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Nov. 5 Iowa Outdoors

1 message

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IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 5, 2013www.iowadnr.gov | [facebook.com/iowadnr](https://www.facebook.com/iowadnr) | twitter.com/iowadnr | [pinterest.com/iowadnr](https://www.pinterest.com/iowadnr)

1. Preparing Now to Feed Birds Through the Winter
2. Ottumwa Man Wins Adventure Ready Gift Card Giveaway

PREPARING NOW TO FEED BIRDS THROUGH THE WINTER

The last of the leaves are hanging on but shorter, cooler days remind us that the next season is approaching – the bird feeding season.

Legions of backyard birders are swinging into action, ready for the feathered flocks that are gathering nearby.

“It always starts this time in the autumn, the birds are setting up their feeding regimes,” said Pat

Schlarbaum, wildlife diversity technician with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "It's a great time of year to get your bird feeders cleaned up, have some water available and the birds will respond.

"It makes you feel good. It brings the beauty of the outdoors right to your picture window, right outside your kitchen. It adds immeasurably to the outdoor experience."

Next to gardening, watching wildlife rates as Iowa's top outdoor activity according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. More than 750,000 Iowans are estimated to watch and feed wildlife each year. A big chunk of the \$300 million spent on wildlife is birdseed, suet, feeders and other feather-friendly supplies.

The biggest bang for the bird-feeding buck? It comes in a big brown bag.

"Sunflower seeds are probably *the* preferred seed for the majority of songbirds that we like to attract at our bird feeding areas. Particularly the cardinals, the tufted titmice, chickadees, nuthatches, they all like black sunflower seed," he said.

If sunflower seeds are the choice, take a closer look – on the back.

A high fat content – as high as 38 percent – is more valuable in the cold when birds have to stoke up on calories to survive. Some bird watchers swear they see birds picking through feeders to find the good stuff, wasting the other seeds on the ground.

Suet attracts a crowd, too - various woodpeckers, flickers and nuthatches. Don't forget the fresh water. It's not just for drinking but for birds to bathe in. Clean feathers keep them warmer than dirty ones in the cold to come.

"Your bird feeder will be one stop in a range of feeding opportunities so don't worry leaving it for the weekend, but realize that when you do have seed out, the water, the birds are gonna come to your setting and that's what we strive for," Schlarbaum said.

MEDIA CONTACT: Pat Schlarbaum, Wildlife Diversity Technician, Wildlife Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, [515-432-2823](tel:515-432-2823).

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OTTUMWA MAN WINS ADVENTURE READY GIFT CARD GIVEAWAY

Brandon Dunning, from Ottumwa, is this week's winner of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Adventure Ready Gift Card Giveaway. Dunning won a \$50 gift card generously donated by Mills Fleet Farm.

Hunters and anglers who purchase one of four new licenses in 2013 will be automatically entered

into a weekly drawing for a \$50 gift card.

To participate in the drawing, Iowans can simply purchase one of the four qualifying licenses at any license retailer or on the DNR's website at www.iowadnr.gov. The four qualifying licenses are:

- **Bonus Line License** – resident and nonresident anglers can fish with one additional line (with the purchase of the annual fishing license, which allows two lines), for \$12.
- **Outdoor Combo License** – annual resident hunting/fishing/habitat combo license for \$47.
- **Angler's Special** – a three-year resident fishing license for \$53.
- **Hunter's Special** – a three-year resident hunting license with habitat included for \$86.

The DNR will draw every Monday at noon and announce the weekly winner on its website and through Twitter on Tuesday afternoon. The promotion will run through December 23, 2013.

Bass Pro Shops is sponsoring the Nov. 11 gift card drawing. Weekly winner announcements, gift card sponsors and complete drawing details can be found at www.iowadnr.gov/giveaway.

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