

# WHERE TO RELEASE SONGBIRDS



By Maureen Eiger

## HARD DECISIONS

- Is it a flock or solitary bird?
- Who can be released together?
- Short or long distant migrant?
- Habitat specific?
- Time of year?
- Soft release vs hard release?
- Is it a local backyard bird?
- Carrying capacity of location?
- Did you check the weather report?



**RESEARCH & UNDERSTAND EACH SPECIES  
THEIR LIFE DEPENDS ON A GOOD RELEASE SPOT**

# MIGRATORY BIRDS – Decide, do they need a flock?



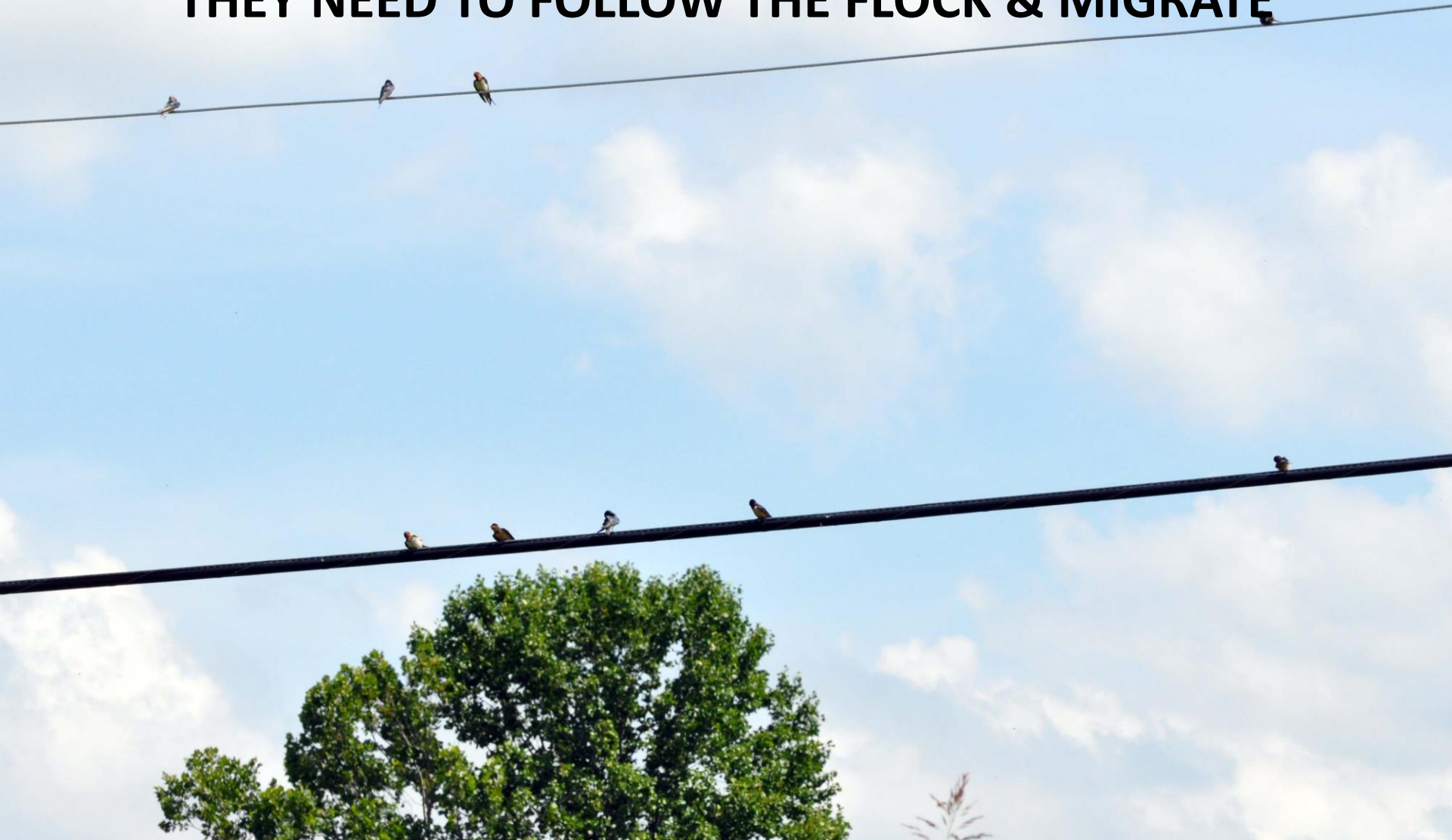


# **CEDAR WAXWINGS**

**Nomadic flock  
birds  
Need to find a  
flock**



**MARTINS, SWALLOWS AND SWIFTS  
SHOULD BE RELEASED INTO A FLOCK  
