



COUNTRY
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PROVIDING WATER FOR WILDLIFE

A birdbath or water feature entices all kinds of wildlife, and can be a year round centerpiece of your garden.

What kind of birdbath or water feature is best?

- ▼ **Shallow.** A birdbath should be no deeper than three inches at the bottom. A water feature should provide shallow areas for birds to drink and bath in. Add a few rocks to give birds alternate depths and surfaces to choose from.
- ▼ **Rough bottomed.** Birds don't want to lose their footing, and they will hesitate to use a bath with a glazed, slippery bottom.
- ▼ **Water movement.** Moving or dripping water will dramatically increase the number of species that visit a birdbath.
- ▼ **Clean.** Your birdbath or water feature should be a short distance from feeding stations, so seeds and droppings can't drop into the water. Rinse out and fill birdbaths often during warm weather.
- ▼ **Good location.** Place your water feature several feet away from where predators could hide, ideally in a sunny location with a surrounding tree or shrub for birds to fly up into. Don't forget to put yourself in this picture. Place the water feature where you can view and enjoy watching the wildlife from indoors.

Water is an essential part of your winter bird feeding. During the winter, birds need water just as much, if not more, than they do during the summer.

- ▼ As winter comes on, ponds and puddles freeze and birds will have a hard time finding drinking water.
- ▼ The food birds eat during the winter is usually very dry, so they obtain no water from winter food sources. (In the summer, birds obtain a large portion of their dietary water from their food.)
- ▼ Birds rely on clean, fluffy feathers to maintain their body temperature during the cold of the winter. They will bathe during the winter to maintain this feathery insulation.
- ▼ **A birdbath heater or pond heater** will enable you to supply much needed water to birds (and other wildlife) during the critical winter months. In return, you can expect more birds of more species.