

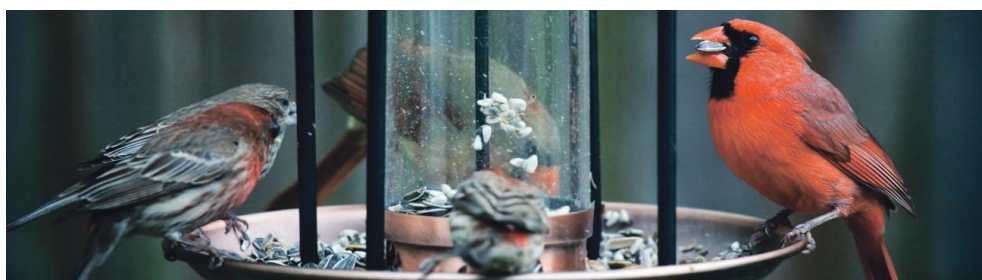
Backyard bird activity is the song of nature

Victoria Day, Thursday, May 20, 2010

For many, the visit of songbirds is the main reason to create a pretty garden in the first place.

Birds also do a lot for us. They keep ecosystems running efficiently by pollinating plants, eating waste, and by controlling rodents and insect pests. The health of our planet is often measured in the condition of bird populations and your backyard, with a few quick tips, can easily attract them:

- Landscape with native plants producing seeds, berries or nectar.
- Provide warmth and shelter from predators with vine, shrubs and trees.



Even a dying tree provides cavities for nesting spots.

- Quench their thirst. Any water fixtures, like a birdbath, a fountain, or a pond with flat rocks for perching, make your garden a very popular spot.

- Feed them well. The best bet is to place a bird feeder in your yard filled with proven, specialty blends. A popular choice is Wild Bird Food in the Scotts Songbird SelectionsBlend line, designed specifically to attract a wide variety of song birds.

"There are several ways in which birds feed," says Syd Pell at Scotts. "On the ground, at the feeder, or both. Be aware, however, that it might take several weeks before the birds in your area discover your new feeder." Consider the following:

- Place the feeder where it will be seen, since birds use their sight for food.
- Sprinkle some seeds on the ground or on top of the feeder to add an enticement.
- Keep the feeder clean and if birds have not begun to eat, change the seed at least once per month.

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