

BLUE RIDGE BIRD OBSERVER

JULY 2026

WONDERFUL WORLD OF WARBLERS

Members of the *Parulidae* family, otherwise known as warblers, are some of the most diverse and prolific migratory visitors that we get throughout the late spring and summer seasons. Of the 120 species of New World Warblers, the *Carolina Bird Club* estimates that North Carolina is populated by an average of 40 different species throughout the spring and autumn migratory periods.

While there are some species that utilize the Blue Ridge Mountains as their breeding grounds, such as the Blackburnian Warbler, many species travel through North Carolina to reach their northward destinations. These are known as transient migrants. While more uncommon due to their fleeting presence within the state, birds such as the Magnolia Warbler, the Cape May Warbler, and the Bay-breasted Warbler are uncommon visitors that should be looked out for as well.

Hooded Warbler



While they may be in the same family, many warblers differ from one another in terms of their nesting habits. For example, the Hooded Warbler pictured above is known to nest in dense shrubbery, usually a foot off the ground. The Northern Parula to the left utilizes lichen or moss to weave a nest together in the high tree canopies. This is an example of similar birds occupying different ecological niches. An ecological niche can be defined as the role an animal occupies in the ecosystem, and its interactions with biotic and abiotic factors within the habitat.

By placing her nest above the ground within dense plant matter, the Hooded Warbler is able to capture leaf-dwelling insects, while the Northern Parula often gleans insects from the underside of leaves. Their insectivorous habits may overlap, but they each have a distinct method of insect population control. This is why the preservation of diverse habitats is so important—the ideal nesting place for one warbler may not be suitable for another, and as a result, one species may continue to thrive while another declines.



Northern Parula

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WINDOW STRIKES: WHAT TO DO?

Due to their difficulty perceiving glass, birds are often the victims of window collisions. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an estimated 1 - 1.2 **billion** birds die every year as a result of hitting glass. The trouble with neurologic injuries of this nature is that they are often deceiving. While a bird may seem to recover and then fly away, a 2024 study conducted by the American Bird Conservancy concluded that roughly 60 percent of birds will later succumb to internal bleeding, brain damage, or shock. Instead of keeping an eye on the bird and seeing if it flies away, if you witness a window collision with a bird that cannot properly fly away at first, it is always best to capture the bird and locate a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, or a wildlife rehabilitation center.

The website **anhow.org** can help locate the nearest licensed professional near you, with contact information included. As for capturing a bird, you can often gently toss a hand towel over the bird and carefully scoop it up. Once contained in a well-ventilated box or closed container, it is best to avoid giving any water or food, as this can cause complications with possible internal injuries. Additionally, if it must be kept overnight, make sure to keep the bird somewhere quiet and warm until transportation is possible.



Action Alert - Prevent Window Strikes

A great way to prevent birds from striking your window is the use of bird-friendly window decals. Some manufacturers focus on stylish decals such as leaves or flowers, that are also visible to birds with the use of UV (ultraviolet light) vision. There are also many standard preventative measures that can be found online and easily applied, such as **Acopian Birdsavers** (shown above). For those on a budget, ensuring that feeders are either very close to the window or at least 30 ft away can also help reduce window collisions.

By placing the feeder right up against the window, birds are already slowing down to land as they approach. Additionally, window shaders allow for you to still see outward, but diminish the reflective qualities of the window that causes birds to mistake glass for the sky, trees, or water. By taking steps to reduce the likelihood of a window strike, you could potentially be saving the lives of several birds per year.

VOLUNTEER WITH US!



Indigo Bunting



French Broad Banding Station *Bird's Eye View* Visit Days:

Visitors are invited to the French Broad Banding Station at 7 or 9 am on the following dates:

- July 27th
- August 8th

Visitors will be able to see wild birds up close, watch bird banding demonstrations, and have a front row seat to biologists working in the field!

Scan the QR code below to register, or email bigbaldbanding@gmail.com



Kentucky Warbler



French Broad Banding Station