

# Meet the Finches

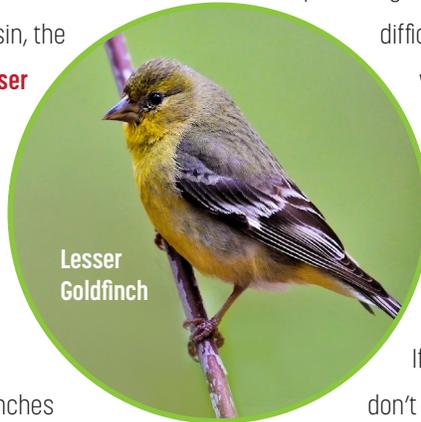
## How well do you know this extended family of songbirds?

Finches come in a spectrum of colors including purples, reds, and yellows, live in many regions throughout the United States and are among the most colorful and reliable bird feeder visitors.



American Goldfinch

Probably the most common and easily recognizable of the finch family is the canary yellow **American Goldfinch**, which can be found clinging to tube feeders about anywhere in the continental U.S. Its cousin, the striking black and gold **Lesser**



Lesser Goldfinch

**Goldfinch** makes its home in the desert southwest. Purply-red **House Finches** flock to just about anywhere the people are. And if you're hiking in pine forests in the mountain west, you may spy a red **Pine Grosbeak** sitting placidly in the boughs.

Despite the wide range of habitats and hues, finches share key characteristics used by scientists to classify them into one big family, under the Latin term Fringillidae.

### Finches have conical beaks designed for seed crushing

Their stout, triangular, conical beaks are wide at the base with a sharp point at the end. This structure is well-suited for crushing the hulls of seeds they glean from plants, pine cones, and grasses.

Though they are mostly granivores – eating a seed-based diet – they also enjoy insects and will offer this protein-rich food source to their nestlings.



House Finch

### Finches are hardy little birds

The seed-based diet is what lets finches survive and thrive in cold climates. That means you'll see finches year-round, either at the feeder or out in chattering flocks known as a charm of finches that forage in woodlands, grasslands and urban areas alike.

### Finches are ready to travel as irruptive migrants

Though finches have great winter survival skills, they will migrate when they must, to access more robust food supplies. That means predicting if and when they'll leave and where they'll end up is difficult. This style of migration is called an irruption. So

when there's an irruption of finches in your area, it's kind of a big deal in birding circles. When it happens, be sure and fill the feeder and keep an eye out for these rare visitors.

### Finches have a longer breeding timeframe than other birds

If you've seen a finch nesting in July, don't worry, it's not out of place!

While spring is generally the time that most birds make their nests and lay eggs, finches can breed anytime between March and early August. While they are able to lay up to 6 clutches of eggs in that timeframe, usually only 3 are successful.



Pine Grosbeak



## What to Feed Finches

If you'd like to attract members of the finch family to your feeder, opt for **Lyric Finch Small Songbird Mix**, and watch these colorful birds of all seasons pay you a visit. With small-sized seeds like canola, small golden millet, sunflower kernels and their favorite, Nyjer seed, it's the perfect mix to keep them well-fed and happy to visit.

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