



Kevin Milaeger

Milaeger's

Glass Bird Ornaments---always a favorite!

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Birds are one of the most universally loved Christmas ornaments. The color combinations and body shapes are endless. Many of the glass artists attempted to represent known birds---swan, cockatoo, parakeet, owl, and others, but they also created their own fanciful versions of birds. All make for wonderful additions to the Christmas tree. And, like the beaded ornaments that were discussed in the last blog,



most bird ornaments don't look all that

"Christmassy," so they can be displayed at times other than Christmas.



We have offered vintage glass birds for a number of years now, but this year we have acquired a much larger cache than usual, about fifty or so. We have many different styles and colorations, and most are of the clip-on type. The clip-on ornaments are useful because they fill the void on the tops of the branches, whereas traditional hanging ornaments hang below the branches. This makes for a more fully decorated tree, and



birds seem natural in

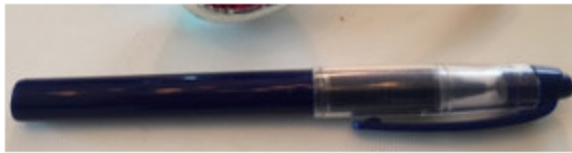
the perching position. With age, the clips sometimes don't work, but I have checked all of ours and they work pretty well, if not quite like new.



Most vintage glass birds were made in Germany or Czechoslovakia. All the books on old ornaments agree. Ornaments with caps sometimes have the country of origin stamped on the cap, but most birds don't have caps. Occasionally we will find one with a paper label, but those labels are usually long gone. In our current offering, there is one exception to the European ornaments---a bird with a curious looking beak and a pipe cleaner around its neck. This



ornament is one of the few birds that has a cap on top, and it is marked Japan. I've never seen another like it.



Japanese bird

The tails of the birds are made of several different materials.



Sometimes they seem to have used real feathers, or at least they look pretty real. We also see tinsel tails, in silver or gold. The most common tails are made of "spun glass," a silvery white material. Most of our birds have their original tails but I had to replace a few that were missing.

Most Christmas ornaments are round, or roundish in shape. Bird ornaments have a

different shape entirely, especially those birds with long necks. Add to that the tail feathers, and sometimes side feathers, and we have a new shape of ornament that contrasts well with round ornaments. This adds a new dimension to tree decorating, and makes all ornaments more attractive.



Please [email me](#) if you have any questions or comments. If you are interested in purchasing ornaments pictured in this blog, please contact Rosemary, who handles mail order sales, at 262.693.2040 x101 or info@milaegers.com.