

# Blue Jay

## *Cyanocitta cristata*

### Description

The blue jay ranges from 9 to 12 inches in length, distinguished by its bright blue upper parts and white to grey underside. It features a grey-blue crest on its head, black and white bars on its wings and tail, and a distinctive black "necklace" across its lower throat. Its bill, legs, and feet are all black.

As an omnivore, the blue jay eats fruits, acorns, seeds, nuts, insects, small animals, and raids nests for eggs and chicks. It's known for holding nuts with its feet to crack them open with its bill, and it plays a role in spreading seeds by burying food for later consumption, leading to unintentional seed planting and tree growth.

Female blue jays lay 4-6 eggs in stick and twig nests lined with grass, typically built in trees or shrubs. Blue jays are aggressive and territorial, defending against intruders and predators.

If you find an injured or orphaned wild animal, please contact the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society hotline at 403-214-1312, for tips, instructions and advice.

### FUN FACTS

- The blue jay is commonly found in deciduous forests and residential areas alike
- The blue jay inhabits southern Canada and the eastern United States, migrating south in winter from northern regions.
- The blue jay is highly vocal, producing various calls like its distinctive "jay-jay," along with growls, whistles, and chatter.
- The Toronto Blue Jays baseball team is named after the bird.

