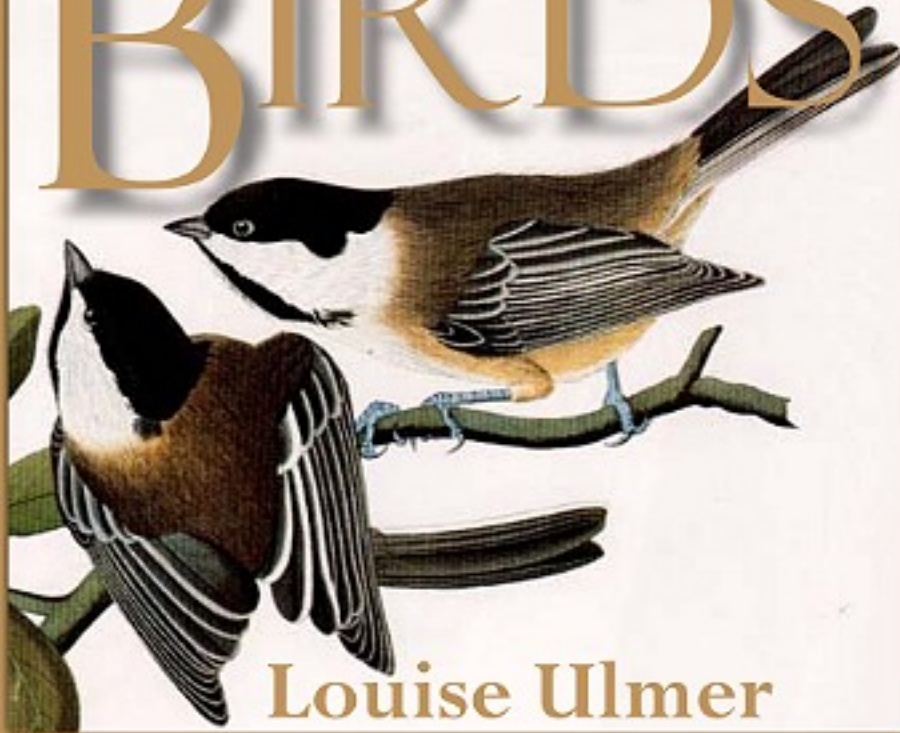


STATE BIRDS



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State Birds

By

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Featuring Several Illustrations by J. J. Audubon

A is for American Robin.

See his orange vest and coat of brown.

You always know that winter is going when the robin comes back to town.

The American Robin is the state bird of Connecticut, Michigan and Wisconsin. The robin is the most common native American bird in the East. Early American settlers named the robin after the similar bird in Europe. But the European robin is smaller and has a redder breast. The American Robin is actually a member of the thrush family and cousin of the Bluebird.



Robins like to build on shrubs and trees near houses and scout for food in lawns and gardens. They eat worms and insects, little else. If you have hanging baskets of flowers on your porch, don't be surprised to find a robin family nesting there. Some people say they can tame a robin to sit on their hands by feeding it raisins. Maybe the birds think the raisins are bugs. Others say that works about as well as the old saying that you can catch a bird by putting salt on its tail. The raisin trick is worth trying.

B is for the Bluebird.

The Eastern Bluebird wears an orange bib to protect his nice blue suit. It keeps his feathers clean and neat when eating juicy fruit.



New York and Missouri both named the Eastern Bluebird for their state bird. The Eastern bluebird lives on fruit and insects. New York, with its many apple trees, is a favorite place for bluebirds. When Americans built more cities and fewer farms, the bluebirds lost most of their nesting places. Neighborhoods and bird lovers had to make special efforts to save the birds by putting out houses just for them. You can help by putting up houses with holes no bigger than one and one-half inch to keep out bigger birds. Place the houses no higher than a fencepost to keep out the sparrows.

The Mountain Bluebird is a different shade of blue. It is state bird in Nevada and in Idaho too. The Mountain Bluebird is a longer, slimmer size. Its presence is always a delight to the eyes.

