

YOUNG EXPLORERS

Wicked Fun Winter Bird Feeder

Winter is the most wonderful time of year for bird feeders! Wintering birds use bird feeders to supplement their diets with needed nutrients. Some winter birds you might be able to recognize, like the Blue Jay with its bright wings, but others may look a little different. In the summer, American Goldfinches are easy to spot with their yellow bodies and black wings, but in winter their bodies are gray-brown instead of yellow. Watch a bird feeder in this season and see how many species you can identify.

Don't have a feeder? No problem! You can make a simple pinecone bird feeder that will help your neighborhood birds stay fed in the winter. Follow the directions and share your final pinecone feeders on Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok at @massaudubon.

Supplies

- Pinecones
- Garden wire, twine, or ribbon
- Scissors
- Plate or tray
- Popsicle stick or spoon
- Peanut butter (allergy-friendly alternatives include sun butter, soy butter, or vegetable shortening)
- Black oil sunflower bird seed
- Bowl or plastic container

Instructions

1. Pick out a dry pinecone with the scales open and spread out.
2. Take the pinecone and tie wire, twine, or ribbon around the top third of it. Trim this as needed, leaving some extra to tie a loop. This loop will go over a stick or a branch to hang the feeder.
3. Place your pinecone on a plate or tray and use a popsicle stick or spoon to spread peanut butter (or sun butter, soy butter, or vegetable shortening) into the crevices of the cone. You don't need an excessive amount of butter – just enough so bird seed will stick.
4. Pour bird seed into your bowl or container. Place the butter-covered pinecone in the seed container and toss the seed over the top and all around the pinecone. Pack the seeds into the crevices and onto the outside of the cone so that it looks like a little seed ball.
5. Once you're done preparing your pinecones, hang them in your favorite trees and wait for the birds to come!

