Bohemian Waxwing

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Just as their name suggests, Bohemian Waxwings live a nomadic lifestyle akin to the gypsies of Bohemia. The fruits and berries they consume are available only for a short time, so they move around to find food - even during nesting season. Thus, Bohemian Waxwings do not defend territories as other birds do, and some scientists believe this is why they don't have a true song.

Bohemian Waxwings are irregular winter visitors to the Canadian-bordering U.S. states, but they also have been spotted as far south as northern New Mexico and south-central California.

The Bohemian Waxwing is a little larger than the Cedar Waxwing, with grayer plumage and a slightly shorter tail.

Interesting Facts:	
Family:	Bombycillidae
Scientific Name:	*Bombycilla garrulous*
Location:	The Bohemian Waxwing prefers coniferous forests. It breeds in the subarctic regions of Alaska, northwest Canada, Scandinavia and eastward to Siberia.
Migration:	In winter, these birds reside from southern Alaska to the Canadian-bordering U.S., and may irrupt as far south as northern New Mexico and south-central California. In their Europe and Asia ranges, they travel in winter as far south as central Europe, Turkey, Iran, Mongolia, Korea, and Japan.
Nesting:	They build nests of grasses, twigs and moss, lined with fine materials on the fork or branch of a tree 5' - 40' high. Females lay 4-5 eggs, blue-gray with black spots. Incubation lasts about 14 days, and during this time the male is known to feed the female. Nestlings fledge in 13 to 15 days and both parents continue to feed the fledglings for about 6-10 days after they fledge.

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Diet:	The diet of the Bohemian Waxwing consists mainly of sugary, fleshy fruits and berries like rose-hips and berries from the mountain ash tree. In summer, they also eat insects for protein.
Size and Color:	8" length. The Bohemian Waxwing is a crested bird with gray plumage with bright yellow tips on their tail feathers and a yellow or white stripe along their wing feathers.
Song:	The Bohemian Waxwing does not have a true song, but its call is a high-pitched, buzzy trill.
Special Characteristics:	• Almost always found in large feeding flocks • Travels around for food - no true territories • Irrupts to the south in some winters • Likes to catch insects in mid-air in summer • Will eat berries until they are gorged and unable to fly • Sometimes, the fruit they eat is overripe and fermented, causing an intoxicated-like stupor
Attracting:	It is difficult to attract the Bohemian Waxwing to your yard without flowering berries or fruits. Plant mountain ash, cedars and junipers. They also like the sap of maple trees.

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