

## For the Birds

If you think about some of the stuff we throw away each day, you'll realize that many containers can be used several times by finding creative ways to reuse them. In this activity, you'll see how to turn food containers into a nice feeder for the birds. When reusing any food containers, be sure that you completely clean the inside before beginning your craft project.



### Here's What to Do:

1. Create bird feeders out of clean household containers by using the drawings you see here for models. Remember to punch small drain holes in the bottom of the containers to let rain water out. (For complete instructions on making milk jug feeders, keep reading.)
2. Do some research to find out where to locate each different type of feeder. Each one will attract different types and sizes of birds. You'll also want to find out what types of bird feed to put in each container. Birds have very different diets and will be picky about what they will eat. It is also important to keep the feeders clean to avoid making the birds sick.

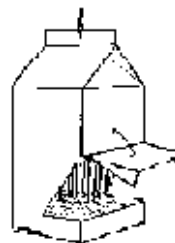
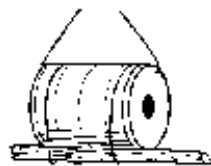
### Use household containers that are completely clean:

milk jugs  
milk cartons  
coffee cans  
pie tins  
2-liter soda bottles  
mustard jar lid (for tracing circles)  
sticks or dowels (for perches)



### Tools You'll Need (You may need an adult to help you with some of these tools.)

knife  
hammer  
nails  
wire cutters  
pencils  
ruler  
light wire  
coat hangers



### Milk Jug Feeder Instructions

You'll need a gallon or half-gallon plastic jug, small wooden doweling rods, and string to hang the feeder. Cut two or three holes in the middle of the jug, as shown in the picture. The holes should be between two and four inches wide depending on the type of birds you want to attract. Then make smaller holes below the feeding holes for the doweling rod. Take each rod and insert it into the smaller hole for a perch. Fill the feeder with seed and hang it in a nearby tree.

## A Few More Ideas

1. Provide string, old yarn, human and pet hair (gathered from brushes), baler twine, or cloth strips for nesting materials. Wind these through an onion sack and hang the sack on a coat hanger.

2. Donate your feeders to nursing homes and volunteer to take care of them.

3. Make a visitor log for your birdfeeder—record how many different types of birds visit and what times of the day seem to be busiest; change the bird seed periodically and see if the type of visiting birds change.

4. Grow completely reusable/recyclable birdfeeders—sunflowers! Birds love sunflower seeds and after all the seeds have been eaten, you can compost the plants. Seeds that fall to the ground and avoid getting eaten by birds and squirrels will grow to become new sunflowers next summer to continue the cycle.



Adapted from: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eeek/earth/recycle/rbirds.htm>.