

Birds

Mostly birds were for hunting. Shooting bb's at sparrows, grackles, dove, quail, and pheasant was for sport and eating. It was later in life that I started appreciating the beauty and uniqueness of the individual species.

The camera became my weapon of choice. Skills in Photoshop became my goal.

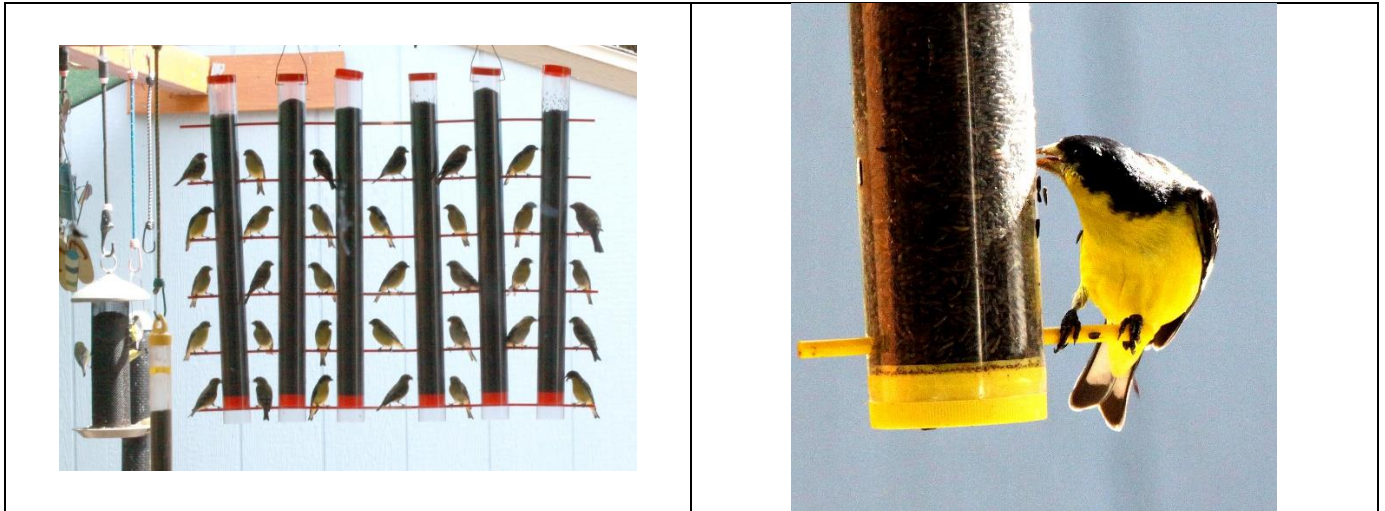
The flight patterns, the songs, the seasonal migrations, the behaviors, the food preferences, and interactions between bird species became a late-life-long study. After moving to our new home in 2009, the birds were fed well. Living on a green belt, I had plenty of opportunities to set up the breeding thatch, water availability, and feeders.

Some food attracts cardinals, titmice, chickadees, and house finches; other foods attract woodpeckers, suet bars are best. The cheap food attracts flocks of sparrows which can ruin the scene for the better birds. Safflower seeds have become very expensive, and it is a shame to waste it on sparrows even though it is not their preferred food. Lesser goldfinches and goldfinches prefer (thistle) seed (socks or tubes) and can often congregate in large numbers. Dove are ground feeders and always love the cheaper stuff. Sunflower seeds are out since it attracts all the squirrels for miles around.

