Backyard birds in the Jayhawk Audubon Society membership area (native species only)

Food Preferences - Cornell/All About Birds.org - Life History tab - Food section

Year-round

American Crow	American Crows eat a vast array of foods, including grains, seeds, nuts, fruits, berries, and many kinds of small animals such as earthworms and mice. They eat many insects, including some crop pests, and also eat aquatic animals such as fish, young turtles, crayfish, mussels, and clams. A frequent nest predator, the American Crow eats the eggs and nestlings of many species including sparrows, robins, jays, terns, loons, and eiders. Also eats carrion and garbage.
American Goldfinch	Goldfinches eat seeds almost exclusively. Main types include seeds from composite plants (in the family Asteraceae: sunflowers, thistle, asters, etc.), grasses, and trees such as alder, birch, western red cedar, and elm. At feeders prefers nyjer and sunflower.
American Robin	American Robins eat large numbers of both invertebrates and fruit. Particularly in spring and summer they eat large numbers of earthworms as well as insects and some snails. They have very high percentage of fruit in their diet, including wild fruits, small shrubs, and aquatic insects. Robins also eat an enormous variety of fruits, including chokecherries, hawthorn, dogwood, and sumac fruits, and juniper berries. One study suggested that robins may try to round out their diet by selectively eating fruits that have bugs in them.
Barred Owl	Barred Owls eat many kinds of small animals, including squirrels, chipmunks, mice, voles, rabbits, birds (up to the size of grouse), amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates.
Black-capped Chickadee	In winter Black-capped Chickadees eat about half seeds, half other plant matter, and half animal food insects, spiders, eggs, and carrion (including meat from butchered animals and from frozen carcasses). In spring, summer, and fall, insects, spiders, and other animal food make up 80-90 percent of their diet. At feeders they take mostly sunflower seeds, peanuts, suet, peanut butter, and mealworms.
Blue Jay	Blue Jays glean insects and take nuts and seeds in trees, shrubs, and on the ground; they also eat grains. They also take dead and injured small vertebrates. Blue Jays sometimes raid nests for eggs and nestlings, and sometimes pick up dead or dying adult birds. Stomach contents over the year are about 22 percent insect. Acorns, nuts, fruits, and grains made up almost the entire remainder.
Brown-headed Cowbird	Brown-headed Cowbirds feed mostly on seeds from grasses and weeds, with some crop grains. Insects such as grasshoppers and beetles, often caught as cows and horses stir them into movement, make up about a quarter of a cowbird's diet. As you might imagine, female cowbirds have a large calcium requirement from laying so many eggs. To satisfy it, they eat snail shells and sometimes eggs taken from nests they've visited.
Carolina Wren	Insects and spiders make up the bulk of this wren's diet. Common foods include caterpillars, moths, stick bugs, leafhoppers, beetles, grasshoppers, crickets, and cockroaches. Carolina Wrens occasionally eat lizards, frogs, or snakes. They also consume a small amount of plant matter, such as fruit pulp and seeds from bayberry, sweetgum, or poison ivy.
Cedar Waxwing	Cedar Waxwings feed mainly on fruits year-round. In summer, they feed on fruits such as serviceberry, strawberry, mulberry, dogwood, and raspberries. The birds' name derives from their appetite for cedar berries in winter; they also eat mistletoe, madrone, juniper, mountain ash, honeysuckle, crabapple, hawthorn, and Russian olive fruits. In summer Cedar Waxwings supplement their fruit diet with insects including mayflies, dragonflies, and stoneflies, often caught on the wing. They also pick items such as scale insects, spruce budworm, and leaf beetles directly from vegetation.
Common Grackle	Common Grackles eat mostly plants, particularly agricultural grains such as corn and rice. Other seeds include sunflower seeds, acorns, tree seeds such as sweetgum, wild and cultivated fruits, and garbage. In summer, one-quarter or more of a grackle's diet may be animals, including beetles, grasshoppers, caterpillars, spiders, crustaceans, mollusks, fish, frogs, salamanders, mice, and other birds.
Cooper's Hawk	Cooper's Hawks mainly eat birds. Small birds are safer around Cooper's Hawks than medium-sized birds: studies list European Starlings, Mourning Doves, and Rock Pigeons as common targets along with smaller birds. Robins, several kinds of jays, Northern Flicker, and quail, pheasants, grouse, and chickens. Cooper's Hawks sometimes rob nests and also eat chipmunks, hares, mice, squirrels, and bats. Mammals are more common in diets of Cooper's Hawks in the West.
Downy Woodpecker	Downy Woodpeckers eat mainly insects, including beetle larvae that live inside wood or tree bark as well as ants and caterpillars. They eat pest insects including corn earworm, hemlock caterpillar, bark beetles, and apple borer. They also consume about a quarter of their diet consists of plant material, particularly berries, acorns, and grains. Downy Woodpeckers are common feeder birds, eating suet and black oil sunflower seeds and occasionally drinking from hummingbird feeders.
