



Choose a stylish feeder and fill it with fresh treats to entice feathered friends.

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B

irds are easy to please. Just give them fresh food and sparkling water, and your garden will soon be bustling with feathered friends from dawn until dusk. A feeder can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. To help you narrow your choices, decide which birds you want to attract, then present specific food to tempt their tastes. We'll show you several feeders on the next few pages and tell you what kind of food can go in each. Turn to page 74 to learn which foods are best for the birds you want to attract. If you have space for a birdbath, you can also provide fresh water. But don't be surprised if your drinking station turns into a community pool. Sure, they'll splash out a bunch of water, but watching their antics will be worth it.

Photographer: Jay Wilde



### Sunflower Feeder

Who doesn't love a pretty garden sculpture? It gets even better when you find it's a feeder where birds can alight and delight. Filled with black-oil sunflower seeds, this feeder will attract chickadees, grosbeaks, purple finches, mourning doves, cardinals, and downy woodpeckers, such as the one shown here. Each sunflower is 13 inches in diameter and holds ½ pound of seed. The 5-foot flowers and stems are made of metal with a copper paint finish that may rust over time to an aged patina.

\$29.95. Gardener's Supply Co.; [www.gardeners.com/bhg](http://www.gardeners.com/bhg)





### Recycled-Plastic Upside-Down Suet Feeder

Suet is a tasty, energy-filled treat for birds, especially starlings and grackles. To keep those undesirables at bay, choose an upside-down suet feeder. Starlings and grackles aren't adept at hanging upside down, but clingers such as tanagers, nuthatches, and downy woodpeckers (shown here) are. This model is made of sturdy recycled plastic.

**\$28. Backyard Nature Products;**  
[www.backyardnatureproducts.com](http://www.backyardnatureproducts.com)

## FOR THE BIRDS

### Window-Mounted Hummingbird Feeder

Attach this feeder to your favorite bird-viewing window and watch as beautiful hummingbirds come up close to drink. The feeder's base is easy to fill with homemade hummingbird nectar (See "Bird Brief," below right) and can be cleaned in your dishwasher.

**\$17. Wild Bird Unlimited;** [www.wbu.com](http://www.wbu.com)

### HummZinger

With the HummZinger hummingbird feeder, you'll feed only hummingbirds. A built-in moat keeps ants from getting to the four drinking ports. Small gaskets on the inside of each port keep bees and wasps from getting close to the nectar. Fill the sturdy polycarbonate feeder with purchased or homemade hummingbird nectar (See "Bird Brief," right) and be sure to clean the feeder each time you refill it. This feeder can be hung or mounted on a post.

**\$18.95. Anacortes Telescope and Wild Bird;**  
[www.buytelescopes.com](http://www.buytelescopes.com)



### Bird Brief

**Feeding hummingbirds:** To make hummingbird nectar, mix 1 part sugar and 4 parts water; bring to a boil. Let the nectar cool, then pour it into your feeder. Store extra nectar in the refrigerator. It's better for the birds if you don't add red dye. This nectar's sweetness is enough to draw hummers.







## The Great Divide

Can't decide which birds you want to attract? You won't have to limit yourself with this easy-to-fill feeder that dispenses two types of seeds at the same time. It can hold most larger seeds and feed mixtures such as peanuts, cracked corn, sunflower seed, safflower seed, and larger-seeded songbird mixes. You'll bring in a variety of birds with any of these seeds. We filled ours with sunflower nuts and a songbird mix and were lucky enough to have a charm of finches visit.

**\$40. Wild Birds Unlimited; [www.wbu.com](http://www.wbu.com)**

## Hot House

Smaller birds, such as this black-capped chickadee, enjoy visiting this decorative wooden feeder. We filled ours with a traditional songbird mix, but the large opening at the base of the feeder would allow it to dispense any number of seed types. The top opens for easy filling and provides cleaning access to the hand-painted glass inserts. Before you use the feeder, we recommend drilling several holes in the base that are large enough to let water drain out but small enough to keep seed from falling through.

**\$30. BirdBrain; [www.birdbrain.com](http://www.birdbrain.com)**



## Large Fly-Through Feeder

Feeding a crowd takes space. With this 23x17-inch platform dining room, your winged visitors will have plenty of elbowroom. This feeder will dispense almost any feed—even fruit and mealworms—so almost any bird will come. A goldfinch savors the sunflower seeds we put in ours. The main structure is made of naturally weatherproof cedar. The powder-coated screen platform base drains quickly after a storm and can be easily lifted out of the base for cleaning.

