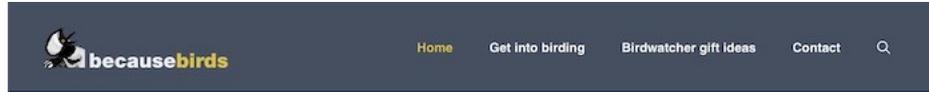


becausebirds.com



Guides

Young birdwatcher gear guide

Birdwatching is a wonderful hobby that allows us to connect with nature, observe beautiful creatures, and learn about the diversity of the world around us. For young, curious birdwatchers, it can be an especially rewarding experience. And having the right tools can make all the difference in their ability to explore the world of birds.



Written by: Jeff Mann
Published on: March 4, 2023



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In the footer of this website you'll see a live leaderboard of the birds chirping in my backyard. These detections are made via my BirdNET-Pi station and submitted to BirdWeather. Let's look at how it was created.



Written by: Jeff Mann
Published on: February 25, 2023

The current 2023 design of becausebirds.com

Description

becausebirds.com is a self-hosted birdwatching WordPress blog launched in 2013. It often has a tech focus and is written to be accessible to new and seasoned birders alike.

History

Because Birds has been a passion project of mine since 2013. It began as a Tumblr blog in March 2013. After finding a humor niche and growing a large audience there, I yearned for more. I wanted my own place to write, be creative, and sharpen my technical skills. Christmas of that year, my previous companion gifted me a WordPress blog that he set up, which would get me started with formal blogging. I transferred my domain to the new WordPress and got to work.

Focus

Since launch, Because Birds has grown and evolved as I've gotten deeper into my birdwatching hobby. I write about my birding experiences & trips, reviews, guides, and anything else that sparks my curiosity. Whatever I'm feeling inspired by at the moment is a candidate for a new blog entry.

Monetization

The blog has been monetized in various ways throughout the years, with the goal of at least covering the costs of operations and ongoing maintenance.

Display ads

Initially, [Google AdSense](#) display ads were shown throughout the site. The traffic was fairly minimal at the time, and these ads brought in pennies at the expense of the website loading slower and looking spammy. Display ads were quickly removed after a few months to improve the visitor experience. To be honest, even with the traffic I get today, ads would still not be worth the compromise to the viewership.

Affiliate marketing

Affiliate marketing, which is linking to products sold by third-party resellers (mainly [Amazon](#) in this case) was a great fit for this blog. When visitors click an affiliate link and make a purchase, a small commission is earned by the referrer. This monetization method is a good fit for the website because it is unobtrusive and can be organically included in content without being detrimental to the experience.

Because Birds' approach to affiliate marketing has always been to only link to products I have had a personal positive experience with and would recommend to birder friends. The exception to this is the blog's [Birdwatcher Gift Ideas](#) page. While I have personal experience with a lot of these products, many are found through my own research on what may make good gifts for birdwatchers.

Brand sponsors

Occasionally, brands or companies will [reach out to me directly](#) to provide products for review. [Reviews](#) written on these products come from an honest perspective and do not necessarily skew positive because they are provided for free.

Technical details

Because Birds was originally launched on shared hosting via BlueHost but as my knowledge and experience grew, I transitioned to a faster virtual private server (VPS) on [Digital Ocean](#).

To make managing multiple WordPress websites easier, I use the [SpinupWP](#) platform.

Content management system	WordPress.org
Domain registrar	Porkbun
Server type	Virtual Private Server (VPS)
Server host	Digital Ocean droplet
Server details	2GB memory / 50GB disk
Server management	SpinupWP
Theme foundation	GeneratePress
Analytics	Plausible Analytics (view live dashboard)

Design

Current design

Homepage

Because Birds currently leverages a [Full Site Editing](#) (FSE), open source, block-based theme from [GeneratePress](#). This lightweight theme allows for a focus on the content with extremely-high [PageSpeed](#) scores across mobile and desktop.



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Guides

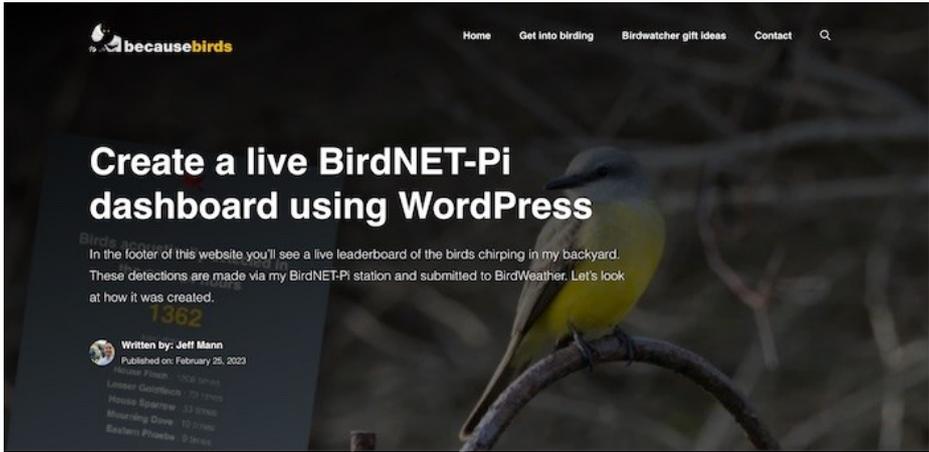
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Single post

The GeneratePress theme shines on single posts with a bold hero title section.



