

## *Feed or not?*

Winter is a difficult time for garden birds. It is hard to find them anything to eat because everything has snowed over. Searching in the cold consumes valuable energy. In the garden covered with snow blankets we can often meet sparrows, mazurkas, tits, woodpeckers, jackdaws, rooks, blackbirds, fieldfare and their cousins. Many birds will not survive the harsh winter conditions - low temperatures and precipitation. You can feed them to help them survive the winter.

Birds often come near our homes because they know perfectly well that they can expect a "free canteen". Birds quickly get used to such a source of food and longer breaks in providing them with food can be dangerous for them.



*If we decide to feed birds in the winter - let's do it regularly.*

Unfortunately, when feeding birds we make many mistakes, which often bring more damage than good, so let's follow the rule - it is better not to feed the birds at all than to do it wrong!

## *When to start feeding birds?*

We start feeding the birds only when the snow cover prevents them from feeding. During the snowless winter, the birds should cope alone, without our help. Initially, we put out little food so that it does not break down. Feeding ends with the arrival of spring (before the end of April).

Let's not start feeding the birds too soon, because it disturbs the migration of swans and ducks, causing them to remain in Poland and later problems in surviving the winter.



## *Bird feeder*

It is worth placing a bird feeder in the garden. Buying or making it out of wood should not be a problem. Feeder sizes should be adapted to the size of the birds. It's worth placing a board or tray in it to make it easier to clean it from food residues and droppings. The feeder should protect the food against dispersal, backfilling and wetting - it must have a roof protecting the food against rain and snow and a windshield. At the same time, it should provide birds with safety - free arrival and departure (escape).

Remember that the feeder can attract predators, so let's position it so that it is difficult for them to get to it. It should be firmly attached to the ground or tree so that it does not fall during strong winds.

## What to feed the birds with?

We only use natural products for feeding birds - not processed by humans! In stores, you can easily get cereal, cereals, oatmeal, sunflower, hemp, pumpkin, nuts, dried fruit and ready-made seed mixtures for wild birds. For many birds, delicacy is animal fat (fat or tallow), as well as seeds and nuts flooded with melted fat - so-called winter balls. Remember, however, that the bacon does not hang too long (about 2-3 weeks), because when it goes rancid it can harm birds.



Seed mixes for wild birds are available at any pet store.

Usually, this mixture includes sunflower, hemp, wheat, pumpkin seeds and ground peanuts.

### *What NOT to feed the birds with?*

Birds are often fed randomly and ill-considered, and the wrong type of food causes more harm than good. Hungry birds will eat anything, but the effects can be tragic.

Birds must not be fed with salted products - i.e. salted peanuts, salted bacon, salty bread. Spoiled food (moldy bread) or bread soaked and frozen is very dangerous. Birds must not be given uncooked pearl barley and other grains and porridges that swell in the digestive tract.



