



## FYN Garden Q & A Series

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Yards & Neighborhoods



### FYN TOPIC: American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhyncho*)

**Question:** What's the large black bird that leaves discarded food stuffs on my bird bath? I suspect these birds are driving away my songbirds. Could they also be harassing the herons on my lake?  
John, Ft Myers

**Answer:** Yes, the American crow (*Corvus brachyrhyncho*) is a large bird with long legs and thick-neck. It has no coloration apart from black. This crow chases away larger birds like the hawks, owls and herons and eats small wildlife. This crow thrives where people are and learns fast where discarded food ends up on lawns, parking lots, golf courses, trails and athletic fields. Like raccoons, skunks and opossum, they are opportunists and adapt to urban surroundings. They will feed out of an open trash can and will change its diet to low quality, junk food. A very wary bird species, farmers succeed keeping crows away from ripening watermelons using noise cannons and fright devices. They protect blueberries using netting or by picking early. I suggest removing or moving the bird bath to another place. Crows will move on to better food. The rainy season gives them more places to obtain water.

#### Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>  
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>  
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>  
<http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>



American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhyncho*)  
Photo: UFL IFAS

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 239-533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by emailing [Extgardener@leegov.com](mailto:Extgardener@leegov.com). Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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