

## Baltimore Oriole

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

The Baltimore Oriole is a stunning sight many hobbyists look forward to seeing during spring migration. Preferring open areas with tall trees, Baltimore Orioles are common in many parks and suburban areas throughout the eastern United States. One interesting fact about this species is that they are more closely related to blackbirds and meadowlarks than to the true orioles of the family *Oriolidae*.

### Interesting Facts:

**Family:** Icteridae

**Scientific Name:** *Icterus galbula*

**Location:** The Baltimore Oriole can be found across much of the eastern United States and southern Canada, from the Great Plains east to the Atlantic Ocean. Habitat ranges from woodland edges and open areas with tall trees, especially deciduous trees, to parks and wooded urban areas.

**Migration:** During summer, the Baltimore Oriole can be found across a majority of North America extending east of the Rocky Mountains to as far south as Texas. During winter, this species moves south to more tropical regions like Florida to as far south as northern South America.

**Nesting:** Their nest is gourd-shaped and woven from hair, plant fibers, and synthetic fibers. Nests are usually hung by the rim from thin branches or a fork in a tall tree. A typical Baltimore Oriole lays 4-5 eggs. This species hybridizes extensively with the Bullock's Oriole.

**Diet:** In nature, the Baltimore Oriole primarily feeds on caterpillars, insects, and spiders, along with fruits and [nectar](#).

**Size and Color:** Approximately 7-8" in size. The male breeding plumage is a brilliant flame orange to yellow orange color with black on head, throat, mantle, wings, and tail. The female is duller with head and tail more dark brownish olive than black, body paler orange, and two white wingbars. Both sexes have a pointed, silvery bill. The male's non-breeding plumage is similar to that of the female.

**Song:** The song consists of an irregular musical sequence of "hew-li" and other whistled notes. Its call is also a rich "hew-li" sound.

**Attracting:** Baltimore Orioles mainly eat insects, berries, and [nectar](#) and are often seen sipping at [hummingbird feeders](#). [Oriole feeders](#) are extremely similar to hummingbird feeders. The slight differences include being orange in color instead of red and are designed with larger perches for the bigger, more weighty Oriole. The Baltimore Oriole is also fond of fresh orange slice offerings and [grape jelly](#).