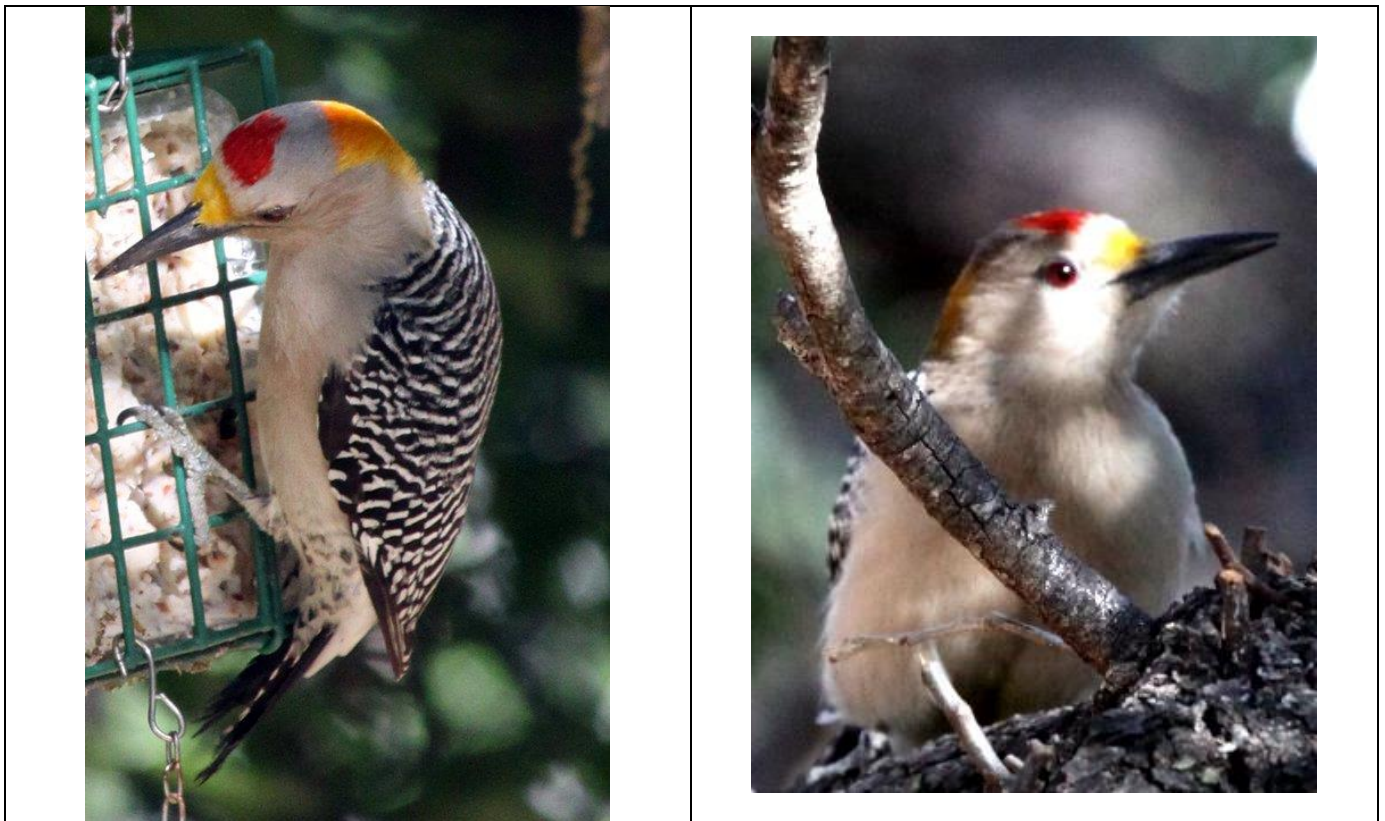
Three dove species: white wings (little pigeons), mourning (turtle), and Inca (Spanish), all of which do not need to lift their heads to swallow from the fountain. Three finch species: house finches (males with red breasts and females without, both loving safflower seeds), goldfinches and lesser goldfinches- males (black on the backs and yellow on breasts) and females with small drab yellow/brown colors, loving thistle seed. Red-bellied and golden-fronted woodpeckers attacking the suet squares. Cardinals like safflower most of all, but it is interesting that they feed on the ground so much. They are easy to video and feed their babies. And they have much better night vision. They will be the last feeders at night and the first feeders in the morning.

Part 2 - Episodes and Memories

Wrens are my favorites. Carolinas in the back, Bewicks in the front. I never see them on feeders, only on the ground, moving debris to unearth bugs, worms, and anything else organic. I have raised many wrens in the back and front as you will see below along with many other friends I have made.



