



The National Bird-Feeding Society

The ultimate resource for enhancing your wild bird-feeding experience



Bird Safety - Prevent Disease at Your Bird Feeders

- 1. Provide birds with a large amount of space for feeding** – While images of dozens of birds crowded on to a single feeder are beautiful, such events increase the likelihood of contact between sick and healthy birds and may increase a bird's stress level while feeding, making them more susceptible to disease. To prevent overcrowding, purchase feeders that minimize contact between birds and provide birds with additional places to feed.
- 2. Keep the birds' feeding area clean of both seed hulls and bird droppings** – A clean feeding area can be maintained by sweeping or vacuuming the ground below the feeder. One way to minimize the cleaning needed is to use no-waste seeds or seed mixes that contain hulled seeds and to offer only the preferred seeds for the bird species in your area.
- 3. Purchase bird feeders that do not have sharp points or edges** – Sharp points or edges may cause bleeding or scratches on birds that can facilitate the transmission of disease.



- 4. Regularly clean your bird feeders** – Feeders should be washed approximately once a month with a solution of 10% bleach (one-part bleach to nine-parts water) by completely immersing feeders for at least three minutes and then allowing them to dry. Purchasing feeders that are made of materials that are easier to clean, such as metal and plastic, may make feeder cleaning easier. Also, scrub bird baths and change the water several times per week to prevent mosquito reproduction and the possible spread of West Nile Virus.
- 5. Store bird food appropriately and ensure that fresh seed is in your feeder** – Use a rodent-proof container to store food and avoid having wet, moldy, musty-smelling seed in your bird feeder or storage container. Your bird seed should be stored in areas that are cool and have low humidity. Providing feeders that protect seed from the elements and using birds' preferred seeds should reduce the chance of seed getting wet or moldy.

Are you a National Bird-Feeding Society Member?

If not, please consider joining our flock today.

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