



GO WILD!

Bird Care Guide

Why should we feed the birds?

Bringing with them life, colour and song, wild birds are a welcome visitor to any garden. Observing their delicate and cheeky characters offers a connection with nature for all walks of life. Feeding our feathered friends is important for their health and survival and gives us the enormous pleasure of their company. It doesn't matter whether you live in the town or country, providing food, water and shelter for birds is rewarding for us as it is as helpful to them. Birds have a steady energy requirement throughout the year, they need to be warm in the cold winter months, breed and feed their young in springtime and replace their feathers after moulting in the summer.

When should we feed them?

Birds should be fed all year round, they soon become reliant on the food we provide. However, their greatest time of need is during the winter and spring, when natural food sources are greatly depleted. This helps them survive the chilly winter months and ensures they are in good condition for breeding season. Many migrant birds also arrive back here in autumn in need of a hearty meal after their long journey.

Feeding tips

- Always maintain a continuous supply of fresh food, as birds will come to depend on the foods you put out.
- Consider different foods and feeding methods. Some birds can hang from feeders whilst other may prefer table or ground feeding.
- Only put out as much food as will be consumed in one or two days.
- Fresh, clean water should always be available.
- Feeding stations should ideally be located near cover. If there is risk from cats or other predators, a greater distance or height should be allowed.
- Food should be stored in a cool, dry place.

Hygiene

When feeding wild birds it is important to maintain a hygienic environment:

- Ensure feeding stations are regularly cleaned with warm water.
- Remove any wet or old food as soon as possible to avoid the build up of bacteria, moulds or toxins.
- Help reduce the risk of bacteria build up by having several feeding areas and relocating them regularly.