



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

Keeping Birds Safe

Those who enjoy feeding birds can contribute to their safety with these strategies.

- Put animal guards around any trees in your yard that may have nesting birds.
- Make bird feeders less cat friendly by using an anti-climb cone on poles supporting bird feeders.
- Put a short fence around feeders. The cat will have to leap over the fence and that will give birds a chance to escape.
- Put hazelnut shells around feeders. They are sharp. See <http://www.evergreenorchards.com/shells.html>.
- Use a bird platform and locate it where the cat cannot easily jump onto it. Feeding birds gather in larger numbers and this provides greater safety – there are more eyes to see the cat.
- Feed high quality seed mixes. They don't contain unpalatable filler seed which is likely to be tossed aside and fall to the ground where it attracts other birds. High quality mixes may be more economical to feed.
- Use a spill tray to prevent accidental spillage of seeds.
- Put bird feeders on an upper floor window so cats can't reach it.
- Hang bird feeders in the middle of a sturdy wire strung between two trees at least 8 feet apart.
- Restrict the volume of seed to small rations and refill feeders in early morning when birds are most active.
- Locate feeders away from ground cover, including shrubs, to minimize cats ambushing birds.

humanesociety.org/feralcats



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- Place feeders near vertical cover such as trees so birds can leap out of harm's way when cats attempt to catch them.
- Plant bushes with thorns, such as Pyracantha, near feeders.
- Use noisemaking devices, such as wind chime, to interfere with cats' ability to hear bird calls.
- Clean feeders regularly to prevent the growth of mold and other harmful conditions.
- Stop feeding the birds until the cat loses interest. They will not starve and will eventually return when you put seed out again.
- Ask your neighbor to keep their cat indoors or in their yard with a cat-proof fence or cat enclosure. See www.neighborhoodcats.org/HOW_TO_CAT_CONTAINMENT_SYSTEMS