



Bird feeders can be an excellent way to create habitat for wildlife and entertainment for you, but, done improperly can increase incidences of window strikes, disease, and predation. If you would like to keep a bird feeder in your yard, you must carefully consider feeder placement, type, and cleanliness.

### **Feeder Type**

- Avian influenza has been found in Summit County. While it typically does not affect songbirds; waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors are regularly affected. Keep up-to-date with rates and species affected through the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources [news](#).
  - To avoid increasing transmission rates among these groups do not ground feed birds.
- Use feeders that target songbirds such as tube feeders, small hoppers, and suet cages.

### **Feeder Placement and Filling**

- **Do not place feeders or seed anywhere on Swaner Preserve property including fencing and the small strip of property between the bike path and Swaner fence.**
- Reduce window strikes by placing feeders either within 3 ft. away from windows or over 30 ft. from your home. To break up reflections, use [window adhesives](#), screens, or leave your windows dirty until after migration season.
- Place feeders at least 4 ft. off the ground so they are out of reach to birds such as sandhill cranes and Canada geese.
- Place feeders near shrubs or trees for cover, but avoid putting them near sturdy branches that predators, such as cats, could climb on.
- Many types of seed and other food exist to offer wild birds. Learn more about seed types and birds they attract from [Bird Feeding and Care | Audubon](#) and [Feeding Birds - FeederWatch](#).

### **Feeder Cleaning**

- Feeders must be cleaned at least once every two weeks. Clean them more frequently during the migration season.
- Regularly check that the feed you use is not moldy, especially after wet weather.
- **To clean feeders:** first remove excess seed, then scrub off any visible debris, finally soak the feeder in a solution of 9 parts water to 1 part bleach. Let the feeder completely dry before refilling and getting back to birding!
- Regularly rake and remove debris below feeders to prevent disease, predators, and pests.

## Hummingbird Feeders

- Hummingbird feeders can require additional cleaning. They must be cleaned twice every week in warm weather and once every week in cooler weather.
- For feed: bring 1 part refined white sugar and 4 parts water to a boil then allow to cool before filling the feeder. **Do not add red dye**, it can be harmful to the birds.
  - Use only pure white cane sugar, NOT organic sugar which may contain trace amounts of molasses which can be toxic to hummingbirds.

## Is a feeder right for you?

**Immediately remove** any bird feeders if:

- You have backyard chickens or ducks or other waterfowl or poultry.
- You have an outdoor cat.
- You begin seeing sick or dead birds. **Do not touch** and report to the [nearest DWR office](#).

If you would like to provide habitat for feathered friends but a bird feeder is not the right option for you, we recommend creating a more bird friendly landscape in your yard. Some easy steps include: adding native plants to your garden, waiting to deadhead your flowers, and leaving your leaves in the fall. Learn more about landscaping for birds at the [Audubon Society: Plants for Birds](#).