

Getting Started Bird Feeding

Feeding the birds can be as simple as placing a feeder full of seed in your yard and waiting for them to find it.

Most birds find food by sight, so it's important to place feeders in an area that's easily seen, sheltered from the wind and safely away from cats and other predators. Feeders with different seeds or seed blends can be placed throughout the yard at different levels to attract different types of birds.

Birds' feeding preferences are normally based on the elevation of where the food can be found.

1. Birds Feeding on the Ground

For ground-feeding birds, use a seed blend high in millet which is designed to attract birds such as doves, sparrows and juncos.

2. Birds Feeding at the Feeder

If you are interested in feeding birds at elevated levels, use a blend that contains little or no millet, and contain seeds such as oil sunflower, striped sunflower, and safflower which is designed to attract birds such as chickadees, nuthatches and titmice that feed at high levels.

3. Birds Feeding at the Feeder & on the Ground

If you are interested in feeding birds at both ground and elevated levels, use a blend designed to attract a variety of birds that feed at both levels and contains a moderate amount of millet and other seeds attractive to birds. This blend should attract the greatest variety of birds to any one feeding station including cardinals, chickadees, finches and juncos.



Feeders come in a wide variety of materials and styles. There are hopper feeders, platform feeders, suet feeders, tube feeders and specialty feeders designed to supply bird food to birds.

Things to Remember When Getting Started

If you haven't been feeding birds in your backyard, it may take from one day to several months before the birds in your area discover your new feeder. Be patient and consider the following:

- It is important that you use a seed type or seed blend based on the birds in your area.
- Birds generally find their food by sight. Placing your feeder where it will be visible to them should decrease the time it takes for birds to start feeding.
- Sometimes sprinkling some seed on the ground or on top of the feeder will let the birds know that you are open for business.
- Keep your feeders clean, and change the seed at least once a month if birds have not begun eating.

It's important to understand what kind of backyard habitat you have and what birds you might attract depending on the season. There are also situations that exist (squirrels, starlings, sparrows, pigeons etc.) that may increase or decrease your enjoyment of bird watching. Birds may also be challenged by problems (house cats and birds of prey) while trying to feed at feeders.

Whatever your nature question or problem is, we'll help you solve it. Good luck and enjoy your birds!

For more information, talk to one of our
Certified Bird Feeding Specialists

