



Winter bird feeding tips in Pound Ridge

Why feed birds?

You get a live show from dawn to dusk in the comfort of your home. You help the birds get through the winter especially if it is a harsh one. Nuthatches, chickadees, sparrows,

woodpeckers, and blue jays are some common visitors. Altogether in our area there are 32 types of birds. Start by mid-November. After that it's more difficult to attract birds.

There are three basic types of feeders: mounted on poles in the ground, hanging types, and suet feeders.

Pole mounted feeders with adjustable weight sensitive bars keep out sunflower-obsessed blue jays, squirrels, and even raccoons. Let them eat the picked through lesser seed and cracked corn that falls on the ground. The clear plastic cylinders have up to 8 holes. You can see multiple birds feeding at once. The suet feeder is a little metal cage, and you can hang it near your kitchen window. The carnivorous birds love suet and the cages are small enough so that it is difficult for blue jays to dominate these feeders. Where you place the feeder is very important. You want it to be close to the house but near trees or shrubs so the birds can quickly find cover from predator attacks. You also do not want it to be too close to the house because the birds panic when a predator attacks, and they often fly into the windows resulting in severe injury.

The most practical feeders in terms of attracting birds are the ones which contain seeds blended for the northeast in 20 lbs bags. The store brands, such as ACE hardware, cost considerably less than the premium brands. The difference is the premium brands contain more expensive sunflower seeds and others which are the first attraction. All you will be doing is stuffing the wily blue jays while the other species look on hungrily. Within a day or two, the more economical store brands will attract birds as well as the premium brands,

It is important not to let the feeder run out of seed as the birds will wander off after a few days. These fine-feathered addicts are now left on their own to find native seeds making it more challenging to find food. So, you could endanger them. If you are faithful in keeping the feeder full, you will find yourself going through 20 lbs bags in a week.

Take down feeders by mid-March because the bears and raccoons are coming out of hibernation. They are ravenous and especially like bird feeders because of the high nutritional value of the seeds.