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Here's to You!

It's a fact: We couldn't make this magazine without you. Contributions from you, our readers, are the heart and soul of this brand, and they have been since *Birds & Blooms* was launched a little over 30 years ago.



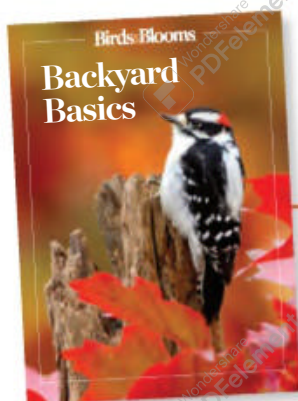
To put it into perspective, I counted the number of photos in this issue that were taken by someone from our talented readership. It was 23! And that doesn't include a few photos within our Ask the Experts department, starting on page 47, where 10 additional readers contributed amazing, thoughtful questions. William Toth asked who decided it should be a 1-4 ratio of sugar to water in homemade hummingbird food (find the answer on page 51). And Raymond Covault's grandson wondered if birds pee. This very valid question gave everyone on our team quite a chuckle—see our experts' response on page 48.

We have a lot of opportunities for you to share content with us, but our biggest contest of the year is kicking off now—our annual photo contest! We accept entries in three categories: birds, butterflies and blooms, and one grand prize winner will receive \$1,000! For more details, turn to page 45 or visit birdsandblooms.com/contests.

And as always, we accept submissions all year long at birdsandblooms.com/submit. There you can send photos, stories, videos, questions for our experts and more. We love hearing from you—and love showing off your submissions in the magazine!

Kirsten

KIRSTEN SCHRADER, CONTENT DIRECTOR



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SAY CHEESE!

I like to wander through sunflowers with my constant companion, my Nikon camera. I didn't even notice this bee-eyed smiley face until I downloaded my photos. Sunflowers are known to make people smile, but to have one smile back at you is a real treat! **Michele Loftis** Greer, SC

DIY BEE BATH

Our assistant art director, Payton Grote, made her own bee bath after being inspired by "The Basics of Bee Baths" on page 54.

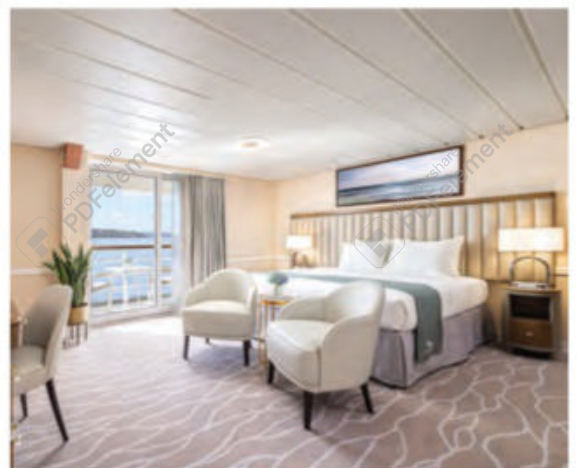




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