

BEHAVIORAL TRAITS OF A BLACKBIRD

Range and Habitat:

This blackbird breeds from Alaska east across Canada to Newfoundland and south to northern Baja California, central Mexico, Gulf Coast, and Florida. It winters regularly across the United States north to British Columbia, Great Lakes, and Pennsylvania. Preferred habitats include marshes, swamps, wet and dry meadows, and pastures.

Breeding and Nesting:

Three to five pale blue eggs, spotted and scrawled with dark brown and purple, are laid in a well-made cup of marsh grass or reeds, attached to growing marsh vegetation or built in a bush in a marsh. Incubation takes 11 to 12 days and is carried out by the female.

Foraging and Feeding:

This bird feeds on insects, small fruits, seeds, waste grain and small aquatic life. While these birds are often regarded as pests because they consume grain in cultivated fields, the farmer benefits because of the blackbirds' consumption of harmful insects.

Readily Eats:

Bread Products, Cracked Corn, Millet, Nut Meats, Suet

Vocalization:

This bird's song is a rich, musical o-ka-leeeee!

Similar Species:

The male Red-winged Blackbird can be told from the male Tricolored Blackbird by its yellowish, not white, border to the red shoulder patch. Females are quite similar, but Tricolored's typically have darker bellies. Tricolored Blackbirds are only found in Oregon and California. While other species of blackbirds may be similar, they lack the red shoulder patch of the male and the streaked underparts of the female.



Breeding Locations:

Bushes, shrubs, and thickets,
Marshes, freshwater, Swamps

Breeding Type:

Abundant, Common

Breeding Population:

Bushes, shrubs, and thickets,
Marshes, freshwater, Swamps

Egg Color: Light Blue Green

Number of Eggs: 3 - 5

Incubation Days: 11 - 12

Egg Incubator: Female

Nest Material:

Dried cattail leaves and sedges, lined
with fine grasses and rushes.

Migration: Migratory