Eastern Bluebird	Insects caught on the ground are a bluebird's staple food throughout the year. Major prey include caterpillars, beetles crickets, grasshoppers, and spiders. In fall and winter, bluebirds eat large amounts of fruit including mistletoe, sumac, blueberries, black cherry, tupelo, currants, wild holly, dogwood berries, hackberries, honeysuckle, bay, pokeweed, and juniper berries. Rarely, Eastern Bluebirds have been observed eating salamanders, shrews, snakes, lizards, and tree frogs.
Eastern Screech-Owl	Eastern Screech-Owls eat most kinds of small animals, including birds and mammals as well as surprisingly large numbers of earthworms, insects, crayfish, tadpoles, frogs, and toads. They eat many kinds of mammals, including rats, mice, squirrels, moles, and rabbits. Small birds taken as prey include flycatchers, swallows, thrushes, waxwings, and finches, as well as larger birds such as jays, grouse, doves, woodcocks, and rails. They also eat crayfish, earthworms, and occasionally fish. This owl is agile enough to catch bats, and can rarely even be cannibalistic.
Hairy Woodpecker	Great Horned Owls have the most diverse diet of all North American raptors. Their prey range in size from tiny rodents and scorpions to hares, skunks, geese, and raptors. They eat mostly mammals and birds--especially rabbits, hares, mice, and American Coots, but also many other species including voles, moles, shrews, rats, gophers, chipmunks, squirrels, woodchucks, muskrats, bats, ducks, geese, gulls, herons, grebes, rails, coots, shorebirds, and woodpeckers. This owl is agile enough to take bats, and can rarely even be cannibalistic.
Northern Cardinal	Northern Cardinals eat mainly seeds, including beetle larvae that live inside wood or tree bark as well as ants and caterpillars. They eat pest insects including corn earworm, hemlock caterpillar, bark beetles, and apple borer. They also consume a small amount of plant matter, such as fruit pulp and seeds from bayberry, sweetgum, or poison ivy.
Northern Flicker	Northern Flickers eat mainly insects, especially ants and beetles that they gather from the ground. They also eat fruits and seeds, especially in winter. Flickers often go after ants underground (where the nutritious larvae live), hammering at the nest mound to pry the top off. They may also use woodpeckers drill into wood. They've been seen using their tongues to eat insects living within. Other invertebrates eaten include flies, butterflies, moths, and snails. Flickers also eat berries and seeds, especially in winter, including poison oak and ivy, dogwood, sumac, wild cherry, and Virginia creeper. They will also eat seeds from cultivated sunflowers and grains.
Northern Mockingbird	Northern Mockingbirds eat mainly insects in summer but switch to eating mostly fruit in fall and winter. Among their animal prey are beetles, earthworms, moths, butterflies, ants, bees, wasps, grasshoppers, and spiders. Important fruits include holly, juniper, and a wide variety of berries from multiflora rose. They've been observed eating on their territories on ornamental bushes, as well as fruits from multiflora rose. They've been seen drinking sap from the cuts on recently pruned trees.
Pileated Woodpecker	The Pileated Woodpecker's primary food is carpenter ants, supplemented by other ants, woodboring beetle larvae, termites, and other insects such as flies, spruce budworm, caterpillars, cockroaches, and grasshoppers. They also eat wild fruits and nuts, including greenbrier, hackberry, sassafras, blackberries, sumac berries, poison ivy, holly, dogwood, persimmon, and elderberry. In some diet studies, ants constituted 40 percent of the diet, and up to 97 percent in some individuals. Occasionally, Pileated Woodpeckers visit backyard bird feeders for seeds or suet.
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Although the Red-bellied Woodpecker mainly eats insects, spiders, and other arthropods, it eats plenty of plant material, too. In particular, acorns, nuts, and pine cones, as well as seeds extracted from annual and perennial plants are important staples. Fruits are important in winter; Red-bellied Woodpeckers eat berries from junipers and mangoes. Occasionally eats lizards, nestling birds, even mouses.
Red-tailed Hawk	Mammals make up the bulk of most Red-tailed Hawk meals. Frequent victims include voles, mice, wood rats, rabbits, snowshoe hares, jackrabbits, and ground squirrels. The hawks also eat birds, including pheasants, bobwhite, starlings, and blackbirds; as well as snakes and carrion. Individual prey items can weigh anywhere from less than an ounce to more than 5 pounds.
Red-winged Blackbird	Red-winged Blackbirds eat mainly insects in the summer and seeds, including corn and wheat, in the winter. Sometimes they feed by probing at the bases of aquatic plants with their slender bills, prying them open to get at insects hidden inside. In fall and winter they eat weedy seeds such as ragweed and cocklebur as well as native sunflowers and waste grains.
