

# LEARN AT CHESTER ZOO

## FEEDING GARDEN BIRDS GUIDE

Leaving out food for birds can be a great way to help them. It also helps you get great views of birds you might not otherwise see. Different types of bird like different things.

**So leaving out a variety of food will help attract lots of species.**

### BLACK SUNFLOWER SEEDS OR SUNFLOWER HEARTS

Contain protein, fat, and vitamins. Black seeds have more oil in than stripy ones which makes them better for birds. Sunflower hearts are less messy but also more expensive.

**Birds they might attract:** blue tits, great tits, green finches, and chaffinches



### PEANUTS

Contain lots of fat and protein. Make sure the peanuts you use are made specifically for birds as they may contain toxins otherwise. They shouldn't be salted or dry roasted and should be bought from somewhere reputable.

**Birds they might attract:** blue tits, coal tits, greater spotted woodpeckers, house sparrows, great tits, starlings, long-tailed tits, goldcrests, goldfinches, nuthatches, coal tits

### APPLES

Get an apple or a chunk of apple and spear it onto a tree branch, making sure there are places near it for the birds to perch on whilst eating. Some birds prefer apples to nuts and seeds. You could also try pears. If you have access to an apple tree you can use apples that have fallen on the floor as it doesn't matter if they are slightly old.

**Birds they might attract:** blackbirds, blackcaps and blue tits



### FAT WITH EXTRA BITS

You can generally buy this in the form of fat balls or cylinders or feeders with fat already in them. Avoid anything that is in a mesh bag as birds can get their legs or beaks trapped. You can also easily make your own by mixing lard with seeds and putting it in a container such as a yoghurt pot.

**Birds they might attract:** long-tailed tits, coal tits, great tits, blue tits, blackbirds, starlings, robins, goldcrests, blackcaps and greater spotted woodpeckerstits, goldcrests, goldfinches, nuthatches, coal tits

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## NYJER SEED

This is a different type of seed which needs a special kind of feeder because the seeds are so small. They contain lots of fat.

**Birds they might attract:** goldfinches and siskins



## SEED MIXES

These can be useful for lots of different birds as they contain different things. Buy good quality ones so that the birds have lots of variety. They don't tend to eat mixes with lots of cheaper foods in.

Look out for those with flaked maize, sunflower seeds, peanut granules, and millet. Avoid those with beans, dried rice, lentils, split peas, dog biscuit.

**Birds they might attract:** blue tits, great tits, house sparrows, dunnocks, green finches, coal tits, nuthatches, reed buntings, collared doves



## MEALWORMS

Lots of garden birds like eating insects. Mealworms are a great way of providing this type of protein for them. You can buy dried ones or go for fresh, live mealworms if you want to give them a real treat. Soak dried ones in water to provide more moisture for the birds.

**Birds they might attract:** robins and thrushes



## DRIED FRUITS

Birds that would naturally eat fruit might also enjoy dried fruit. You could poke some onto wire and hang it up. Make sure dried fruit is out of reach of mammals including pets, as it is bad for them.

**Birds they might attract:** robins, blackbirds, song thrushes

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## WHAT TO PUT THE FOOD IN

Bird feeders come in all shapes and sizes, suitable for different sorts of food. You can buy them or take a look at our other guides for how to make them yourself.

It's important to keep feeders clean to stop birds from catching diseases from them. Regularly clean them out with water and animal-safe disinfectant.

## WHERE TO PUT THE FOOD

Generally, bird feeders should be positioned high up and near lots of cover like trees and bushes. This will help birds to feel more secure and gives them areas to hide from ground predators like cats.

Some birds won't use feeders but will hop around on the ground underneath, picking up bits the other birds drop. You can scatter extra mixed seed or sunflower seeds on the floor to encourage these birds.

## WHEN TO FEED THE BIRDS

Make sure you feed your birds all year round. In the winter birds often find it hard to find food to survive. In the summer they need extra energy to help them raise their chicks.

In the summer, don't use peanuts, or fat balls because birds can't feed these to their youngsters. But do put out fat in the winter to give birds lots of energy for the cold.

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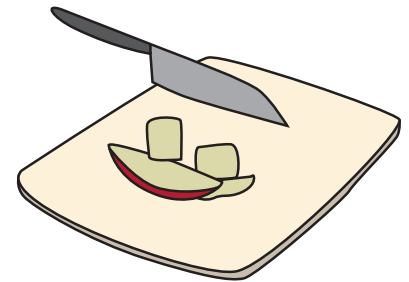
## CREATE YOUR OWN APPLE BIRD FEEDER

You can place your bird feeder in any garden, yard, or balcony but make sure you have permission from the landowner first.



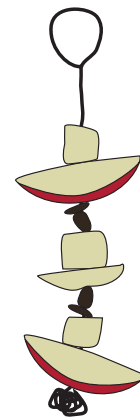
### YOU'LL NEED

- Apples
- Knife and apple corer  
(make sure you get help from an adult)
- Raisins
- 30cm garden wire



### ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS...

1. Use a corer to remove the apple core
2. With a knife, cut the cored apple into medium sized segments. Make sure to ask an adult for help!
3. Tie one end of the wire into a loop as shown in the picture, so that you can hang the feeder up
4. Starting with the other end, poke the raisins and apples onto the wire so that the white side of the apple is facing up
5. Now tie the other end of the wire into a knot to avoid everything falling off



### WELL DONE!

Our completed bird feeders should look something like this



Now place the feeder outside, high enough that cats won't reach it, and wait and see which birds come for a delicious meal.