



Audubon
AT HOME



How to Help

Bullock's Orioles

Bullock's Orioles are colorful summer residents over much of the Western United States. They nest in large trees and are often found along waterways or in suburban neighborhoods with large trees. They can be helped by providing or protecting large trees for nesting, fruit trees for food, and by protecting them from pesticides and other hazards.

What Bullock's Orioles Need

Food: In breeding season, Bullock's Oriole eats primarily insects, especially butterfly and moth larvae and pupae; grasshoppers and crickets, beetles, flying ants, scale insects, stinkbugs, leafhoppers and treehoppers, and spiders. Nectar and fruit are key plant foods, and the bird often feeds at hummingbird feeders. In winter, feeds on nectar, and probably takes fruits and insects when available. Forages widely, up to half a mile from nesting site in summer.

Nesting: Nests are commonly placed 10-25 feet up in isolated or scattered trees, frequently near water, at edges of woodlands, along watercourses, in shelterbelts, and in urban parks. Several active nests may be placed in close proximity. Nests are woven "baskets" suspended from small limbs and may take up to 15 days to construct. They are placed in a wide variety of trees.

Shelter: Roosting behavior almost unknown, but probably sleeps on high sheltered tree branches.

Other: Orioles will visit to bird baths, leaking faucets, water troughs, or other sources of dripping or running water. In many parts of the country, oriole habitat in streamside areas is at risk due to water diversion, cutting, concentrated recreational activities, poor grazing management, and development.

How You Can Help

- Plant fruit bearing trees and shrubs, including mulberries, juneberries (*Amelanchier* sp.), blackberries, raspberries, cherries, and figs.
- Fruit, jelly, and nectar feeders specifically for orioles are commercially available and can be used to supplement their diet.
- Orioles may also eat mealworms provided at bird feeders.
- Avoid treating trees and shrubs with pesticides that may kill insect prey species and harm foraging orioles.
- Plant or maintain landscape trees for nesting sites. Depending on your region, sycamore, orchard trees, cottonwoods, willow, oak, madrone, mesquite, or pecan would be appropriate selections. Cottonwoods and willows are particularly fast growing and can provide nest sites and shelter in a relatively few years.

• Provide large landscape trees suitable for nesting and roosting.

- In suburban yards, provide a birdbath or small pond for bathing and drinking. Make sure to keep birdbaths clean and free of mosquito larvae.
- Protect streamside habitats with large trees in urban and rural areas.