Tufted Titmouse	Tufted Titmice eat mainly insects in the summer, including caterpillars, beetles, ants and wasps, stink bugs, and treehoppers, as well as spiders and snails. Tufted Titmice also eat seeds, nuts, and berries, including acorns and beech nuts. Experiments with Tufted Titmice indicate they always choose the largest seeds they can when foraging.
White-breasted Nuthatch	White-breasted Nuthatches eat many insects including wood-boring beetle larvae, wood-boring beetle larvae, other beetles, tree hoppers, scale insects, gall fly larvae, caterpillars (including gypsy moths and tent caterpillars), stinkbugs, and click beetles, as well as spiders. They also eat seeds and nuts, including acorns, hawthorn, sunflower seeds, and sometimes crops such as corn. At birdfeeders they eat sunflower seeds, peanuts, suet, and peanut butter.

Winter only

American Tree Sparrow	American Tree Sparrows eat seeds, berries, and insects, but the relative proportions of those foods change radically from winter to summer months. From fall through spring, they're almost exclusively vegetarian, eating grass, sedge, ragweed, knotweed, goldenrod, and other seeds, as well as occasional berries, catkins, insects, insect eggs, and larvae. In settled areas, they happily feed on birdseed. Seeds from feeders usually fall into the ground, where they are mostly left behind. They prefer to eat seeds from a wide variety of plants, including seeds from feeders--including millet scattered on the ground. In summer, after their migration to Alaska, they begin eating a wider and wider variety of insects until, during June and July they eat almost exclusively insects such as beetles, flies, leafhoppers, wasps, moths, and caterpillars, as well as spiders and snails. They may augment their summer food with berries such as blueberries, huckleberries, and cranberries.
Brown Creeper	In the breeding season, Brown Creepers eat insects and their larvae (including stinkbugs, fruit flies, gnats, beetles, weevils, bark beetle parasitoids, butterflies, moths, lacewings, caddisflies, scale insects, leafhoppers, katydids, flat bugs, plant lice, ants, and sawflies) along with spiders, spider eggs, and pseudoscorpions. They mainly patrol large, live trees with deeply furrowed bark, which harbors the highest densities of insects. In the winter they maintain the same diet of insects and other arthropods, but may also eat small amounts of seeds and other plant materials. Creepers may visit seed and suet feeders.
Dark-eyed Junco	Dark-eyed Juncos are primarily seed-eaters, with seeds of chickweed, buckwheat, lamb's quarters, sorrel, and the like making up about 75% of their year-round diet. At feeders they seem to prefer millet over sunflower seeds. During the breeding season, Dark-eyed Juncos also eat insects including beetles, moths, butterflies, caterpillars, ants, wasps, and flies.
Fox Sparrow	Fox Sparrows forage on leaf litter and bare ground, usually under dense cover. During the breeding season they eat mainly insects--such as beetles, fly larvae, caterpillars, ants, bees, and wasps. They also eat other invertebrates such as spiders, millipedes, and earthworms. In winter they eat a variety of berries from multiflora rose. They've been seen drinking sap from the cuts on recently pruned trees.
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Golden-crowned Kinglets eat mainly insects. During the breeding season, they glean small, soft-bodied arthropods and their eggs from branch tips, under bark, and in tufts of conifer needles. The diet includes springtails, grasshoppers, crickets, lice, bugs, lacewings, beetles, caddis flies, moths, butterflies, flies, bees, wasps, spiders, mites, and some snails. They also eat small seeds and fruits, including those of poison ivy, bayberry, and wax myrtle, and may forage in brush piles and understory trees. Besides gleaning, they hover to capture prey under leaves, peck at the bases of pine needles, and hawk for aerial insects.
Harris' Sparrow	Harris' Sparrows eat seeds, fruits, arthropods, and young conifer needles.
Pine Siskin	As their name suggests, Pine Siskins have a fondness for the seeds of pines and other conifers like cedars, larch, hemlock, and spruce. They also feed on deciduous seeds like alder, birch, sweetgum, and maples. They eat the young buds of willows, elms, and maples, and the soft stems and leaves of weeds and even young garden vegetables. They'll glean the seeds of grasses, dandelions, chickweed, sunflowers, and ragweed. They also feed on the insects, spiders, and grubs from leaves and bark of trees, and occasionally take insects from the air. Pine Siskins feed readily at backyard feeders, preferring smaller seeds without tough shells like thistle and oil sunflower; but they will scavenge fragments of larger seeds left by other birds. Feeders that dispense thistle seed attract Pine Siskins. Suet attracts them to feeders in the mixed deciduous forest. They have been observed drinking from sapwells drilled by sapsuckers.
Purple Finch	Purple Finches eat mainly seeds of coniferous trees and elms, tulip poplars, maples, and others. They also eat soft buds, nectar (extracted by biting the bases off flowers), and many berries and fruit, including blackberries, honeysuckle, poison ivy, crabapples, juniper berries, cherries, and apricots. In winter you may see Purple Finches eating seeds of the plants like dandelion, chicory, goldenrod, and ragweed. They also feed on insects, including adults, caterpillars, grasshoppers, and beetles.
