

## **Make your own bird food**

Food is one of the things I love. However, I am not only concerned about my own physical well-being, but also that of the birds. While they can feed themselves sufficiently in the summer, it looks less rosy in the cold season. Nature conservationists therefore recommend that food be made available to our feathered friends from November to the end of February. Now you might think that it's enough to throw them a little bread. This is not right, however, because bread is not a species-appropriate bird food.



With just a few ingredients you can make high-quality bird food yourself. Add a dash of creativity and the result becomes an eye-catcher in your garden.

### **The basic ingredients**

During winter birds need fatty and nutrient-rich food. Some are soft eaters, others grain eaters. The designations already give a glimmer of what kind of food they both prefer. Soft eaters like crushed grains, dried berries and shelled seeds. Grain eaters, on the other hand, like seeds and grains with the shell. Nuts are also very popular with them. However, make sure that they are not bad or even moody, as this can be fatal for our feathered friends.

The production process is based on beef tallow, vegetable fat and/or edible oils. You can mix these ingredients as you like: oat flakes, sunflower seeds, chopped nuts, flax seeds, millet, wheat bran, dried berries or raisins. You can buy beef tallow from the butcher.

The following quantities are sufficient to fill a medium-sized flowerpot or the shell of half a coconut.

## **Preparation - quick and easy**

Dissolve 100 grams of beef tallow - alternatively coconut fat - in a pot. It's supposed to melt, but not boil. Add a small dash of liquid vegetable oil. This helps to prevent the food from becoming too hard when cold.

Now stir in about 150 grams of a home-made grain mixture. The sunflower seeds should make up two thirds of the total mixture, because their high oil content makes them very healthy for birds.

Allow the mixture to cool a little and then refill it. Decoratively painted flower pots, half a coconut shell, empty yoghurt pots, painted tins or cups are suitable as vessels. Insert small wooden sticks or branches into the warm mass. The birds can hold on to it later.

## **Birds feeder**

Fir cones are a natural alternative to the vessels. Brush the slightly cooled mass into the cone and allow it to harden in a cool place. Now attach a packing cord to the cone and hang it outside.

Another variation is to first attach a string to the pine cone and then dip it in the melted oil. Make sure that it is evenly coated with grease. Then turn it in the grain mixture so that it is thickly covered and place it on baking paper to dry. Place the cones on a cold place so that they cure well before you hang them out.

With homemade bird food you not only do well, but you also bring vitality to your garden. The more versatile the food, the more bird species you attract. Have fun watching the colourful hustle and bustle!

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