

Winter Bird Feeding

As winter approaches and you have extra time for family activities, consider attracting wild birds to your best windows for observation by hanging bird feeders outside them. The food you provide helps birds that do not migrate south in the winter because their traditional sources of food may be less available (e.g., insects) or buried in frozen soil or under snow.

Wisconsin's *Environmental Education for Kids* site has wonderful resources to help families get started with both making bird feeders and observing birds, as well as caring for bird feeders and discouraging squirrels and raccoons from stealing the food you intend for the birds (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/ee/nature/winterbird.htm>). They also provide directions for making bird feeders from recycled materials and for choosing different types of food based on the species of birds you hope to attract. According to the site, "Grains are very popular with many bird species. Sunflower seeds, corn, milo, and millet are common birdfeed grains. Black, oil-type sunflower seeds and white proso millet are probably the best and most popular seeds to attract goldfinches, blue jays, cardinals, black-capped chickadees, evening grosbeaks, pine siskins, purple finches, pine grosbeaks, and white-