Lesser Goldfinches



Golden Fronted Woodpeckers

Part 2 - Episodes and Memories



TitMice

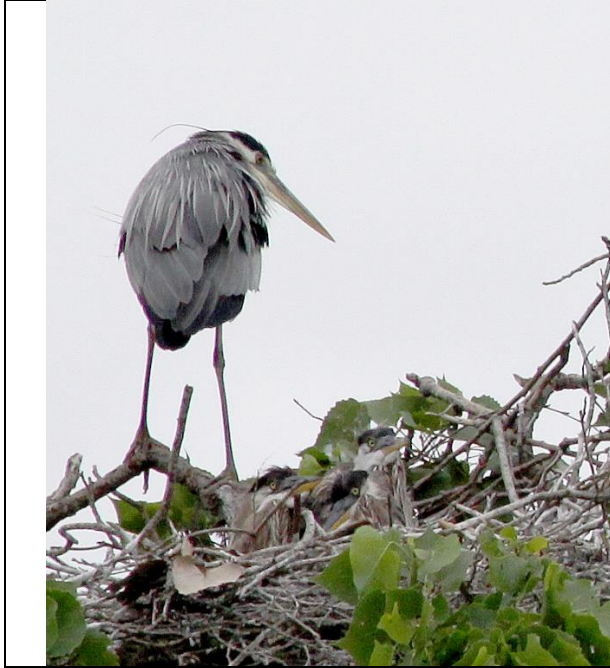


Cardinals

