

Holiday Tree for the Birds



Celebrate the season with your feathered friends by decorating a tree in your yard, or even one in a container, with special treats that they'll love.

First, the Ornaments!

Make pine cone feeders to hang from the branches: Gather some pine or spruce cones. Tie a loop of twine around the top to use as a hanger. Fill the crevices with peanut butter, then roll in bird seed or cornmeal.

Fill scooped out orange halves with a mixture of peanut butter, suet and seed. Poke a length of wire through the top to attach to the tree.

Make 'bird cakes' to set in the branches: Melt 2 cups of suet in a saucepan. Mix in 2 cups of peanut butter and 12 cups of cornmeal. Spoon mixture into muffin cups and decorate with black oil sunflower seed. Cool.

Now for the Garland!

String popcorn, peanuts, cranberries, grapes and/or raisins on lengths of heavy-duty thread or fishing line. Weave your edible garland among the branches.

And lastly, the Tree Topper!

Make a grapefruit 'Star': Slice the ends off a grapefruit, leaving a 1" slice in the middle (use the ends to fill with seed or peanut butter mixture). Wire 5 cranberries around the edge of the slice to form the points of a star. Then, wire the whole thing to the top of your tree.

Bird Feeders

Feeders should be located in a sheltered place where they are not exposed to strong winds or vulnerable to attack from predators such as hawks and cats. Try grouping several different feeders together, to include the maximum number of different birds. Remember we'll be happy to help you select the right feeders for your location.

Bird Seeds

Just like us, birds have certain food preferences. Black Oil sunflower seed is one of the most popular seeds, attracting a large variety of different birds. Some seeds such as Nyjer (Thistle) are very specific - if you want to attract beautiful Goldfinches, then this one is for you. Mixes containing sunflower, thistle, cracked corn, millet and other seeds are also available, to tempt many bird visitors.

Natural Food Sources

Birds love berry-producers such as Crabapples, Hollies, Hawthorns and Viburnums. Perennial favorites for seed eaters include members of the Black-Eyed Susan family (Rudbeckia), Coneflower (Echinacea), Goldenrod (Solidago) and Coreopsis. Seed heads of ornamental grasses are also highly sought after. Of the annuals, Sunflower (of course!), Marigolds and Cosmos are popular.

Don't Forget Water!

