

Baltimore Oriole

Icterus galbula

General Information:

-The eastern counterpart to Bullock's Oriole was once thought con-specific with it and called the Northern Oriole. It is the state bird of Maryland. The male is the only bright orange-and-black oriole north of Florida. Some winter along the southeast Atlantic Coast and may find food in backyard feeders and gardens.



Song:

-Disjointed measured 2-note whistled melodic phrases, some with long pauses, *hue-lee, hue-lee, hue-lee*.

Behavior:

-Solitary or in pairs in the breeding season, and in family groups after nesting, although some males remain solitary. May join mixed foraging flocks in the winter and during migration. It forages in bushes and trees, often high in the canopy. It eats insects, caterpillars, berries, and fruits. It also sips nectar from drill wells created by sapsuckers.

Breeding:

-Monogamous and a solitary nester. A displaying male spreads his tail and wings while he bows to the female.

Nesting:

-Incubation of 12-14 days by the female. The 1 brood per year of altricial young is brooded by the female, fed by both sexes, and remains in the nest for 12-14 days.

Population:

-Common in deciduous woodlots, riparian woodlands, woodland edges and clearings, and around human habitation.

Conservation:

-A neo-tropical migrant that is an infrequent host to cowbird nest parasitism because it kicks out the cowbirds eggs.

Shoreline Restoration Issues:

- If you would like to create an environment friendly to the Baltimore Oriole on your shoreland property I would suggest planting a mixture of trees, some of which will grow very tall to create the foraging environment it likes, and some with berries for additional food. I think a mixture of Eastern White Pine, Red Pine, American Elm, Red Oak, Swamp White Oak, White Ash, Shagbark Hickory, Mountain Ash, Flowering Crabapple, Black Cherry, and Hackberry would be great. I would then concentrate on berry producing shrubs of differing sizes and furthermore encourage of planting of emergent aquatic vegetation.