Red-breasted Nuthatch	In summer, Red-breasted Nuthatches eat mainly insects and other arthropods such as beetles, caterpillars, spiders, ants, and earwigs, and they raise their nestlings on these foods. In fall and winter they tend to eat conifer seeds, including seeds they cached earlier in the year. They also feed on the sap and outbreaks of spruce budworm, a forest pest. Red-breasted Nuthatches respond strongly to the plentiful food supply. They also eat from feeders, taking peanuts, sunflower seeds, and suet.
Red-headed Woodpecker	Red-headed Woodpeckers eat insects, fruits, and seeds. Overall, they eat about one-third animal material (mostly insects) and two-thirds plant material. Their insect diet includes beetles, cicadas, midges, grasshoppers, and grasshoppers. Red-headed Woodpeckers eat seeds, nuts, corn, berries and other fruits; they sometimes cache food and bird nests to eat eggs and nestlings; they also eat mice and occasionally adult birds. In winter Red-headed Woodpeckers catch insects on warm days, but they mostly eat nuts such as acorns, beech nuts, and pecans.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Ruby-Crowned Kinglets prey on spiders, pseudoscorpions, and many types of insects, including aphids, wasps, ants, and bark beetles. Kinglets usually forage in high tree foliage, hovering and pecking in order to glean insects from the surfaces of leaves and branches. These birds also eat a small amount of seeds and fruit, from poison oak berries to the pulp of dogwood berries.
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Songbirds make up about 90 percent of the Sharp-shinned Hawk's diet. Birds the size of American Robins or smaller (especially warblers, sparrows, and thrushes) are the most frequent prey; bigger birds are at less risk, though they're not completely safe. Studies report quail, shorebirds, doves, swifts, woodpeckers, and even falcons as prey. Sharp-shins also eat small rodents, such as mice and voles, and an occasional moth or grasshopper. While nesting, much of the food for their babies is the nestlings and fledglings of other birds.
Spotted Towhee	In the breeding season, Spotted Towhees eat mainly insects including ground beetles, weevils, ladybugs, darking beetles, click beetles, wood-boring beetles, crickets, grasshoppers, caterpillars, moths, bees, and wasps. Other leaf litter arthropods such as millipedes, sowbugs, and spiders are also eaten. They also eat acorns, berries, and seeds including buckwheat, thistle, raspberry, blackberry, poison oak, sumac, nightshade, chickweed, and crops such as oats, wheat, corn, and cherries. In fall and winter, these plant foods make up the majority of their diet.
White-crowned Sparrow	White-crowned Sparrows eat mainly seeds of weeds and grasses, plus considerable numbers of caterpillars, wasps, beetles, and other insects during the summer. They also eat grains such as oats, wheat, barley, and corn, and fruit including elderberries and blackberries.
White-throated Sparrow	White-throated Sparrows eat mainly the seeds of grasses and weeds, including ragweed and buckwheat, as well as fruits of sumac, grape, cranberry, mountain ash, rose, blueberry, blackberry, and dogwood. In summer they eat a variety of insects and other arthropods; they catch on the forest floor or occasionally on open flights out from low vegetation. These include dragonflies, wasps, stinkbugs, beetles, flies, and caterpillars, as well as spiders, millipedes, centipedes, and snails. During winter, White-throated Sparrows readily visit bird feeders for millet and black oil sunflower seeds. They also feed on the tender buds, blossoms, and young seeds of oak, apple, maple, beech, and elm.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	As the name indicates, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers rely on sap as a main food source. Just like people who tap maple trees to make maple syrup, these birds drill their wells in early spring. Sapsucker feed on flowing sap and also eat the cambium underneath the bark, which is sweet and nutritious. Some species with high sugar content to their sap, such as paper birch, yellow birch, sugar maple, red maple, and hickory. They drill wells for sap throughout the year, on both their breeding and wintering grounds. In addition to sap, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers also eat insects gleaning them from beneath a tree's bark like other woodpeckers. Sapsuckers are also attracted to orchards, where they drill wells in the trees and eat fruit.

Breeding-season only

American Kestrel	American Kestrels eat mostly insects and other invertebrates, as well as small rodents and birds. Common foods include grasshoppers, cicadas, beetles, and dragonflies; scorpions and spiders; butterflies and moths; voles, mice, shrews, bats, and small songbirds. American Kestrels also sometimes eat small snakes, lizards, and frogs. And some people have reported seeing American Kestrels take larger prey, including red squirrels and Northern Flickers.