THEY NEED TO FOLLOW THE FLOCK & MIGRATE**



# **CHIMNEY SWIFTS SHOULD BE RELEASED AT THEIR EVENING ROOSTING SPOT**



**It is the best way to be  
assured they will join up  
and migrate with a flock**

# CAN “SINGLES” BE RELEASED TOGETHER?

In the fall some birds are found in loose mixed flocks.

- Barn swallows and rough wing swallows are often found together
- Tree swallows and Purple Martins are usually found together
- Sparrows, cardinals and finches can usually be released in the same place
- Most warblers, flycatchers and vireos use the same habitat



# NON MIGRANTS

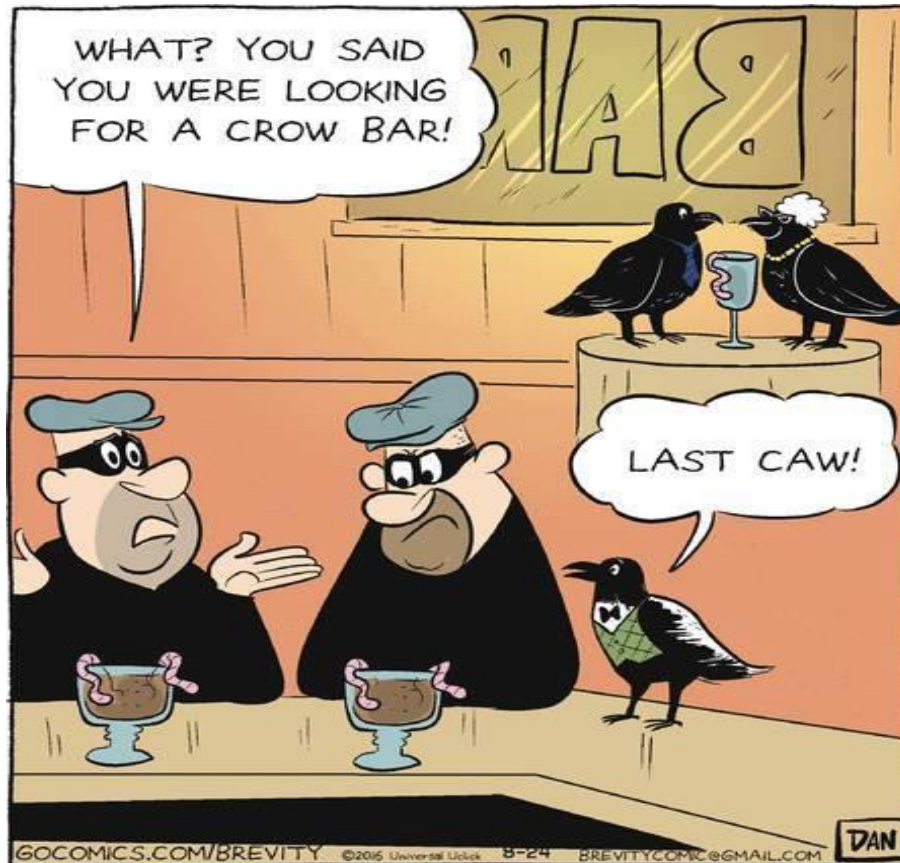
Common flock birds like mourning doves don't migrate.



