

blotched brown, black or gray. Incubation is by the female for about two weeks, with the male bringing her food. The fledging period is two to three weeks with both parents feeding the young. In breeding season both parents develop a pair of pouches toward the front of their mouths for carrying food for the young.

In winter Pine Grosbeaks take more than ninety-nine percent vegetable food, sometimes foraging in mixed species flocks with redpolls, crossbills, and waxwings. They eat mostly buds of maple, birch, mountain ash, poplar, and willow, and seeds of evergreens, grasses, and weeds. They frequently forage in orchards and love crab-apples and apples. In summer insects and spiders may make up fifteen percent of their diet. They will eat rose and sunflower seeds, acorns, and dogwood. They tend to be methodical feeders, remaining in an area until they have depleted the food supply, a trait that endears them to birders who can often count on a flock's presence at a particular locality until a weekend makes a viewing junket possible.

Pine Grosbeaks live in remote areas where the threats of pollution are low, and hence are not currently threatened, although clear-cutting of conifer forests is a potential threat. Their irregular movements, remoteness, and tameness are features that make Pine Grosbeaks enigmatic, understudied, and a great potential research project for the adventuresome. These features, together with this bird's beauty, make it worth venturing forth on cold winter days whenever lack of food drives Pine Grosbeaks into our area.

— William E. Davis, Jr.

### ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

**Barry Van Dusen**, a wildlife artist and illustrator based in Princeton, Massachusetts, frequently contributes his insightful bird drawings to *Bird Observer*. Some of Barry's art will be appearing in a two-person show, titled "A Passion for Birds," at Massachusetts Audubon's South Shore Regional Center in Marshfield, Massachusetts, beginning on May 5, 2000. James Coe will be the other artist featured. For more information, call the Center at (781) 837-9400. Beginning in March 2000 and continuing through November, the Burrell Collection in Glasgow, Scotland, will be showing a range of the work Barry began in the fall of 1997 as part of "Project Tiger." In addition to preparing work for a variety of upcoming juried shows, Barry has been working on illustrations to be used with the "Birdsong Identifier," a new product designed to facilitate the identification of bird songs in the field.