

# Bird Feeding Tips

in areas with deer baiting and feeding bans

## Your actions matter!

We need your help to keep Michigan's deer and other wildlife healthy. In order to keep wildlife healthy, under a baiting ban please do not put out any "substance composed of grains, minerals, salt, fruit, vegetables, hay or any other food material, whether natural or manufactured, which may lure, entice or attract deer." Baiting promotes the unnatural concentration of deer and other wildlife, which increases the risk that diseases may spread.



The only way to guarantee that your birdfeeders won't act as bait or feed is to not fill them. However, with a little care, you can significantly reduce the likelihood that your feeders will attract deer.

**The following tips will help you enjoy feeding birds or squirrels legally, while protecting Michigan's deer:**

- Use feeders that make it difficult or impossible for deer to access feed. Tube feeders, hopper-style feeders, and cage-style suet feeders all provide minimal access to deer, but still allow cardinals, woodpeckers, chickadees, and goldfinches to visit. Platform and fly-through feeders provide easy access to deer and other large animals and are not recommended.



- Use feeds that are less attractive to deer, but still enjoyed by your favorite backyard birds! Thistle seed, suet, and hummingbird nectar are much less likely to attract deer than whole or cracked corn, black oil sunflower seeds, and other seeds usually found in commonly-available bird seed mixes.



- Only put out the amount of feed birds will eat in one day. Empty feeders are less attractive to deer.
- Place feed and feeders in locations that are less accessible to deer. Deer can reach feeders up to about 5 feet off the ground or a packed snow surface. Place feeders at least 6 feet off the ground or snow surface to prevent deer from accessing feed.





- Placing feeders directly next to windows is safer for birds; they are less likely to hit windows if feeders are within 3 feet of them. Placing feeders close to your home may also deter some deer from feeding at them.
- If you have an outside dog, feed birds above where the dog is. Birds will become accustomed to the dog, yet deer will not have access to the feeder.
- Securely install 4 foot or taller woven wire fencing around all your feeders to prevent deer from reaching over or through to feed or fence your yard with a woven wire fencing that is at least 10 feet tall to prevent deer entering. Fence height requirements will vary depending on the depth of the snow in your area.
- Keep the area around your feeders clean. Scattered seed on the ground under bird feeders can attract deer and other mammals. Place a platform, at least 5 feet off the ground, under the hanging feeder to catch all spilled feed. Clean this platform daily (if not more often, depending upon the spilled seed).
- Mess-free bird seed options are also available to purchase at stores, which will help reduce the amount of seed and seed shells beneath your feeders.

Following these guidelines will help reduce the chances that your bird feeding will attract deer, therefore helping to lower your chances of violating the baiting and feeding ban. If deer are still attracted to your feeder after following these guidelines, you may need to remove your feeder or take further action to deter deer from your feeding station.



If you have any questions about the baiting and feeding ban, please contact your local DNR customer service center.

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