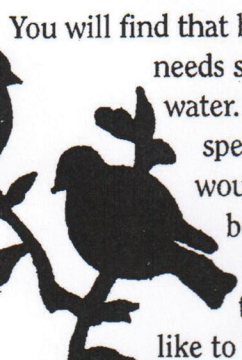


THIS IS FOR THE BIRDS

Almost everyone can attract birds, whether they live near a forest or on the top of a high rise. The number and variety attracted will vary, of course. But there is a lot more to bird feeding than just hanging out treats. If you really want to enjoy your feathered friends, it's probably a good idea to know a little bit about them.



You will find that birds all have a few basic needs such as food, shelter and water. If you have a particular species in mind that you really would like to get to know better, find out how they like to be served, what they like to be served and when they like to be served.

If you want to attract many types of birds, you will have to offer many types of seed from different type feeders and at varying heights. Some birds prefer ground feeding, while others like platforms and hoppers. For best selective seed feeding, try a few tube feeders. Vary the heights and the mixture, and don't forget a thistle feeder. Suet feeders will bring in woodpeckers, flickers, sapsuckers and make many of your chickadees happy as a lark.

Consider your bird feeding responsibilities the same as running a fine dining establishment. You have to offer food in ample portions, constantly refill the water and keep the feeder and eating area clean. It is not advisable to throw seed or other bird food directly on the ground, because it can become contaminated by mold and dampness, causing sickness in the birds.

The following questions and answers might help you in feeding and attracting your favorite birds.

1 WHAT KIND OF SEED SHOULD I BUY?

Black oil sunflower seed is a bird favorite. While many of the mixed variety of seeds are cheaper than straight sunflower seeds, you'll need to use more mixed seed in the long run. If you want to feed a variety of seeds, use a different feeder for each type of seed, putting only one kind of seed in each feeder.

2 HOW EXPENSIVE IS IT TO BEGIN FEEDING WILD BIRDS?

You can start simply with a piece of scrap wood, elevated a few inches above the ground. Add a few holes for drainage and you've built a platform feeder! If you consider buying a commercial feeder, consider one made of metal, ceramic, PVC or other durable plastics so it can last for years.

3 WHAT IS THE BEST LOCATION FOR A BIRD FEEDER?

The best location is where you can see and enjoy it, in a place that is easily accessible for you. It's a good idea to keep it close to quick cover. If you watch birds often, you will notice they always use both eyes—one for looking at food and the other looking over their shoulders for possible predators.

4 HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR THE BIRDS TO FIND THE FEEDER?

You can help the birds find your new feeder by taking advantage of a bird's natural curiosity. Fasten some aluminum foil to your feeder so that it will reflect the light. Birds will see the glint of light and will come to investigate.

5 WHAT ABOUT SQUIRRELS?

If you've seen squirrels in your neighborhood, it's safe to assume they will visit your feeder. There are a variety of baffles and "squirrel-proof" feeders on the market. Squirrels can sometimes be diverted by providing them with their own squirrel feeder with peanuts and corn.