

FEEDING WINTER BIRDS

Common Feeders & Tips

With cold weather approaching, many birds such as Baltimore Orioles, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Summer Tanagers have migrated south for the winter. Others remain as loyal residents throughout year, and are joined by birds migrating from farther north. Birds that feed on berries, suet, seeds, and other backyard supplements can bring life and action to your feeder, even during the coldest midwestern months, making winter a great time to start a feeder for the first time or refresh a backyard staple!

Most birds that visit feeders weigh less than a few ounces, so they rely on the food they eat during the day to survive the cold winter nights. In a pinch, winter bird feeding can be as simple as scattering general wild bird mix on the ground, or it can be specialized depending on the species you hope to attract! Birds like Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches and Red-breasted Nuthatches feed primarily in elevated areas. Dark-eyed Juncos, doves, and native sparrows will typically feed on the ground. Other birds, such as woodpeckers and Brown Creepers, feed in areas known as the "tree trunk zone," while opportunistic species like House Finches, American Goldfinches, Northern Cardinals and Blue Jays will feed anywhere seed is accessible.

Check out our suggestions below for a few common feeders to try this winter, and enjoy the fun they bring to your backyard!



TUBE FEEDER

- **Place:** at least 5 feet off the ground
- **Type:** choose a model with metal ports around the seed dispensers- this helps to deter squirrels from stealing the food and destroying the feeder
- **Attracts:** chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, Goldfinches, siskins, and House Finches
- **Use:** black oil sunflower, mixed seeds, safflower, and peanuts

HOPPER FEEDER

- **Place:** at least 5 feet off the ground
- **Type:** typically house-shaped, some models rely on the weight of the bird to release seeds
- **Attracts:** Northern Cardinals, Blue Jays, grackles, & Red-winged Blackbirds
- **Use:** safflower, sunflower, cracked corn





SUET FEEDER

- **Place:** at least 5 feet off the ground
- **Type:** best to use in a cage feeder, or in a mesh bag
- **Attracts:** woodpeckers, titmice, nuthatches, chickadees, wrens, creepers and warblers
- **Use:** homemade or store-bought suet blocks with chopped, unsalted nuts, unsweetened raisins or cranberries, and birdseed

GROUND FEEDER

- **Place:** at least 10 feet from a tree or shrub to give birds a chance to escape predators
- **Type:** screen-bottomed tray that will sit several inches off the ground or on a deck
- **Attracts:** juncos, doves, towhees, and Goldfinches
- **Use:** mix of cracked corn, milo, millet, sunflower seed, mixed seed, wheat, and oats



OTHER WINTER FEEDING TIPS

- Provide nutritious winter seed options
- Keep feeders filled
- Be consistent with feeding throughout the winter
- Hang feeders in safe locations
- Keep feeders clean
- Keep clean, unfrozen water options available to birds

