

*Full of advice
on caring for
your pets*

Your guide to
Wild Birds



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best for you and your pets*



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Are you ready?



Feeding wild birds in your garden can be a very rewarding experience - and it also gives you the chance to see a wide variety of beautiful birds up close. Providing food will bring these fascinating birds right to you where you can watch their behaviour and unique personalities on a daily basis.

It is important to offer a wide variety of food to your visitors, so that you can provide them with as much natural proteins and vitamins they require. If you offer a variety of different foods then your new friends will visit your garden often.

Never give wild birds any food containing salt

Providing food to wild birds is not only a satisfying experience, it is a means of survival for them - especially in the cold winter months when their food sources can become considerably low. Help to look after wild birds and be sure to offer them some of the foods they need.

What food to provide

Bird- seed mixtures - A large variety of mixes are available for feeders, bird tables and ground feeding. The best mixtures will contain the likes of sunflower seeds, maize and peanut granules. It is important to avoid mixtures that include split peas, beans, dried rice and lentils. Your local Jollyes will be happy to advise you on appropriate bird seed mixtures.



Black sunflower seeds - These are really great for wild birds as they are high in oil and better than striped seeds. Black sunflower seeds are a superb food to provide all year round.

Nyjer Seeds - These are also high in oil and are black in colour. These seeds will require a specific seed feeder and are a popular seed especially with goldfinches and siskins.

Peanuts? Very popular with a variety of birds - especially blue tits, greenfinches, house sparrows, nuthatches, great spotted woodpeckers and siskins - peanuts should either be crushed or fed from a special peanut feeder so that the birds cannot take them whole. Salted or dry roasted peanuts should never be used. Your local Jollyes will advise you on appropriate peanuts. It is vital to buy the correct peanuts, as some can be too high in natural toxins, which can kill birds.

Fat balls - Fat balls and fat based food bars are really good for the colder winter months and wild birds really enjoy them. You can also make your own fat balls by pouring melted fat into a mixture of seeds, nuts, dried fruits, oatmeal, cheese and cake. You can find appropriate recipes on the Internet or from specific wild bird care books.

Live foods - Wild birds rely on live foods as a source of natural food that can be provided throughout the year. Mealworms are a popular choice. These should always be fresh and you should never feed any dead or discoloured worms. Wax worms are another alternative but are more expensive than mealworms.



What is bad for Wild Birds?

The following foods should never be fed to wild birds: cooking fat, polyunsaturated margarines and vegetable oils, dog and cat food, milk and coconut and mouldy food.



Bird Tables

Bird tables are most valuable to wild birds when natural food is scarce - usually between October and April. Once winter is over your wild birds will rely less on your food, as their natural resources will be once again readily available. You can still continue to feed your wild birds during the spring and summer as a means of extra food supply.

Fat based foods are ideal in winter

If you are a first time bird table owner then do not be disappointed if you don't get results straight away. It may take your birds a while to realise that they have a new source of food or it may not be the season for them.

Where should I place the Bird table? Place the bird table in a very quiet part of your garden, by a window if possible so that you can marvel at your wild birds. The table should be in an open and safe place and sheltered from too much sun or harsh winds. A raised bird table is advised as it will be easier to see and harder for predators to harm the birds.



Seasons

Autumn & winter - Wild birds will require a frequent supply of food during the cold winter months: twice a day is necessary, in the morning and early afternoon. Through the cold weather, birds will require high-energy foods to maintain their fat reserves. Ensure that you provide high quality foods throughout the winter. Fat balls are great for this time of year.

Spring & Summer - During the warmer months, wild birds will not require as much support from you for their food. Appropriate foods to provide during these months are black sunflower seeds, mealworms, waxworms and seed mixtures to name but a few.

What type of birds can I expect to see?

Provide water as well as food

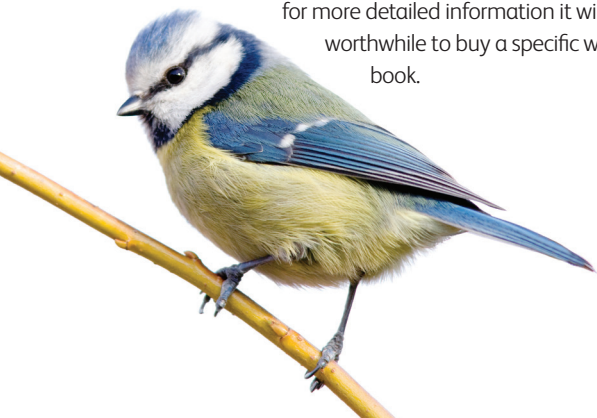
The most likely birds you can expect to see in your garden will include starlings, house sparrows, blackbirds, blue and great tits, robins, greenfinches and collared doves. Siskins and bramblings may also visit in the winter months.

Birds such as dunnocks, song thrushes and chaffinches may also be visitors to your garden but are likely to hop around on the ground below your bird table.

Why not buy a bird book so you can identify which visitors you have in your garden?

Looking after wild birds is a complex topic and a great hobby.

Please be aware that this is a basic care guide and for more detailed information it will be worthwhile to buy a specific wild bird book.



Shopping Checklist

We recommend the following items for your wild birds.

Wild Bird Checklist

- Bird table
- Appropriate feeders for seed, peanuts and nyjer
- Appropriate seeds, mixtures, fat balls and food
- Bird safe table disinfectant
- A book on wild bird care

It is now time to enjoy the vast variety of wild birds that will visit your garden.

For further information contact:

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