

Romeo wants to rid the neighbourhood of rivals

We had a very interesting situation develop at our home over the last few weeks. A very Catholic bird took interest in our windows. A Cardinal, actually, a male Cardinal that I have named Romeo. When he discovered that he could see a rival in his reflection the games began. My worry was that Romeo could hurt himself, or even just wear himself out. He was being very persistent to say the least.

Of course, google had some great ideas, NOT, like taking a candle and rubbing the wax all over the window to block the reflection. Likely would work, but how do you remove the wax later?

I started covering the window he was going to the most with plywood, well, the bottom half. You guessed it, he was then standing on the top of the plywood admiring his deflexion in the top half. Got some cardboard and covered the top half. This should do it, nope, the piece I used was a little short and left a 2-inch space at the top. Yes, Romeo found this, use more tape.

By now my wife is laughing at me because he has moved to the next window. We have a lot of windows, and

BY
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Rooftops

since catholic means “all encompassing,” Romeo is challenging each and every one. By the end of the day our home looks like we are preparing for a hurricane. Now Romeo is constantly singing by each window. He’s so persistent and convinced that we are harbouring a rival, that he still pecks at the plywood.

By the way, he has a mate that is not the least bit interested in his endeavour to rid the neighbourhood of rival males.

The good part is that after a few days, Romeo has given up on his reflection and has gone back to courting his mate.

A little more on the life history of the Northern Cardinal which is the official name today. These days we are inundated with information about species dwindling

or threatened with extinction. Cardinals are a success story, and the fact that they are so beautiful and sing so nice, and frequent human settlement, make it noteworthy.

They are now a familiar garden bird in Southern Ontario, but this is relatively recent. They were considered a Carolinian species, and the first recorded nesting in Canada was at Point Pelee in 1901. From there they started to move east and northward, and were first recorded in Toronto in 1922. When I settled in Inverhuron 50 years ago there were no Cardinals here. They are now a common bird.

Some would believe this is evidence for climate change, but research appears to point out the widespread availability of optimum habitat.

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