Baltimore Oriole

Be an at-home naturalist! Discover and explore the outdoors with our weekly Critter Card.

**LOOK**

Baltimore Orioles are colorful, vocal members of the blackbird family. Slightly smaller than robins, orioles are found wherever large trees are mixed with open spaces, such as farms, parks, and neighborhoods. Look up! Orioles are often perched at the tops of trees or flitting through the upper foliage in search of insects.

What’s on the menu?

Baltimore Orioles sometimes feed in an unusual way, called *gaping*. They stab their closed beak into fruits, then open their mouths and drink the juice with their brushy-tipped tongues.

**TRY IT**

Cut oranges in half and hang them from trees to invite orioles into your yard. You can also put out a little jelly to attract these nectar-eaters.

**LISTEN**

The song of the male Baltimore Oriole is a loud caroling, "hoolee," somewhat like a robin song but with harsh call notes. Their chatter is unlike the call of any other bird. Every male sings a different song, so you can learn to recognize individuals and welcome a bird returning from central America on his first day back in the spring!

**What is hanging from that tree?**

Baltimore Orioles build sock-like hanging nests in tall trees. Nests are woven by the female, using plant fibers for the outside, and lined inside with hair, down, and other soft materials.

Photos by Lisa Hutchings and Dave Larson

Source: massaudubon.org; allaboutbirds.org