A leaderboard for bird chirps

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About Jeff Mann

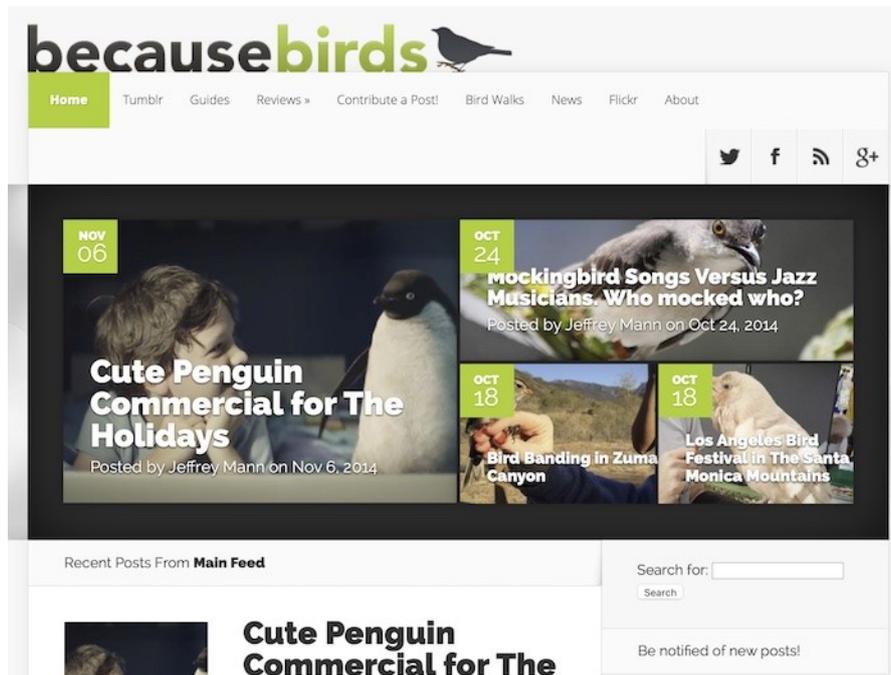
Jeff is an early-30s birder living in San Antonio. He enjoys birding on the weekend and loves to check out new areas in Texas to photograph and record birds. When not obsessing about birds, you can find him cross-stitching, working on tech projects, and playing Nintendo games. He is currently working on his Texas Master Naturalist certification.

[More from this author](#) >

Previous design

Homepage

The initial theme for Because Birds was called *Divi* by [Elegant Themes](#). Divi is one of the most common WordPress themes out there and the website used Divi's specific magazine-like *Extra* theme. Divi is less of a theme and more of a WYSIWYG platform with its own themes. It looks pretty, but it came at the expense of slow, bloated code and performance.



The initial design of becausebirds.com. Pretty, but it had a large variety of visible categories to keep fresh.

Single post

becausebirds 

Home Tumblr Guides Reviews > Contribute a Post! Bird Walks News Flickr About



Bird Banding in Zuma Canyon

Home Birding Summary Bird Banding in Zuma Canyon

Posted By Jeffrey Mann on Oct 18, 2014 |



Today brought the opportunity to participate in my first wild bird banding experience. My friend, Dinuk, was invited to help with the banding and was able to invite me along!

I woke up early at 5:30AM and headed over to Zuma Canyon next to Malibu, CA. It is important to get started as early as possible for any bird studies. Birds are very active in the morning when they are searching for water and food. The banding station was ran today from 7AM to noon.

We helped set up three out of about 17 large nets. The sites for most of these nets were far from the trail in the brush between large bushes. Birds have a hard time seeing the nets and fly or jump through them and



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- Ballona Wetlands Bird Walk**
01/18/2015
8:00 am - 12:00 pm
Playa del Rey
- Malibu Creek State Park Bird Walk**
01/18/2015
8:00 am - 11:30 am

Logo

The Hooded Merganser pixel art logo was designed by the talented pixel artist [alurasheans](#).



Revision #21

Created 21 March 2023 04:36:02 by Jeff Mann

Updated 25 May 2023 18:24:04 by Jeff Mann