Feeders and birdhouses will help

How to attract feathered friends

relcoming birds into your yard will bring you joy and help provide the birds with the food and shelter they need. Birds nesting in your area will also help keep the insect population down. How can you invite and keep your feathered friends at your home?

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A bird feeder is a good way to lure birds into your yard. A seed table

is a tray about the size of a cookie sheet. Set the tray on top of a high, sturdy pole. Make sure it has a coverto keep it as dry as possible. You can also add a rim so the seed doesn't fall to the ground. To keep the squirrels and other rodents away, place an inverted cone, 3' in diameter, about halfway up the pole.

You need to weigh your options carefully when deciding on the placement of your bird feeder. You'll want to keep it far enough away from trees, large shrubs and bushes so squirrels and cats won't be able to jump onto the feeder. Another consideration is to keep it close enough to a smaller bush so that the feeding birds can take cover from a hawk or other predator.

After you have placed your bird feeder, you then need to fill it with seeds according to the type of bird you want to invite. You don't have to buy expensive bags of birdseed. Homemade birdseed

can be as simple as saving bits of bread, cereal and small pieces of fruit. White millet will attract doves and sparrows. Raisins are good food for robins and bluebirds and black-oil sunflower seeds bring chickadees and woodpeckers.

To keep birds in your yard, help them make nests in your trees. The next time you buy onions, keep the bag. Collect little pieces of cotton or wool material,

hair from hairbrushes or lint from the dryer trap. Stuff these items into the onion bag, cinch the top and tie it to a tree. The birds will come by and take what they need to fill their nests.

You can also provide housing for birds. You wouldn't move into just any house. Birds have preferences, too. Different types of birdhouses attract different kinds of birds. Martins and swallows like to live in groups. They prefer apart-

ments. Wrens like cedar homes. Bluebirds are pretty picky. They would like you to build them a home about 5' off the ground, next to some berry hedges. Keep the houses apart from each other. Birds don't like to have their neighbors too close.

While you want to attract birds to your yard, you don't want them in your garden. So next time you have a leftover foil pie pan save it. Hang it in your vegetable or flower garden. It is a cheap, harmless way to keep the birds out.

—By Kathy Scott, special



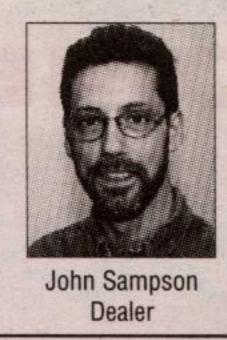








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