



American Robin

Coloring instructions:

Yellow - the bill

White - the thighs and the throat (except for the black streaks)

Orange - the breast and belly

Black - the eye and head (except for the white spots outside the eye)

Gray - the wings, back, and tail

American Robin

Length: 10"

Habitat: Open woodlands, lawns, fields, city parks.

Field marks: Round orange belly, dark head, and gray wings.

The American Robin may be the best known bird in North America. Most people recognize their bright orange breasts and their **foraging** behavior: the robin runs a few steps on the lawn, then stops abruptly, and stares at the ground with the head cocked to one side. Suddenly, it grabs an earthworm out of the grass and gobbles it down. Robins forage mostly for worms, insects, spiders, and snails in the warm weather months.

Robins eat different types of food depending on the time of day: more earthworms in the morning and more fruit later in the day. Because the robin forages largely on lawns, it is vulnerable to pesticide poisoning and can be an important indicator of chemical pollution.

In the spring and summer, robins are usually found in nesting pairs, wherever there are trees for nest sites and mud for nest material. They often nest on human homes, in gutters, eaves, on outdoor light fixtures, and on porches and windowsills. Their nest is a sturdy bowl constructed of grass and twigs, reinforced with mud, and lined with fine grasses. "Robin's egg blue" is a color named after their light bluish green eggs.

The robin's rich caroling is among the earliest bird songs heard at dawn at this time of year, often beginning just before first light. Have you heard the expression, "The early bird gets the worm"? It was probably the behavior of the American Robin that inspired it.

During fall and winter, robins gather in large flocks that may number in the hundreds or even thousands of birds. Flocking together helps them protect themselves because they can all watch out for predators together, and one will alert the rest of the group if a hawk or other bird of prey appears. They forage mainly for berries and roost in trees together in the cold months. When birds **roost**, they go somewhere to rest or to sleep.

American Robin Challenges

Put a check mark in the box when you have completed the challenge.

- Identify an American Robin. Male robins have darker heads and backs. Female robins are paler overall. It can be difficult to tell them apart.
- See a juvenile American Robin. They have spotted breasts throughout their first summer.
- Hear the song of the robin in springtime. It's a string of 10 or so clear whistles, often described as "*Cheerily, cheer up, cheer up, cheerily, cheer up.*"

Find more educational materials at www.wintuadbon.org/education



