

Harbor Island, Naturally

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A PERSONAL PROJECT OF JOHN ALBERT



EASTERN TOWHEES

COLORFUL VISITOR

One of the interesting things about living on a barrier island is the wide



variety of critters that come and go over the course of time.. I first spotted an Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) two years ago, Atthat time I got one photo, the one in the upper left corner. I did not see

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another until several came to my bird bath last March. Many of the birds that are seen in the south stay year round.

There are six species of Towhees. The eastern is the only one that appears east of the Mississippi River.

Seed and insect eaters, they mainly forage on the ground scratching in the leaf litter. Rarely they may eat small snakes and lizards.

Females build nests out of grasses and bark in low shrubs and trees less than five feet off the ground. They lay 2-6 eggs



and in the south may produce two or three broods a year.

Eastern Towhees in the northeast have declined in number. The southern population seems to be stable.



Sources
Lives of North American Birds
by Kenn Kaufman
South Carolina Bird Life