

THE AMERICAN ROBIN[©]

by Dan Pemble, Kissimmee, Florida

Once again, nature has put on a show for me today, January 13, 2017, a rather rainy one! While standing on my back patio and peering out at the 11th fairway of the Kissimmee Bay (Florida) Country Club, suddenly a flock of several hundred American robins appeared from almost nowhere and commenced with what appeared to be a “feeding frenzy”. Just the previous day, the golf course had been over-seeded with rye grass; thus, I assumed the birds were feeding on the rye seed. Since I had never seen this before, particularly at this time of year, I was prompted to do some further research on these birds’ habits.

Having grown up in Iowa, I recall that each year in early spring when there was still some residual snow on the ground with patches of exposed grass here and there, it was always a much-welcomed sight to see robins “bobbing around” in search of their daily fare; this was considered to be a sign that winter was almost over!



While robins sometimes remain in southern Canada and the northern USA in winter, most migrate south to Florida, to the Gulf coast, to central Mexico, and also to areas of the Pacific coast. Robins will typically depart their southern winter locations during August and start returning to northern locales during February and March.

Given the above migratory facts, I was curious about which specific direction the birds that I saw were headed? Were they still moving south as the northern winter weather becomes harsher or were they confused and beginning an early move back north because of the milder northern winter weather (as brought about by so-called “climate change”)? I cannot readily determine which direction they may have been moving, but am happy they decided to stop by our location for a visit! Perhaps they will elect to spend their winter in Florida!?

Robins have an extensive range that covers 6.2 million square miles. Their current population is estimated to be as high as 320,000,000. Even with their large population, they are protected in the USA by the Migratory Bird Act, a US federal statute. This act makes it unlawful (without a waiver) to pursue, hunt, take, capture or kill any of the approximate 800 bird species covered by the act.

The following Wikipedia link offers some additional interesting facts about robins:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_robin

An American classic song entitled “The Red Red Robin Goes Bob, Bob, Bobin Along” has been performed by a number of artists over the years. The following YouTube link is an excellent version of the song by the late Doris Day and has some very good photos too. Please have a look and enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tc95FaqWKJA>



Now you know a few more things about me! Have a nice day!