

Bohemian Waxwing

Bombycilla garrulus

General Information:

-True to its name, this bird is highly nomadic and travels in flocks over a wide range in search of abundant food source, particularly berries, which make up its principal diet. In winter it often is attracted to berries and fruits produced by ornamental plantings in towns and residential areas, and flocks may appear as if from nowhere. Gray underparts with cinnamon under-tail coverts distinguish it from the smaller Cedar Waxwing. Like that more widespread relative its tail is yellow tipped.

Song:

-While flying, utters continuous twittering and chatter. The call is an abrasive *scree* or *zirrr*.

Behavior:

-In pairs or small groups during breeding season; gregarious the rest of the year, forming flocks. Usually feeds closed to other birds on ground and in trees. Perches to spot insects, then hawks them in flight. Eats fruit, berries, and insects, and drinks sap.

Breeding:

-Monogamous and colonial.

Nesting:

-Incubation of 14-15 days by the female. The one brood per year of altricial young are brooded by the female, fed by both sexes, and stay in the nest for 13-18 days.

Population:

-Fairly common to uncommon in mixed conifer and open coniferous woodlands.

Conservation:

-Vulnerable to habitat loss due to logging in coniferous forests.

Shoreline Restoration Issues:

-If you would like to create an environment friendly to the Bohemian Waxwing I recommend planting coniferous trees on the lot lines with berry producing trees and shrubs in the middle of your lot. Some suggestions are Mountain Ash, Hackberry, Black Cherry, Flowering Crabapple, Nannyberry, Juneberry, Winterberry, Staghorn Sumac, and Snowberry. For coniferous trees I would suggest Balsam Fir, Tamarack, White Spruce, Eastern Red Cedar, Northern White Cedar, Red Pine, and Eastern White Pine.

