

Turning Toward May

A tale of two days:

-April 23rd: Temps were in the low 40s with steady winds much of the day. Felt like 30, and I can only imagine how our nesters were feeling about it — like, “We migrated a thousand miles for this?” Additional problem is that we had at least 8 nests in progress as of last week, and since this cold snap arrived, I’ve seen zero progress in any of them (no eggs laid in the week-old finished nests, and no adult birds seen at nests that do have eggs). This has happened before, as April temperatures go roller-coastering, but it’s always concerning.

-April 25th: A “night-and-day difference.” 62 degrees, sunshine, birds! Just like that. The warm blue sky was swarming with our top customers, Tree Swallows, who had been showing up only tentatively. Warmth means insects, and insects mean bug-hunters like the swallows. Their nest-building action should shift gears starting right about now.



Tree Swallows on the move

Throughout April:

-Our friends the Pileated Woodpeckers, as much fun as any bird we’ve got, are also “vandals” at heart — their favorite method of finding their favorite food, carpenter ants, is to utterly hammer tree trunks and limbs, leaving behind amazing excavations, long rectangle ditches that look like nobody else’s trademark. Sometimes they get a little carried away: Check out the tree next to the cart path between the 4th green and 5th

tee. There must have been an ant bonanza in there, and now the tree is barely there. Good news about those construction sites is that the holes pounded out by woodpeckers are often used later by other locals like chipmunks, squirrels and flying squirrels, and plenty of cavity-nesting birds — if somehow they aren't satisfied with our birdhouse accommodations.

— Tom Walsh