Baltimore Oriole	Baltimore Orioles eat insects, fruit, and nectar. The proportion of each food varies by season: In summer, while breeding and feeding their young, much of the diet consists of insects, which are rich in the protein needed for growth and development. In late spring and early fall, nectar and ripe fruits become more of the diet; these sugary foods are easily converted into fat, which supplies energy for migration. Baltimore Orioles eat a wide variety of insects, including beetles, crickets, grasshoppers, moths, and flies, as well as spiders, snails, and other small invertebrates. They eat many pest species, including tent caterpillars, gypsy moth caterpillars, fall webworms, spiny elm caterpillars, and the larvae within plant galls. However, orioles can also damage fruit crops, including raspberries, mulberries, cherries, oranges and bananas, and some fruit growers consider these birds a pest.
Barn Swallow	Flies of all kinds make up the bulk of the Barn Swallow's diet, along with beetles, bees, wasps, ants, butterflies, moths, and other flying insects. Barn Swallows usually take relatively large, single insects rather than feeding on swarms of smaller prey. They will also pick up grit and small pebbles, or spiderlings and egg cases, and other soft items set out by humans, which may help the birds digest insect parts.
Belted Kingfisher	Belted Kingfishers live mostly on a diet of fish including stickleback, mummichogs, trout, and stonerollers. They also eat crayfish and may eat other crustaceans, mollusks, insects, amphibians, reptiles, young birds, small mammals, and even berries. As nestlings, Belted Kingfishers digest the bones and scales they consume, but by the time they leave the nest they begin disgorging pellets of fish skeletons and invertebrate shells.
Black-and-white Warbler	Black-and-white Warblers eat mostly insects. Moth and butterfly larvae form the bulk of their diet during spring migration and throughout the breeding season. Other arthropod prey includes ants, flies, spiders, click and leaf beetles, wood-borers, leafhoppers, and weevils. They also feed on insects attracted to Yellow-bellied Sapsucker sapwells.
Brown Thrasher	Brown Thrashers eat mostly insects and other arthropods along with some fruits, seeds, and nuts. The animal portion of their diet includes many kinds of beetles, along with grubs, wire-worms, army worms, cutworms, tent caterpillars, gypsy moth caterpillars, leafhoppers, treehoppers, cicadas, grasshoppers, crickets, wasps, bees, harvestmen, sowbugs, lizards, snakes, and tree frogs. The fruit portion of their diet includes blueberry, huckleberry, holly, elderberries, pokeberries, hackberries, Virginia creeper, sour gum, bayberry, sumac, raspberry, currant, grape, cherry, and blackberry.
Brown-headed Cowbird	Brown-headed Cowbirds feed mostly on seeds from grasses and weeds, with some crop grains. Insects such as grasshoppers and beetles, often caught as cows and horses stir them into movement, make up about a quarter of a cowbird's diet. Female cowbirds have a large calcium requirement from laying so many eggs. To satisfy it, they eat snail shells and sometimes eggs taken from nests they've visited.
Chimney Swift	Chimney Swifts are airborne insects. Feeding on the wing, they capture flies, bugs, bees, wasps, ants, mayflies, stoneflies, beetles, caddisflies, fleas, cranefliies, and other insects. They grab large insects with their feet and carry them to their nest. They can hold several insects in their throat. Chimney Swifts feed over almost any habitat, including woodlands, fields, grasslands, shrublands, orchards, forests, and marshes, usually some distance away from nest sites. They can also pick insects from branch tips and "helicopter" down through the foliage to flush out prey. Normally during breeding season they range within 5 miles of their nest site, but they have been observed foraging as far as 15 miles from their roosting or nesting sites.
Chipping Sparrow	Chipping Sparrows mainly eat seeds of a great variety of grasses and herbs. During the breeding season they also hunt for protein-rich insects, and these form a large part of their summer diet. Chipping Sparrow sometimes eat small fruits such as cherries.
Common Nighthawk	Common Nighthawks eat flying insects almost exclusively. The Common Nighthawk hunts on the wing at dawn and dusk, opening its tiny beak to reveal a cavernous mouth well suited for snapping up flying insects. It often takes advantage of clouds of insects attracted to streetlamps, stadium lights, and other bright lights. Nighthawks eat queen ants, wasps, beetles, caddisflies, moths, bugs, mayflies, flies, crickets, grasshoppers, and other insects. They may also eat a small amount of vegetation.
Common Yellowthroat	Common Yellowthroats forage on or near the ground, eating insects and spiders from leaves, bark, branches, flowers, or fruit in low vegetation. Their diet includes bugs, flies, beetles, ants, termites, bees, wasps, grasshoppers, dragonflies, damselflies, moths, butterflies, caterpillars, and other larvae. Though they mostly glean their food while perched, they may also catch flies in flight. Common Yellowthroats will also eat berries, including those of poison ivy and blackberry. They have been observed feeding on the fruits of the invasive shrub Japanese barberry.
