

Cedar Waxwing: a colorful berry eater

BY BRUCE MCCAMMON

It is always a treat to see a flock of Cedar Waxwing in February or March.

They show up as large groups and look for berries on Mountain Ash and other berry producing trees or shrubs.

These beautiful birds are notable for their smooth feathers and bright colors. The tips of their wings are colored red and look like they have been dipped in red wax.

The end of the tail has a yellow band and the face sports a distinctive black mask. To top it all off, they display a beautiful set of feathers on the crown of their head.

Their call is a very high pitched chirp and can be hard to hear.

Keep your eyes open for bushes with berries and be alert



Bruce McCammon is retired, color-blind and enjoys photographing the birds in north central Washington.



for groups of these birds as they swarm the tree and strip it of the berries. Sometimes they will have to compete with American Robins for the berries and, usually, the Robin will win the contest since Waxwing are slightly smaller and less aggressive.

This photo was taken along the Apple Capital Loop trail in February 2017.

Most of my bird photos are now taken with a Fuji mirrorless camera since it is light and easy to carry along as we walk the Loop trail or hike into the

extensive trails in our foothills.

We see many Cedar Waxwing in the Horan Natural Area near Confluence State Park.

These birds are just one more reason to enjoy this special area as we wait for spring and the next wave of migrating birds.