



## COMMON YELLOWTHROAT



The Common Yellowthroat is a year-round resident of the Urban Forest, found regularly near the low-lying creek-side pathways. This diminutive wood-warbler is just 5 inches in length and flits around secretly, staying low near dense shrubs and marshy areas. In springtime the male announces its presence vibrantly with a remarkably loud rolling wichity wichity wichity wichity wichity wich song, and a frequent sharp raspy jip outburst marking its nearby hidden location.

Although small and secretive, the male's flashy bright yellow throat with a startling contrasting black face mask makes this tiny bandit pop out colorfully against its surroundings. The female's drab olive/yellow markings and quieter habits allow her to remain protectively camouflaged within the tangled foliage.



The Common Yellowthroat feeds exclusively on insects and spiders captured in dense vegetation and sometimes deftly snatched mid-air. Their tireless efforts contribute importantly in keeping water-borne insect populations in check. It would be true to say that the Common Yellowthroat is a most uncommon beauty and

one that plays an outsized role in the essential balance of our local ecosystem.

*Bird of the Month essays are written by Betty Kanne with photos by James Kendall.*

