

# Common Redpoll

*Acanthis flammea*

## Description

This small songbird with its flaming red cap and red breast (females have no red on the breast), black throat, whitish rump and streaked back is one of the finch family's most northern breeders and is found circumpolar. It finds its normal breeding range in far northern climates on the arctic tundra or in boreal forests, nesting low down in dwarf willows, spruce, birch, alders, and small shrubs. The female lays 4 to 6 pale blue-green eggs, which she incubates for about 10 days, while the male brings her food. Because of the long summer days in the far north, there is lots of daylight time for foraging and feeding. The Common Redpoll often travel in large flocks outside of the breeding season, flocks that may have as many as several hundred individuals. Most of us only see them in the winter when they might forage as large groups in weedy fields or tree small lots.

## FUN FACTS

- To stay warm in the winter, Common Redpolls sometimes tunnel into the snow and rest under it's insulation.
- Common Redpolls can store seeds temporarily in a throat pouch; they fill the pouch and then fly to a safer area to eat
- They eat almost exclusively birch seeds and can consume about 42% of their body mass daily.
- The Common Redpoll can survive temperatures of  $-54^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Brrrr!



If you find an injured or orphaned wild animal in distress, please contact the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society hotline at **403-214-1312** for tips, instructions and advice, or visit the website for more information [www.calgarywildlife.org](http://www.calgarywildlife.org)






Photo Credit: Lilly Hiebert

## Contact Us

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