

# The Fish Eagle

Newsletter

Term 1



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Hello eco-warriors!!

It gives me great joy and gladness to be with you again in this new year. We hope 2023 brings you the privilege of learning new things so you can learn to persevere on the path to success. We will be on a voyage this year to make ourselves better as we build on previous knowledge gained and overall, make our world a better place for humans and animals.

Yours Andrew Mbenjile.



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*Hello eco-warriors!!*

*I am excited to welcome you to this interesting issue of The Fish Eagle Newsletter. In this issue, we are going to learn about some of the birds you can find in your garden and how you can attract them by making a simple bird bath. I hope you will have fun!*



# Birds in my Garden

## What is a Garden Bird?

A garden bird is any bird species that regularly visit our gardens for food and shelter. Their visit to our gardens depends on the types of trees, shrubs, food, water and plants present; these can attract different species of birds.

## Importance of Garden Birds

Birds add life, sound and color to our lives. Caring for birds encourages children to spend time outside and teaches them how important it is to care for nature. Children that learn to care for birds develop respect for the environment. Birds act as pollinators by moving pollen from one flower to another. Pollination helps to produce seeds and fruits. Birds control pests such as mosquitoes, ticks and lice. Birds are also primary indicators of the health of the environment. If you do not have birds visiting your yard, it means that your yard is not healthy! Find out more on how to make the environment attractive to birds on page 5 and 6. There are quite a number of bird species found in the garden, however, we will learn about 2 common garden birds which are: House-Sparrow and White-Browed Robin-chat.



*Hey, I am a Bird that loves to visit your beautiful garden everyday and I enjoy waking you up and making you happy!*

*Look around your garden. Is it healthy and environmentally friendly for birds? If not, do something to ensure it is a place that birds can safely visit every day!*



# House Sparrow



House Sparrow. Source: eBird

These are brown-colored with black streaks on their back. The male and female house sparrows are different in color; the male is dark brown with a black bib, grey chest and white cheeks and the female is light brown on most parts of its body with no black bib, crown or white cheeks. They are found in cities and farms and also in isolated houses surrounded by forests.

House Sparrows mostly nest in buildings, finding holes or using birdhouses and boxes put out by humans in their gardens. Their nests are made of dried vegetation that they stuff into a hole until it is filled. They then use feathers, string and paper for the lining. They sometimes build next to each other and often reuse their nests. Their diet includes seeds, weeds, grass seeds, and grain. In the breeding season, adults feed their young ones with insects.

## Fun fact

The house sparrow commonly known as Black Chest in Zambia is from Europe and Asia. It was brought to Africa by people. It is a social bird that likes to be found near humans. That's the reason why they nest near our homes!





## White-browed Robin-Chat



White-Browed Robin-Chat. *Source: eBird*

The White-Browed Robin-Chat is a shy and very noticeable bird found in the gardens. They are brightly colored and distinctive (different in a special way), both because of their lovely orange underparts, a black crown with white eyebrows. This makes it easy to spot them when they are hiding in darker places -It almost glows. Its wings and back are grey-brown and it has black eyes, and light brown central feathers and its tail is long and brown. White-browed Robin Chat's beautiful song makes it so noticeable and it is one of the prettiest garden birds.

In Zambia, the White-Browed Robin Chat breeds during the rainy season and they usually lay 2 or 3 eggs. The female builds a nest which is made of dead leaves, twigs and other plant material built in a tree hole, stump, river bank or on the ground. The White-browed Robin-Chat is a bird that feeds on insects and seeds, ants, termites, and caterpillars taken from the ground and sometimes it feeds on fruit.



### Fun fact

"The White-browed Robin-chat feeds mainly on insects, seeds and grains. This bird usually lays only 3 eggs and both mum and dad have to incubate these eggs until they hatch."

# How to make a simple bird bath



## WHAT IS A BIRDBATH?

A bird bath is a bowl or pool of water where birds can go to get safe water to drink and to have a wash. A bird bath can be made from different types of materials such as wood, metal, plastic or glass. A bird bath can also be made from old household items that are no longer in use such as an old plastic bowl or a big container.



## Tips to consider when making a bird bath.

1. Ensure the bird bath is large enough for birds to spread their wings for a proper wash and shallow enough to allow them to stand in the middle.
2. Make sure that the surface of the bird bath is rough so that birds can grip it with their claws and not slip.
3. Ensure that the bird bath is placed in the shade to keep the water cool.
4. Make sure that the bird bath is placed in a safe place away from predators like cats.

## What are the benefits of bird baths to birds?



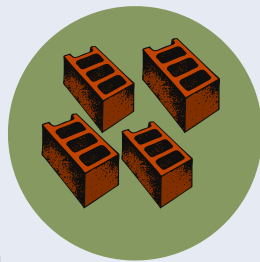
Birds need water to drink just like people and they also like to wash their bodies in water. Having a bird bath for birds to splash around in allows them to keep their feathers healthy by removing dust, loose feathers and parasites from their feathers. A bird bath also helps maintain a bird's body cool.

There are different ways in which you can make a bird bath but in our case, we will look at two ways. The first one is a ground bird bath and the other one is a hanging bird bath.



## GROUND BIRD BATH

You will need a plastic bowl or a plastic basin, 4 bricks, and freshwater for a ground bird bath.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place the 4 bricks on the ground in the garden or under a tree.
2. Place the basin on top of the bricks.
3. Make sure that the basin is steady.
4. Fill the plastic basin with fresh water.
5. Place a stone big enough to rise above the water level for the birds to stand on.



## HANGING BIRD BATH

For a hanging bird bath, you will need a bowl or basin, a rope, and a tree where you can hang the basin.



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Get the rope and tie it around the basin by either making three holes on the sides of the basin 2 cm from the top or by tying the bottom of the basin making three strands where the basin can not fall from.
2. Tie the rope to a tree branch.
3. Fill the basin with fresh water.
4. Place a stone big enough to rise above the water level for the birds to stand on.





# Lusaka National Park Wildlife Discovery Center

BirdWatch Zambia  
Education Hut

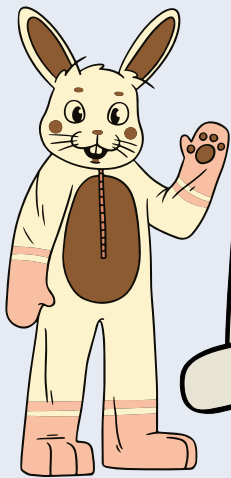


In 2022, Game Rangers International (GRI) opened a unique and immersive Wildlife Discovery Centre at the Lusaka National Park. The centre not only provides free conservation education to children but is also the new home of the renowned Elephant Nursery. Fully accessible to all, the Wildlife Discovery Centre welcomes local and international visitors each year to immerse themselves in interactive displays and exhibitions that highlight conservation issues and the efforts to resolve them. There are three conservation/education huts at the Discovery Centre and BirdWatch Zambia (BWZ) owns one of them, where BWZ will showcase different programs run by the organization as well as raise awareness of bird and habitat conservation in Zambia. Check out some cool paintings on page on the walls of our educational hut at the Wildlife Discovery Centre at Lusaka National Park on page 8!

We will also be conducting a variety of activities with pupils at the park including educational talks, nature walks, Elephant viewing, picnics and art competitions among others. Make sure you tell your parents and teachers about it!



# Do you want to be a conservationist?



Come to our education hut and learn about birds to further your understanding of the birds we have in Zambia



Come to our education hut and learn how you can take part in advocating for better use and management of the environment. Your voice can make a difference!



Come to our education hut and learn how you can take part in protecting the environment and our planet through planting trees!

