for IMBD in the U.S. and Canada has been the second Saturday in May each year, but today, IMBD programs and events can be held year-round. Nonetheless, it seems that most of them occur in the spring.

These are held at schools, parks, libraries, museums, zoos, refuges, nature centers, and other locations accessible to a curious and interested public

For more information on IMBD, see [here](#).

As part of the celebration, this year's bird conservation theme is focusing on 20 creative ways people may help preserve birds, activities that can occur every day.

You can view these grand ideas [here](#).

There are lots of ways to get involved this season in bird conservation, bird education, habitat projects, and birdwatching. Indeed, some of these activities are overlapping with bird and nature festivals, fund-raising "birdathons," and, of course, special spring bird walks. Whatever you might do, it is particularly important *to share*. Here is an opportunity to motivate people of all ages to get outdoors to learn about birds.

## Four-season Bird Feeding

One of the most significant changes in bird-feeding activity over the past few decades has been the transition from feeding birds in the winter to feeding birds throughout the year.

While bird feeding historically was a winter activity, by the 1950s and 1960s warm-season feeding was growing. Seed companies even promoted products suited for summer feeding. Some of this expanded through initial hummingbird interest, some through the presentation of grapes, oranges, sliced apples, raisins, and other fruit for birds. Jelly for orioles and other birds was an important added feature.

By the late 1980s, the trend was well established. Nowhere, of course, do our birds "need" this sort of feeding. It's much more a treat for the backyard watcher than it is a necessity for the birds.



*But that's okay!* It is a great way to deepen casual birders' interest in birds and birding, a great way to help "graduate" the viewer to another level of curiosity and commitment.

Finally, the spread of four-season bird feeding by the late 1980s has helped sustain businesses which might begin to thrive on a year-round basis. It is no coincidence that this was the time when wild bird feeding specialty stores began opening throughout the country.

### Words to Consider:

"I never heard a Wood Thrush until I was a grown man, though I must have been surrounded by them every spring. Each year I discover new sights and sounds to teach me how blind and deaf I must still be."

- Louis J. Halle (diplomat, professor, and author - 1910-1998), *Spring in Washington* (1963)

### GBP Website

Great Birding Projects is a vehicle to promote a creative approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing. It is not "strictly birding," and it is not "strictly conservation." Instead, GBP functions as a bridge to an innovative engagement between people and birds. Contact me concerning your avitourism interests, site and trail/byway evaluations, "beyond birding" workshops, and group presentations.



You can see what Great Birding Projects has to offer on the new GBP website at:

[GreatBirdingProjects.com](http://GreatBirdingProjects.com)

I can also be reached at the e-mail and/or P.O. Box address below:

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