Eastern Kingbird	Eastern Kingbirds catch insects in midair during spring migration and on the breeding range, including bees, wasps, ants, beetles, crickets, grasshoppers, locusts, bugs, and flies. They supplement their insect diet with fruit--including mulberries, serviceberries, cherries, blackberries, elderberries, and nightshade--particularly as the summer progresses. During fall migration they feed a lot of fruit, and fruit makes up most of their diet on the wintering grounds.
Eastern Meadowlark	Eastern Meadowlarks eat mostly insects, including crickets, grasshoppers, caterpillars, and grubs. During winter they also eat weed seeds, spilled corn, and wild fruits, but don't eat sprouting grain.
Eastern Phoebe	Flying insects make up the majority of the Eastern Phoebe's diet. Common prey include wasps, beetles, dragonflies, butterflies and moths, flies, midges, and cicadas; they also eat spiders, ticks, and millipedes, as well as occasional small lizards or seeds.
Eastern Towhee	Towhees eat many foods: seeds, fruits, insects, spiders, millipedes, centipedes, and snails, as well as soft leaf and flower buds in spring. They also eat seeds and fruits, including ragweeds, smartweeds, grasses, acorns, blackberries, blueberries, wheat, corn, and oats.
Eastern Wood-Peewee	The Eastern Wood-Pewee captures small flying insects by sallying out from a dead branch partway up in the canopy. It may also glean insects from foliage or the ground, sometimes taking advantage of insects flushed by other species. Its diet includes flies, bugs, beetles, moths, bees, wasps, ants, mayflies, crickets, grasshoppers, cicadas, stoneflies, and mayflies. The pewee also eats small amounts of vegetable matter, including the berries and seeds of dogwood, blueberry, raspberry, and poison ivy.
Field Sparrow	Field sparrows eat mainly grass seeds in winter; then switch to a blend of seeds and insect prey as the weather warms. Their small bills limit them to small seeds, including those of ragweed, crabgrass, and foxtail grasses. They also eat about half of the summer diet. This diet includes beetles, weevils, beetles, grasshoppers, cicadas, and spiderlings, as well as spiders and snails.
Gray Catbird	In summer, Gray Catbirds eat mainly ants, beetles, grasshoppers, midges, caterpillars, and moths. When fruits are available they also eat holly berries, cherries, elderberries, poison ivy, greenbrier, bay, and blackberries. They are sometimes garden pests, eating or damaging raspberries, cherries, grapes, and strawberries.
Great Blue Heron	Great Blue Herons eat nearly anything within striking distance, including fish, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, insects, and other birds.
Great Crested Flycatcher	Great Crested Flycatchers eat mainly insects and other invertebrates, as well as small berries and other fruits. They eat butterflies and moths, beetles, grasshoppers and crickets, bugs, bees and wasps, flies, dobsonflies, and spiders. Fruit includes small whole berries, the pits of which are regurgitated after the berries are eaten whole. Dragonflies, moths, and butterflies are offered to chicks whole, wings and all, but if they're rejected, the parents crush the insects and re-offer them.
House Wren	House Wrens eat a wide variety of insects and spiders, including beetles, caterpillars, earwigs, and daddy longlegs, as well as smaller numbers of more mobile insects such as flies, leafhoppers, and springtails. They also eats small snails, probably for the calcium they contain and to provide grit for digestion.
Indigo Bunting	Indigo Buntings eat small seeds, berries, buds, and insects. Common seed forage includes thistles, dandelions, goldenrods, and grain such as oats; berries eaten include blueberries, elderberries, blackberries, and raspberries. Spiders and insect prey which form the majority of their diet include beetles, grasshoppers, locusts, bugs, and flies. Adult caterpillars, grasshoppers, aphids, cicadas and beetles such as cankerworms, click beetles, and weevils. The brown-tail moth caterpillar, which is covered with noxious hairs that cause nasty rashes and respiratory problems in people, is no obstacle to a hungry bunting. On arrival to breeding grounds in spring, Indigo Buntings may feed on twigs, buds, and leaves of trees including aspen, cottonwood, oaks, beech, elm, maple, and hickory.
Kentucky Warbler	Kentucky Warblers eat insects, caterpillars, and small spiders.
Killdeer	Killdeer feed primarily on invertebrates, such as earthworms, snails, crayfish, grasshoppers, beetles, and aquatic insect larvae. Follows farmers' plows in hopes of retrieving any unearthed worms or insect larvae. They also will eat seeds left in agricultural lands. An opportunistic forager, Killdeer have been observed hunting frogs and eating dead minnows.
Northern Parula	Northern Parulas eat spiders and many kinds of insects, particularly caterpillars. Their diets include beetles, moths, ants, wasps, bees, flies, locusts, and others. During the breeding season Northern Parulas also occasionally eat seed scales and on wintering grounds they sometimes eat berries, seeds, or nectar.
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Northern Rough-winged Swallows feast upon flying insects.
