

DIY

Milk Carton Bird Feeder *and information on feeding birds*

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FEEDING WILD BIRDS

Most important of the three essentials for bird life is food. Water and shelter play a lesser role. Feeding may be done in two different ways at two different times - summer and winter. Feeding correctly requires varying the diet with the season.

Summer feeding is usually unnecessary but will bring more birds to the feeding area for people to enjoy. Winter is an important time for feeding. You may begin in early fall to attract and hold birds that would otherwise migrate farther south. Once lured from their natural wintering areas, birds concentrate around feeders in larger numbers than the area can naturally support. They are now your dependents. Feeding must continue until spring when natural foods are again abundant. If there is any chance you won't be able to continue feeding throughout the winter, don't begin now.

BIRD DIETS

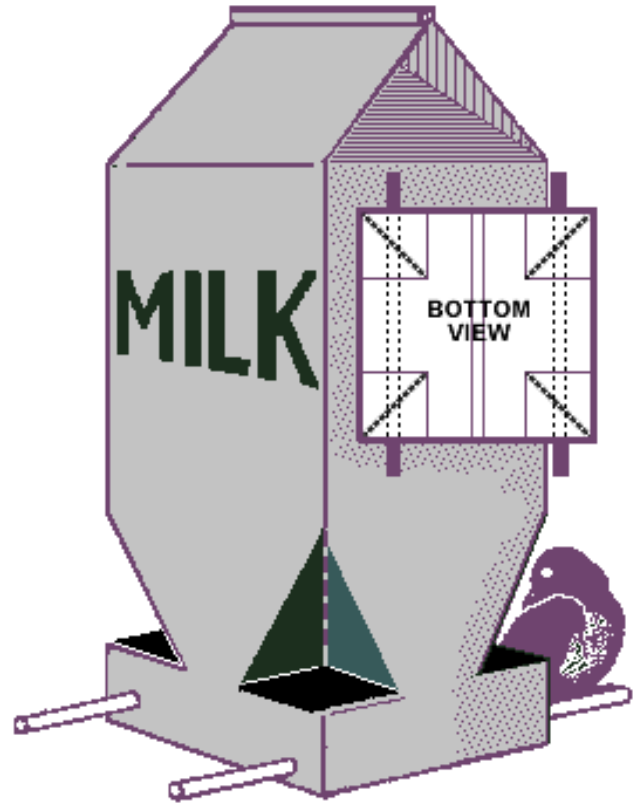
Feeding birds is largely an art which must be learned through experience and observation. On the basis of diet, birds may be roughly separated into seed eaters and insect eaters. This division is not a clean one, for most fit both categories at some time in their life. You may use several different feeders or combinations of feeders to satisfy the requirements of all.

BIRD FOODS

Suet: Insect eaters like nuthatches and woodpeckers will consume large amounts of suet when insects and larva are not available. Avoid stringy suet - it's hard for birds to eat. You may make suet available either plain or in any large, mesh container. A better way is to grind the suet, melt it in a double boiler and pour it into molds to harden. It is more durable if melted twice before molding into cakes. Small frozen-food dishes make good molds. You can make suet-seed cakes by adding the melted suet to any of the seeds or mixtures listed below. Melted suet or suet-seed mixtures should be placed in suet stick feeders while in a semi-liquid state.

Peanut Butter: May be used in place of suet in the manner described above. It is much more expensive, however. Look into obtaining substandard qualities for bird feeding.

Seeds: Even insect eaters consume some seeds, especially in winter. Seeds will attract many different kinds of birds. Grocery, pet, or feed stores will carry the following material for seed feeding: sunflower, millet, wheat, rice, oatmeal, popcorn, hempseed, buckwheat, cracked corn, chopped nuts, bread crumbs (dried) and commercial birdseed mix. Dog biscuits, rabbit food,



raisins, and other such items are also used in mixtures. A good homemade mixture is three-parts sunflower, three-parts hempseed, three-parts millet, and one-part buckwheat. Experiment with several mixtures to determine which is preferred by birds in your area.

Grit: Sand, very fine gravel, or crushed charcoal should be added in small amounts to suet-seed cakes or seed mixtures to complete the diet.

Hummingbird Food: Use a solution of one part sugar and four parts water. Do not use honey or red food coloring.

PLACEMENT OF FEEDERS

Feeders should be placed with protection in mind. Squirrels, cats or other predators should be unable to gain access to feeding stations. Escape routes to nearby trees or shrubbery must be available. These cover plants all provide a place to perch before going to feed. Feeders should be protected from weather by facing them away from the wind. South or east sides of buildings provide the most sun and warmth. Placement must also consider ease in servicing and refilling. Locations where large drifts form or high ladders are required will likely result in empty and ineffective feeders.