

## Casual Birding

by Faraaz Abdool

Casual birding goes by various labels, but all underpin a common ethic: passive observation of birds. By undertaking this practice, over time we are poised to endure experiences which would



have bypassed us entirely under other circumstances. Birds, and all nature, exist in the present. By shedding our attachments to both past and future, we can share the experience of being a part of life on Earth.

Furthermore, the practice of casual birding allows us to investigate familiar sights on a deeper level. Perhaps it is a unique call that is made by one of your backyard birds, you may realize that this call is reserved for when the neighbor's cat waltzes through. It could be gazing at the velvety black feathers of a crow, noticing how

each feather is dipped in purple and green iridescence. Suddenly, areas of our life we may have glossed over previously are now springs of beauty.

Casual birding is merely the introduction – a gateway as some suggest – to a deeper and more expansive connection with nature. There is no limit to what one can come away with, in fact once experienced, it is difficult to interact with the natural world in any other way.

Join me as I elaborate on these concepts and more. We shall delve into the preparation process, how can one become truly open and receptive to learning from birds and nature, what constitutes the casual in casual birding, some of the experiences that I have had, and some of the things that I have learned along the way.