Orchard Oriole	Orchard Orioles eat mostly insects and other arthropods, along with some fruit and nectar. They glean prey from the foliage, including parasitic wasps, ants, bugs, caterpillars, grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, mayflies, and spiders. They drink nectar from flowers (and hummingbird feeders). Their diet shifts to mostly fruit just before fall migration. Migrating flocks forage in orchards, chokecherries, and other berry trees. On their Central American wintering grounds they feed on fruits, nectar, and pollen.
Purple Martin	A year-round insectivore, the Purple Martin eats flying insects at altitudes higher than other swallows, often exceeding 150 feet and sometimes 500 feet or more off the ground. Their menu includes beetles, flies, dragonflies, damselflies, leafhoppers, grasshoppers, crickets, butterflies, moths, wasps, bees, caddisflies, spiders, cicadas, termites, and mayflies. Martins pick up small bits of gravel to help them digest insect exoskeletons.
Red-eyed Vireo	Red-eyed Vireos eat invertebrates as well as seeds and fruits. Their diet changes substantially throughout the year: It's mostly insects during summer, especially caterpillars which can account for 50 percent of their diet during the summer. Caterpillars make up only 15 percent of their spring diet, and 20 percent in fall. They also eat butterflies and moths, beetles, mosquitoes, flies, bugs, cicadas, wasps, ants, bees, and sawflies, to (less frequently) grasshoppers, crickets, dragonflies, and damselflies. They'll also eat spiders and small snails. Among plant foods, small wild fruits like blackberries, elderberries, pokeberries, and spicebush, Virginia creeper, sassafras, dogwood, arrowwood, and bayberry outnumber the occasional flowers, leaf buds, and magnolia seeds. As fall migration approaches, the amount of fruit in their diet rises. During migration they eat both insects and fruit, but are almost entirely fruit-eaters on their over-wintering grounds in South America.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	During the breeding season Rose-breasted Grosbeaks eat a lot of insects, as well as wild fruit and seeds. They mostly feed on berries during fall migration, and on their wintering grounds they have a varied diet of invertebrates and plant matter, including fruit. The animal portion of their diet includes beetles, bees, and wasps, ants, sawflies, bugs, butterflies, and moths. Their vegetarian fare includes elderberries, blackberries, raspberries, mulberries, juneberries, and seeds of smartweed, pigweed, foxtail, milkweed, plus sunflower seeds, garden peas, oats, wheat, tree flowers, tree buds, and cultivated fruit.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Ruby-throated Hummingbirds feed on the nectar of red or orange tubular flowers such as trumpet creeper, cardinal flower, honeysuckle, jewelweed, bee-balm, red buckeye and red morning glory, as well as at hummingbird feeders and, sometimes, tree sap. Hummingbirds also catch insects in midair or pull them out of spider webs. Main insect prey includes mosquitoes, gnats, fruit flies, and small insects. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds sometimes take insects attracted to sap wells or picks small caterpillars and aphids from leaves.
Summer Tanager	Summer Tanagers specialize on bees and wasps on both their breeding and wintering ranges. They also eat other aerial and terrestrial invertebrates--such as spiders, cicadas, beetles, ants, termites, grasshoppers, flies, moths, and bugs--as well as fruits such as mulberries, blackberries, pokeweed, citrus, and bananas. They glean terrestrial insects from the leaves and bark of trees and shrubs.
Warbling Vireo	Warbling Vireos eat mainly caterpillars, pupae, and adult moths and butterflies. They also eat ladybugs, beetles, bugs, bees, ants, wasps, and spiders. In fall and winter they add elderberries, poison oak berries, and other fruit to their diet. They forage mainly in treetops, gleaning insects from leaves and sometimes twigs; they also hunt by hovering, stalking, hawking, and flycatching.
Western Kingbird	Like most other flycatchers, Western Kingbirds are mainly insectivores. They hunt by sight during the day, using acrobatic maneuvers to catch flying insects out of the air. They eat bees and wasps, grasshoppers and crickets, beetles, moths and butterflies, caterpillars, flies, bugs, and spiders. On occasion they may eat fruits of elderberry, hawthorn, Texas mulberry, woodbine, and other shrubs.
Wood Duck	Wood Ducks eat seeds, fruits, insects and other arthropods. When aquatic foods are unavailable they may take to dry land to eat acorns and other nuts from forests and grain from fields. Diet studies indicate a lot of variability, but plant materials make up 80% or more of what the species eats. Examples of food eaten include acorns, soybeans, smartweed, water primrose, panic grass, duckweed, millet, bayberry, waterlilly, blackberries and wild cherries, as well as flies, beetles, caterpillars, tadpoles, snails, nectar, and pollen.
