Birds Around Alberta (Autumn)

Dark-eyed Junco

Generally a grey to black head with a pinkish bill, dark eyes and white tail edges that flash in flight.

There are four “races” of juncos in Alberta. Each has a distinct colour variation. Most often feeds on the ground, but visits bird feeders too.

Great Gray Owl

Our largest owl, told by its impressive facial disks and white bow-tie. Muted gray overall, but an imposing presence.

Great Grays are often approachable if you are quite and cautious. Often found in forest clearings, along roadsides and meadows.

Gray Jay

Lager than a robin with an overall gray appearance. They sport a long tail and light forehead and cheek.

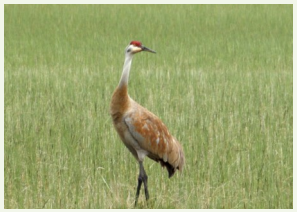
Known as “Camp robber” or “Whiskey Jack” they are bold and quick to visit you while camping or picnicking looking to pick up an easy meal.

Red-breasted Nuthatch

Small, with a blue-grey back, rusty front and stubby tail. It also sports a black cap and eye line and white eyebrow.

Widespread in Alberta found in all forested areas. Listen for their nasally “*yank-yank-yank”* call.

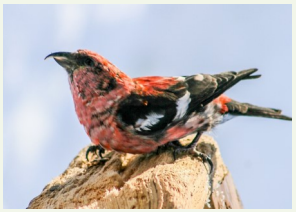
Sandhill Crane



Over a metre in length and a wing-span approaching two metres they sport a red crown and grey body.

Cranes are known for their courtship dancing that renews their pair bonds each spring. In summer they may take on a buff-orange colour.

White-winged Crossbill



Smaller and sleeker than a robin with, black wings and tail and white wing bars. Males reddish, females, dull yellow.

As the name suggests these birds have crossed bill tips. A unique feature used to pry open the cones of conifers to get at the seeds inside.

Bohemian Waxwing

Sleek overall, with a crested head and yellow band at the end of the tail. Also look for buff orange under the tail.

Large flocks (100s of birds) may be seen in towns and cities during the winter months feeding on Mountain Ash berries and other fruit.

Townsend’s Solitaire

A little smaller than a robin, overall grey with a white eye ring. Also look for peach-coloured wing patches in flight.

Mostly seen in the mountains, but during spring migration may be seen throughout the grassland and parkland regions too.

White-crowned Sparrow

A bold black and white striped head help identify this sparrow. Listen for “*I-I-I-got-to-go-wee-wee-now”.*

Widespread in Alberta often in brushy or shrubby habitats. Often feeds on the ground scratching around for insects and seeds.

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Remember keep a safe distance from all wildlife including birds. You may feed birds in your yard, but please don’t feed them in our Parks.

Alberta Alberta Parks