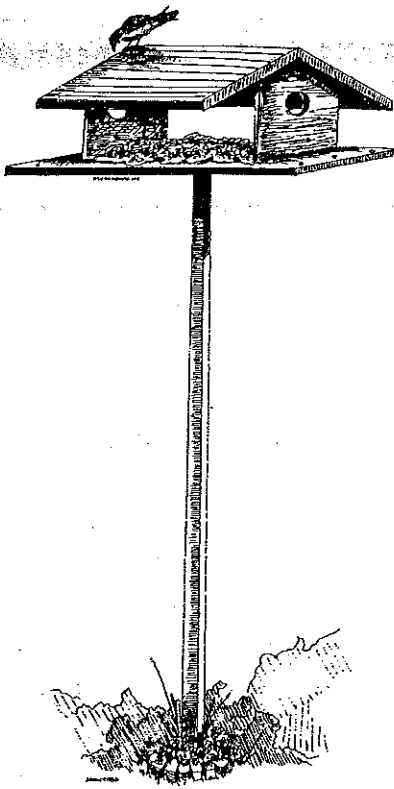


Seeds for the Birds



- Black oil sunflower and white millet are the seeds that attract the greatest variety of birds. Even though these seeds can be purchased separately, many homeowners find that it is easier to use a high-quality birdseed mixture that contains large amounts of both seeds.
- Begin using only 1 or 2 feeders. Don't add additional feeders until birds regularly visit them.
- Position feeders at least 10 feet from cover. This permits birds to easily escape most predators while helping keep squirrels away from feeders.
- If a feeder must be located close to a tree or shrub, encircle the base of the feeder with wire fencing. This helps reduce the chances that feeding birds will be captured by raptors, cats and other predators.
- Offer feed at different levels. Some birds prefer to feed on the ground, while others like to feed at elevated feeders.
- If birds are slow to visit feeders, add pieces of white bread to the seed offerings. At times white bread will draw birds to feeders when nothing else will.
- Don't over-fill feeders. Stock them with only enough food to last a couple of days.
- Keep seeds dry. Dispose of wet seeds before they become moldy.
- Remove and dispose of discarded seeds and hulls regularly. Wet seeds and hulls can promote the growth of fungi and bacteria that can be harmful to birds. Also, sunflower hulls contain a growth inhibitor that can suppress plants from growing near feeders.
- Periodically disinfect feeders by washing them in a solution consisting of 2 ounces of bleach to one gallon of water. Thoroughly dry feeders before refilling them with seeds.
- Once bird feeding begins in winter, continue stocking feeders with seed throughout the entire season. Bird feeding can enhance bird survival during harsh weather.
- Bird feeding was once considered primarily a winter activity. Today bird enthusiasts feed birds throughout the year. In fact, some homeowners attract more birds to feeders in summer than winter.
- The number of birds striking windows near feeders can be reduced by placing raptor silhouettes on windowpanes. Installing screens over windows or hanging ribbons and others objects in front of windows also help prevent birds from colliding by reducing reflection in the window.
- Stunned birds found below windows should be placed in a paper bag with the top loosely closed. Put the bag in a cool, dark place. Once the bird is alert, it can be returned to the wild.
- Report unusual birds using feeders to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Nongame Wildlife/Natural Heritage Section.