



BIRD OF THE MONTH - JUNE



HOODED ORIOLE



A highly anticipated harbinger of spring is the March/April arrival of the male Hooded Oriole, with its brilliant golden-yellow plumage and its noisy whistles and staccato chatter. The vibrant yellow hood with striking black mask has earned this slender member of the blackbird family its well deserved name.



The male is soon followed by receptive females in drabber olive-yellow plumage, providing effective camouflage as she artfully weaves her elaborate, pendulous nest carefully sewn beneath palm tree fronds, swaying 20-30 feet in the air. There, the female will incubate 3-4 eggs, followed by both parents diligently feeding the small clutch of begging hatchlings for two weeks before successfully fledging.



The Hooded Oriole feeds on a large variety insects, flower nectar, and ripe fruit. The sleek, colorful 8" bird regularly visits hummingbird feeders, acrobatically hanging upside down to drink the sweet nectar. It will also eagerly feast on a cut orange half heaped with grape jelly if provided near backyard feeders, making the Hooded Oriole a perennial neighborhood favorite that will be sorely missed when September's shorter days remind the migrant to return to coastal Baja Mexico and Central America where it will spend its winter months.

A dedicated team of birders survey and tally all the birds and bird species each month producing a report viewable on the website. It's accompanied by extraordinary photos that can be a useful learning tool when preparing for a visit to the Urban Forest.

To learn more about the fascinating range of distinctive birds appearing in the Urban Forest and along the Shipley to Shore Nature Trail, visit:

hbtrees.org/urban-forest-2/bird-watching-in-the-urban-forest

PHOTOS BY JAMES KENDALL. WRITTEN BY BETTY KANNE