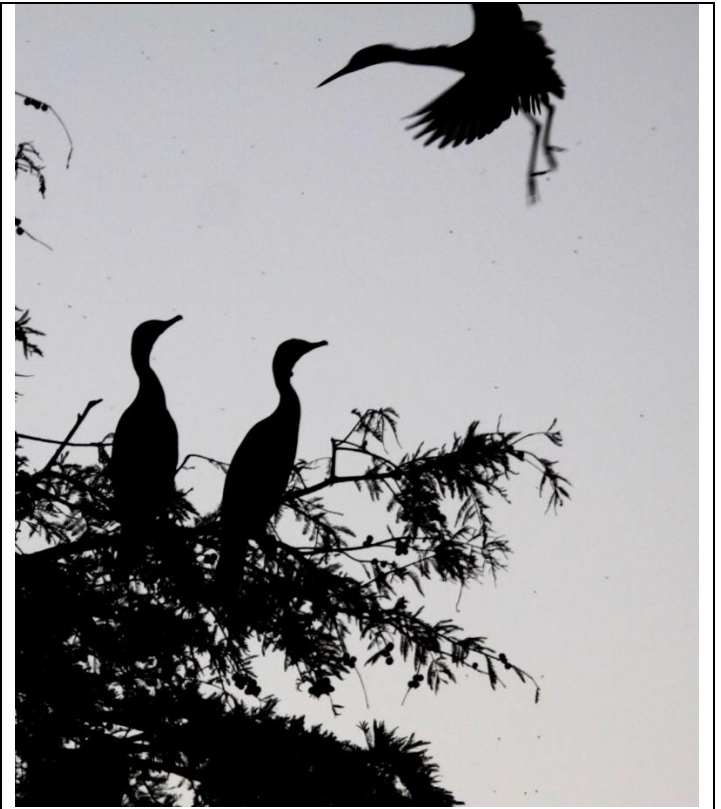


Wrens

Part 2 - Episodes and Memories

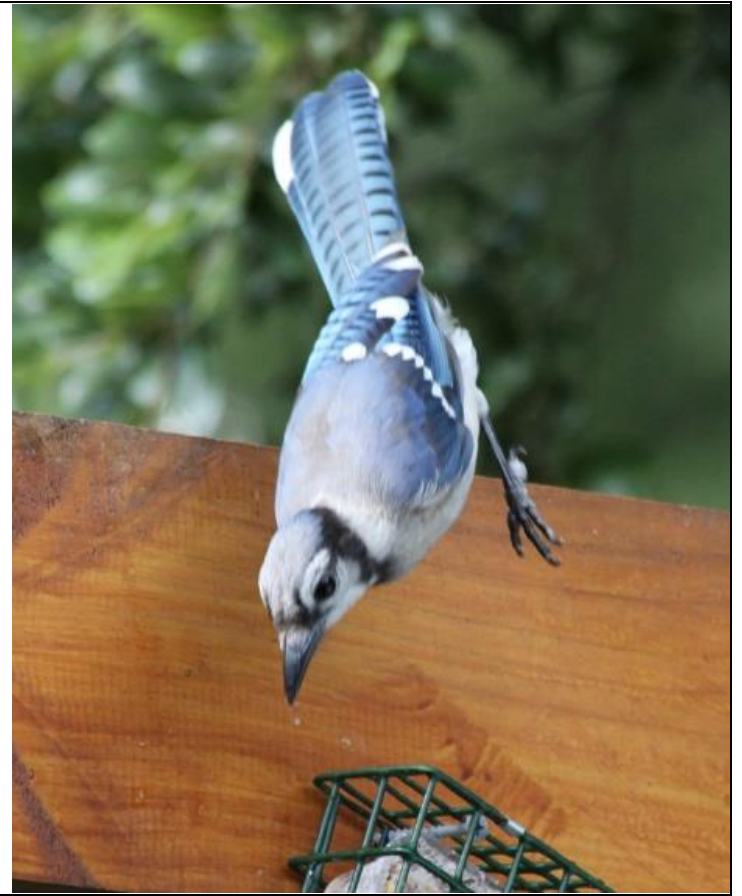
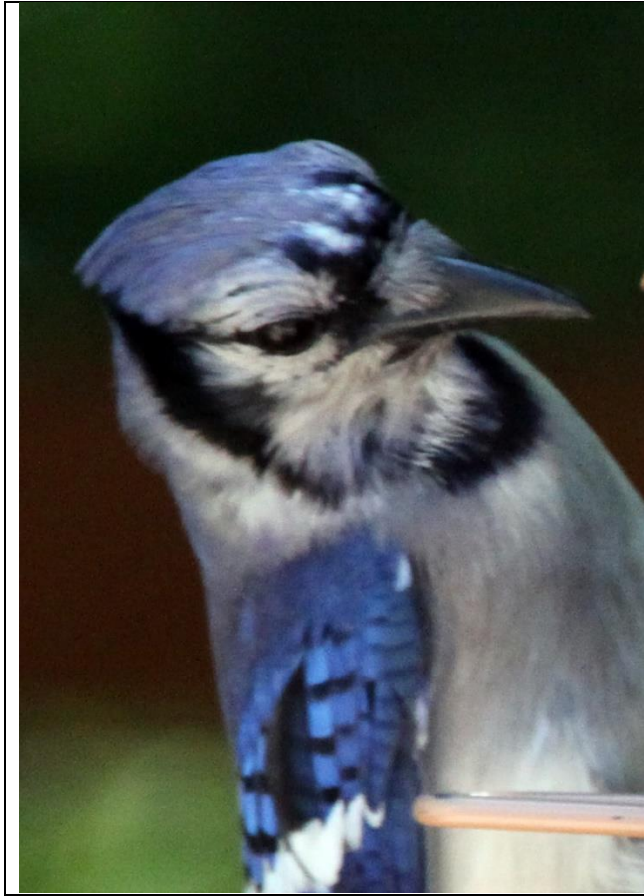