Yellow Warbler	Yellow Warblers eat mostly insects that they pick from foliage or capture on short flights or while hovering to reach leaves. Typical prey include midges, caterpillars, beetles, leafhoppers and other bugs, and wasps.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Caterpillars top the list of Yellow-Billed Cuckoo prey: individual cuckoos eat thousands of caterpillars per season. On the East coast, periodic outbreaks of tent caterpillars draw cuckoos to the tentlike webs, where they may eat as many as 100 caterpillars at a sitting. Fall webworms and the larvae of gypsy, brown-tailed, and white-marked tussock moths are also part of the cuckoo's lepidopteran diet, often supplemented with beetles, ants, and spiders. They also take advantage of periodic outbreaks of cicadas, katydids, and crickets, and will hop to the ground to chase frogs and lizards. In summer and fall, cuckoos forage on small wild fruits, including elderberries, blackberries and wild grapes. In winter, fruit and seeds become a larger part of the diet.

Spring/Fall Migrants

Black-billed Cuckoo	Black-billed Cuckoos eat large insects such as caterpillars, katydids, cicadas, and grasshoppers. They seem to have a particular appetite for large caterpillars--collected individuals have often found with more than 100 in the stomach at once. Along with Yellow-billed Cuckoo, this is one of only two species found to be more numerous during periodic cicada emergences in a recent analysis. Black-billed Cuckoos occasionally eat eggs of other birds. On their wintering grounds they also eat fruit and seeds.
Blackburnian Warbler	Blackburnian Warblers eat a variety of insects and spiders.
Blackpoll Warbler	Blackpoll Warblers eat insects and spiders, and fruit during migration.
Black-throated Green Warbler	Black-throated Green Warblers eat insects and insect larvae.
Blue-headed Vireo	Blue-headed Vireos eat medium to large insects and some fruit in winter.
Canada Warbler	Canada Warblers eat a variety of insects and spiders.
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Chestnut-sided Warblers eat insects and other arthropods, and occasionally fruit.
Clay-colored Sparrow	Clay-colored Sparrows mostly eat the seeds and leaf buds of various grasses, forbs, and shrubs, including tumbleweed, alyssum, lambsquarters, soapberry, mustard, and mesquite. They also eat insects such as leafhoppers, ants, grasshoppers, and moths, as well as spiders.
Hermit Thrush	In spring, the Hermit Thrush eats mainly insects such as beetles, caterpillars, bees, ants, wasps, and flies. They also occasionally eat small amphibians and reptiles. In the winter, they change their diet to eat more fruit, including wild berries.
Least Flycatcher	The diet of the Least Flycatcher consists of mostly insects, and some fruit in winter.
Lincoln's Sparrow	Throughout the breeding season, Lincoln's Sparrows primarily eat arthropods including spiders and larvae and adult beetles, flies, moths, butterflies, and leafhoppers. During winter, their diet consists of small seeds and invertebrates. They occasionally visit feeders.
Louisiana Waterthrush	Louisiana Waterthrushes eat mostly insects, supplemented by other arthropods, earthworms, and occasionally small frogs and fish.
Nashville Warbler	Nashville Warblers eat insects and insect larvae.
Philadelphia Vireo	Philadelphia Vireos eat insects and some fruit.
Swainson's Thrush	Swainson's Thrushes eat largely insects and some fruit during migration. They also eat fruits, particularly in fall and winter. They tend to select yellow fruits and favor those with high fat content, such as spicebush, dogwood, and wild sarsaparilla. Swainson's Thrushes also feed on ants, a dietary item that includes those of fiber, false Solomon's seal, and sumac. Insect prey items include beetles, caterpillars, flies, grasshoppers, and bugs. Swainson's Thrushes also feed on ants, a dietary item that is commonly associated with some woodpeckers and unusual among temperate songbirds. Nestlings are fed mostly insects, including especially caterpillars, beetles, moths, and flies.
Tennessee Warbler	Tennessee Warblers eat invertebrates, especially moth caterpillars, as well as fruit and nectar.
White-eyed Vireo	White-eyed Vireos eat mostly insects and some fruit.
Willow Flycatcher	Willow Flycatchers eat mostly insects, and some berries in fall.
Wilson's Warbler	Wilson's Warblers pick larval insects, spiders, beetles, and caterpillars off leaves and twigs. They also hover or sally (fly out and back) to grab flies, bees, mayflies, aphids, and other insects from leaves or in the air. They do most of their foraging in the understory in willows, alders, or other shrubs. On the wintering grounds they also drink "honeydew"--a sweet liquid excreted by scale insects as they feed on oak trees. Wilson's Warblers hover near the insects and drink the sugary water for a few quick calories.
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Yellow-rumped Warblers eat mainly insects in the summer, including caterpillars and other larvae, leaf beetles, bark beetles, weevils, ants, scale insects, aphids, grasshoppers, caddisflies, cranefliies, and gnats, as well as spiders. They also eat spruce budworm, a serious forest pest, during outbreaks. On migration and in winter they eat great numbers of fruits, particularly bayberry and wax myrtle, which both have waxy coatings. Yellow-rumps are uniquely suited among warblers to digest the waxy substance of the sapwells drilled by