Can form a new flock in right habitat.



**Crows need to go back to their family group, especially if an adult. Though a group (min 3) of fledges raised together can form a new family.**



**Be careful of releasing adult or older “bully birds” like mockingbirds, blue jays, and woodpeckers in the same area as other adult birds. They will just get chased off. Fledges are usually more accepted.**



# HABITAT SPECIFIC BIRDS – TIME OF YEAR

Release where found depending on time of year.

Or in proper habitat or staging area for that species.

Is elevation important?



The screenshot shows the eBird website header with the eBird logo, a bird image, and the Zeiss logo. The navigation menu includes Home, About eBird, Submit Observations, View and Explore Data, and My eBird. A welcome message says "Welcome to eBird" with a "Register as a New User" button. The main content area features "Birding News and Features" with two articles: "Animated migration maps created with eBird data" and "Are you really making Casual Observations?". A list of "TOP REGIONS: Most Checklists Submitted During August 2006" is shown on the right, along with a "Regional Projects Near You:" section.

**eBird**  We make it visible

Home About eBird Submit Observations View and Explore Data My eBird

Welcome to eBird  
Where your bird sightings make a difference! [Register as a New User](#)

**Birding News and Features**

[Animated migration maps created with eBird data](#)

The recent rise in the occurrence of [Avian Influenza](#) has focused attention on the importance of bird migration. Since eBird collects data throughout the year, it has quickly become one of the best sources of migration data. Researchers at Cornell University's Department of Computer Science and Theory Center recently used eBird data from the [Avian Knowledge Network](#) to explore the patterns of bird migration in the northern parts of the Western Hemisphere. They developed an animated mapping application to provide a visualization of the patterns of migration. Some of these animated maps are now available to eBird users.



[Are you really making Casual Observations?](#)

We've noticed at eBird that many observers are choosing the "Casual Observation" methodology when in fact they are actually conducting more rigorous types of surveys while birding. Casual Observations are of limited value because there is little effort information required, which allows them to be used in fewer analyses because we know less about how you went birding. It's important to let us know what kind of effort you put into making your observations. Please read on for a better understanding of the eBird methodology choices, and to learn how to make your data most valuable.



**TOP REGIONS: Most Checklists Submitted During August 2006 (Updated 7 Aug)**

- [Pennsylvania -- 603](#)
- [Texas -- 445](#)
- [Wisconsin -- 414](#)
- [New York -- 235](#)
- [California -- 224](#)
- [Washington -- 106](#)
- [Florida -- 83](#)
- [Ohio -- 81](#)
- [Virginia -- 75](#)
- [New Jersey -- 70](#)
- [Michigan -- 67](#)
- [Georgia -- 63](#)
- [Maryland -- 54](#)
- [Tennessee -- 50](#)
- [British Columbia -- 48](#)
- [Colorado -- 48](#)
- [Vermont -- 48](#)
- [Massachusetts -- 44](#)
- [Arizona -- 39](#)
- [North Carolina -- 30](#)

**Regional Projects Near You:**



## **SOFT RELEASE VS HARD RELEASE**



**What is best for the bird?**

Depends on who and what lives in your neighborhood.  
(cats/hawks/people)

What time of year it is and how old the birds are that you are releasing.  
Often they just get chased off.



Consider their dependency and easy habituation for certain species like blue jays.  
What is your habitat?

**CONSIDER - IS IT A “LOCAL” BACKYARD BIRD?**



# WHAT IS THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF YOUR LOCATION?



# CONSIDER THE WEATHER AT RELEASE TIME





## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

- Network with other bird rehabbers.
- Make friends or contacts with bird club members.
- Sign up for some bird list-serves.
- Create a backyard bird list.
- Look up and read about each species you get in.
- Remember where and when you release your rehabbed bird is crucial for their survival.

# QUESTIONS?