Herons

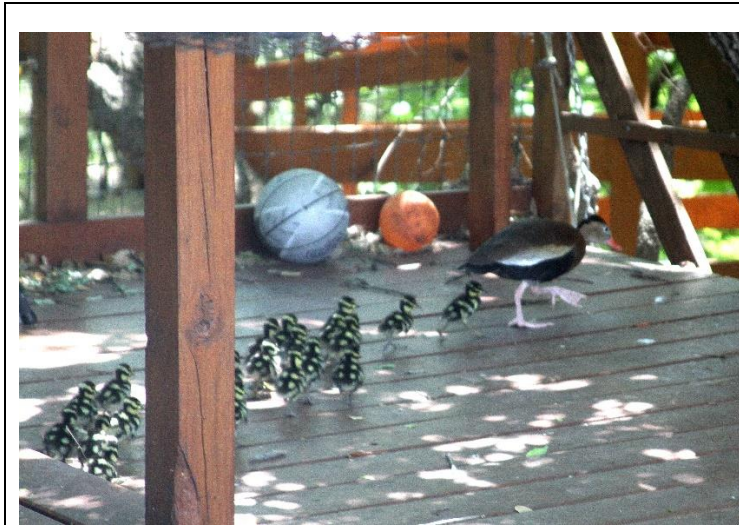


Egrets

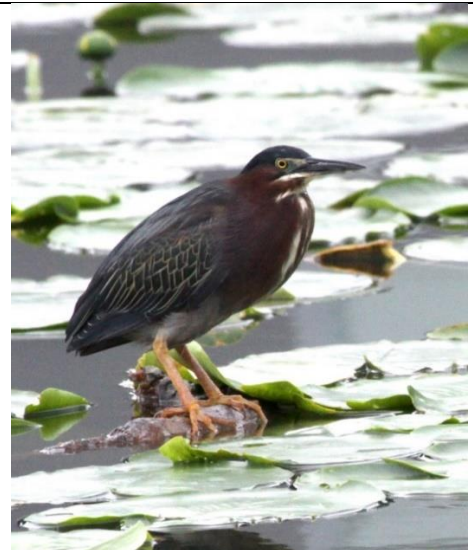
Part 2 - Episodes and Memories



BlueJays



Whistling Ducks walking young

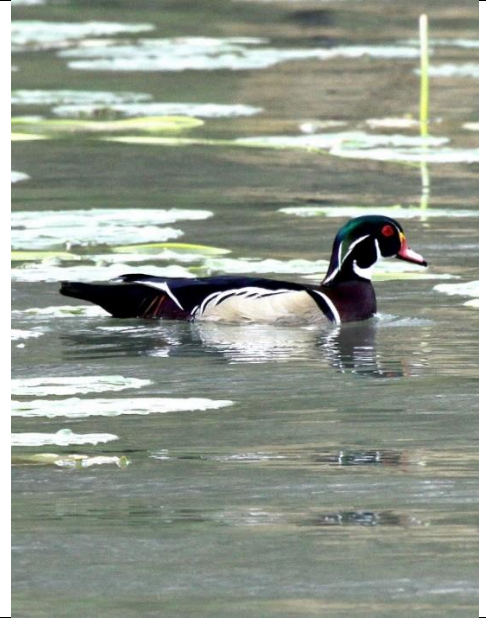


Crane's Heron

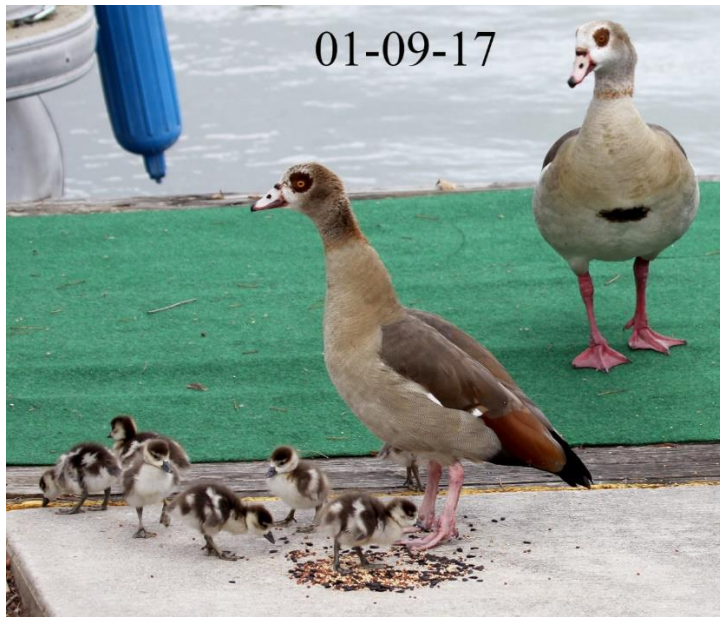
Part 2 - Episodes and Memories



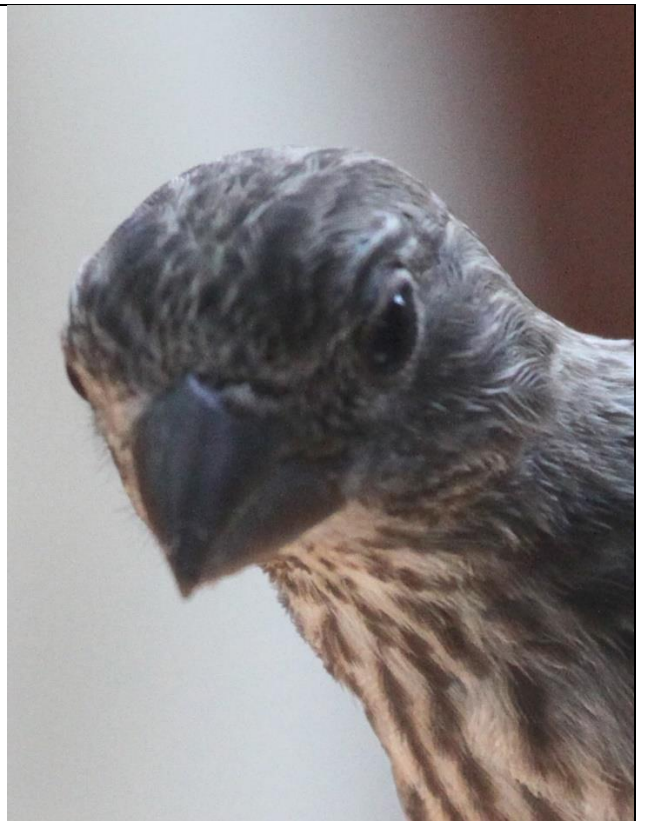
Red-Shouldered Hawk



Wood Duck



Egyptian Geese



House Finch