

# this recipe is for the birds!

## fat block bird feeder

Whether your feathered guests are fall migrants or year-long residents, supplementing their diets with high-quality calories will help them survive to reproduce in spring.

*Choose local, organic ingredients where you can.*

- 1 cup crunchy peanut butter**  
*(less-processed is best, without added fillers)\**
- 1 cup flour** *1st choice: whole wheat, 2nd choice: white flour*
- 1 cup fat** *1st choice: suet, 2nd choice: vegetable shortening*
- 4 cups grains, seeds, legumes and/or dried fruit\*\***

*\*If peanut allergy is an issue, substitute almond or other nut butters. If nut allergies are a problem, try seed butters.*

*\*\*Options: rolled oats, cracked corn, cornmeal, black oiled sunflower seeds, striped sunflower seeds, shelled sunflower seeds, millet, peanuts (raw, unsalted), currants, cranberries, raisins, apples, wild berries or pre-mixed birdseed. (Note: many birds won't be able to eat seeds in the shell once they are coated in fat. You may have to substitute unshelled seeds.)*

Suet — the best fat choice for birds — can be purchased from a butcher, or at a wild bird store. If you choose vegetable fat, be sure it's non-hydrogenated — it's better for birds for the same reasons it's better for humans.

## directions

- Melt fat in a saucepan on low heat.
- While that's melting, mix other ingredients together in a large bowl.
- Pour melted fat over dry mixture, stir well and pour into pancake, loaf or muffin tins — all work well.
- If you're using a larger pan, cut the mixture into smaller blocks or cakes (about the size of a large brownie) once it's cooled.
- To avoid attracting rats, squirrels and raccoons, feed blocks should be small enough for bird guests to consume in a day. Discard rancid or moldy feeders.
- Blocks can be frozen until needed.
- Spread one serving of feeder mixture onto tree bark or smush it onto a pine cone. You can also place one fat block into a mesh onion bag (great recycling ideal!) or a wire suet cage (get this at the bird store) — these give birds something to hang out on.
- If you hang your feeder from a tree branch, secure the holder to a tree trunk with wire or string. Keep it at a distance from bird houses or nest boxes to avoid attracting predators. (Don't worry about stuff that falls — it'll give ground feeders such as Dark-eyed Juncos and Doves a chance to dig in.)
  - Feeders may be cleaned with a solution of Borax and water (1 T Borax to 1 litre water) or non-chlorine bleach.
  - Sit back and enjoy the birds!

*Get to know your guests and learn their preferences. Keep a bird book or reference guide handy.  
This list is a good start:*

FEEDER OPTION	BIRD VISITORS WHO WILL LOVE THIS
peanuts, in shell	jays, crows
peanuts, shelled	jays, chickadees, cardinals, nuthatches, bushtits (A favorite of the Steller's jay)
cracked corn (best choice, or try yellow cornmeal)	jays, wrens, doves, grosbeaks, juncos, blackbirds
dried fruit (apples, raisins, currants)	jays, cardinals, grosbeaks, doves, woodpeckers, sapsuckers, juncos
striped sunflower seeds, in shell	jays, woodpeckers, chickadees, grosbeaks, cardinals, nuthatches, finches, titmice (A favourite of titmice)
sunflower seeds, shelled (aka sunflower chips or hearts)	siskins, chickadees, goldfinches, grackles, finches, sparrows, doves (A favourite of the pine siskin)
black oil sunflower seeds, in shell	chickadees, grosbeaks, finches, nuthatches, sparrow, woodpeckers to name a few (A favorite of chickadees)
safflower seeds, in shell	jays, chickadees, finches, sparrows (starlings, grackles, blackbirds and squirrels don't like these)
white millet	juncos, sparrows, doves, siskins and towhees (a favorite of song sparrows and dark-eyed juncos)