**\$89.95. Duncraft; [www.duncraft.com](http://www.duncraft.com)**

## Would you like a beverage with that?



## Enameled Brass Birdbath

For an attractive focal point, choose a birdbath with a splash of color. This 16-inch diameter bowl has a tough enamel coating that stands up to the most vigorous bathers. Over the season we used this bath, it developed a beautiful aged-brass patina. Buy the bowl separately or with the 3-foot wrought-iron stake. Refill the bath with water daily and use a soft scrub brush to keep it clean.

**\$79.50 for birdbath and stake. Garden Artisans.com; [www.gardenartisans.com](http://www.gardenartisans.com)**



## Backyard fare for feathered friends

Birds, just like you, have favorite foods. To draw them in, feed a seed or food that is specific to the birds you want to attract. You'll get a more interesting variety of birds than you would with a general wild bird blend. Most seed-eating birds rank sunflower seeds as their favorite. Start with that, then graduate to some of the other foods we show here.

### 1. Suet

Suet is a good choice for attracting insect-eating birds such as nuthatches, woodpeckers, creepers, chickadees, titmice, and kinglets. You can make your own with purchased beef kidney fat (available at many meat counters) mixed with seeds, berries and nuts. Or buy preformed suet cakes wherever you purchase wild bird supplies. Suet can feed year-round, but bring it inside when the weather turns hot so it does not become rancid.

### 2. Cracked Corn

Feed cracked corn to attract jays, crows, pigeons, and doves. If you have wild turkeys and pheasants in your backyard, they'll enjoy the corn, too.

### 3. Finch Mix

While the name says finch mix, this blend of chopped sunflower seeds and Nyjer seeds will attract a variety of small birds, including goldfinches, house finches, pine siskins, indigo bunting, and towhees.

### 4. Black-Oil Sunflower Seeds

Black-oil sunflower seeds are, by far, the favorite food of most seed-eating birds. Not only are they a nutritious source of high quality protein, but they also contain a high concentration of oil. Birds ingest the seeds and use oil from their glands to maintain the insulating qualities of their feathers.

### 5. Songbird Mix

This mix of peanuts, two kinds of shelled and unshelled sunflower seeds, and safflower seeds will attract cardinals, titmice, house and goldfinches, blue jays, and white-throated sparrows.

### 6. Nyjer Seeds

Nyjer seeds are a favorite of finches. Fill a tall finch feeder with these seeds and see how many of these pretty birds will flock to your feeder. Nyjer seeds are high in oil, so they are a great source of energy. Contrary to popular belief,

Nyjer seeds are not from wildflower thistles, so you won't be adding to the weed population by feeding them to the birds.

### 7. Shelled Sunflower Seeds

Consider feeding just the shelled seeds; there is a toxin in the hulls of sunflower seeds that prevents grass and some herbaceous plants from growing near them. The presence of these hulls beneath a bird feeder will inhibit the growth of certain plants.

### 8. Sugar Water

Hummingbirds aren't the only birds that like a blend of sugar and water. Orioles will come to a feeder for it if the feeder has a big enough feeding station. You might also find an occasional house finch and red-bellied woodpecker enjoying the sweet drink, too. For the sugar-water nectar recipe, see page 81.

### 9. Safflower Seeds

Safflower is a great choice when you want to attract songbirds but want to keep squirrels, starlings, and grackles at bay. Cardinals, doves, titmice, house finches, and white-throated sparrows all have a taste for safflower seeds.

### 10. Peanuts

Peanuts, both in shell and shelled, attract jays and titmice. If you live near wildlands, you may even attract pheasant and quail.

### 11. Mealworms

Insect-eating birds will appreciate this treat of beetle larvae (mealworms). Place live or freeze-dried worms on a platform feeder to attract bluebirds, warblers, titmice, robins, and wrens.

### 12. Fresh Fruit

In the spring, set out orange halves, strawberries, cherries, apricots, raspberries, grapes, and other fruit to attract orioles, tanagers, and grosbeaks. Orioles also love grape jelly. 🍓



Photographer: Jay Wilde