

*The Weekly Wing*  
**By Brandon Jackson (The Birding Expert)**  
**and his go-to contributor Alex Hebeisen (The Typist)**

This week we will be talking about camouflage. Camouflage is obviously based on the birds' surroundings. Tropical birds might have brighter colors to blend in with the tropical flowers. A bird like the Willow Ptarmigan which looks a bit like a grouse, will change its colors in the winter to blend in with the snow.

The season plays a big part in the bird's colors, but it also can depend on the habitat. A bird that lives on the prairie such as a sparrow may be more of a brownish-yellow color to blend in with the dry grass. A bird that lives in bushes and woodlands such as a thrasher or warbler may have more of a brownish to maybe slightly greenish color.

There is one group of birds that are the masters of disguise. They are so well camouflaged that you can't even see them. This group of birds is called the Goatsuckers (this is really what they are called). Nighthawks are a part of this family but are not nearly as camouflaged as their cousins. This family of birds includes Chuck-will's-widow, Buff-collared Nightjar, Common Poorwill, and the only Minnesota master of camouflage the Whip-poor-will known for its call. These birds only have four colors: black, white, gray, and brown. If they were up against the right tree, unless you're a master, you wouldn't spot it.

Another bird that is incredibly hard to spot lives in the rainforest. It is called the Oilbird and is all light brown.

Brandon the Brains and Alex the Typist