



About Our Cover

The cover image shows part of a flock of at least 150 cedar waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) eating the fruit of the cockspur hawthorn (*Crataegus crusgalli*) on the campus of the College of Lake County in Gurnee, IL. As you can see from the image, the trees were full of berries when they started. The birds completely stripped all three trees in less than a week and moved on for the rest of the fall and winter. They have the amusing trait of passing berries or even apple blossoms from one bird to the next down a long row sitting on a branch until one bird eats the food. Cedar waxwings tend to form flocks in the winter months in areas with significant amounts of berries. Their range is across most of the United States except the very dry deserts of the West, and they winter as far south as Central America. Although their diet is omnivorous, cedar waxwings are one of the few songbirds in the United States that can survive on only fruit for months at a time. According to the Cornell Ornithology Lab, the young of the brown-headed cowbird (a brood parasite that normally lays eggs in the nests of other birds) often die in cedar waxwing nests because they can't survive the high-fruit diet. The photograph was taken on a cold day, using a canon 50D with a 100–400 zoom by Bob Remedi, Associate Professor of Biology at College of Lake County (e-mail: remedi@clcllinois.edu). This image and caption won first prize in the recent *ABT* cover photo contest.

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