

BIRDMAN

Summer birds have left the nest

BY TED A. GLOVER

The summer birds have all left for their journey south to warmer climates and more plentiful food. We had a nice visit in the Applegate during our warm summer months with the beautiful black-headed grosbeaks and, for the first time in our yard in Williams, the elegant evening grosbeak. A small flock of six or eight came through and stayed for just a few days before heading farther north. The male evening grosbeaks are unmistakable with their dark head and prominent yellow forehead. Their overall appearance is a yellow-green, but they sport white secondary feathers, making them quite spectacular in flight. We hope they return for a visit next year.

The rufous hummingbirds are gone, the male leaving first as early as July and the female and young ones not long afterwards. Gone too are the western kingbirds and other flycatchers and the beautiful lazuli buntings. But with the departure of the summer birds and the return to the Applegate of cooler weather, we are beginning to see a return of our "regular" visitors in ever growing numbers. Many of our local birds exit to higher,

cooler areas during our warmer season.

Now we begin to see larger concentrations of these species as they return to our valleys.

The Steller's jay, with its dark blue sheen, broad wings and long dark crest, is now abundant again. So too are both varieties of nuthatches that are common in our area, the white-breasted and the red-breasted. These little birds, the white-breasted about six inches and the red-breasted only a little more than four inches, are so agile they can creep down a tree trunk.

We also see a return in large numbers of the dark-eyed junco, often referred to as the "Oregon junco." Most of these small birds spend the summer farther north, but have returned in large numbers to winter in our area and farther south.

There is lots of activity outside during these cooler fall months as more and more birds move around. It won't be long until the large flocks of ducks, geese, cranes and even swans will be back.

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Photos, clockwise from top left: **Evening grosbeak.** Outside of the nesting season they often feed in flocks. Sometimes they swallow fine gravel. Photo by George Gentry, USFWS. **Lazuli bunting.** This bird makes a loose cup nest of grasses and rootlets placed in a bush. It lays three or four pale blue eggs. Photo by Dave Menke, USFWS. **Western kingbird.** The name kingbird is derived from the bird's "take-charge" behavior. Kingbirds aggressively defend their territory. Photo by John and Karen Hollingsworth, USFWS. **Dark-eyed junco.** Adults generally have gray heads, necks, and breasts, gray or brown backs and wings, and a white belly, but show a confusing amount of variation in plumage details. Photo by Dave Menke, USFWS. Source: wikipedia.com.

~ Dear My Way Cafe Customers ~

On behalf of our staff, we would like to thank you for all of your support through our first successful year of business. We appreciate everyone who joined us on our culinary conquest in Ruch.

- We closed on October 15, 2011, and will reopen on Valentine's Day 2012 from 4 to 9 pm, seven days a week.
- On March 1, 2012, our normal business hours of Sunday through Thursday, 11 am to 9 pm will resume.

This short winter break will allow us to utilize the peak season of local produce for the preparation of homemade stocks and soups for our reopening. We are fully committed to bettering our business by studying and training during our time off.

In honor of all our loyal customers, on November 15, December 15 and January 15, we would like to invite you to our Customer Appreciation Dinners from 4 to 9 pm. The menu will be posted three days before. Please call Chef Jerrod for more information and reservations.

Also, our local staff will be available on short notice from October 15 through February 1 for:

- Private parties
- Holiday parties
- Off-site catering
- Large to-go orders

Please contact Chef Jerrod at 541-227-8179 for pricing, minimum cost, menu selections, staffing requirements, and all other arrangements.

Thank you for respecting our needed time off, and we look forward to serving you all in 2012.

My Way Cafe Staff

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