

## DIY: EASY TO MAKE BIRD FEEDERS

By Dennis Segura

Attracting a wide variety of birds into your backyard can be a fun learning experience. All it takes is a basic understanding of the different types of birdfeeders, a few household items and a little creativity.

Here are two types of easy to make bird feeders to attract birds. This activity will require tools and some cutting; therefore, **adult supervision for building feeders is highly recommended.**

It will take the birds a couple of days to get used to the feeders but they will start to use them. Use a free online birding app such as [AUDUBON BIRD GUIDE: NORTH AMERICA](#) to keep track of the different birds your feeders will attract. Also, please provide fresh clean water every day in a shallow dish not more than 2 – 3 inches high.

***The Department strongly recommends that bird feeders be taken down daily during crepuscular (twilight) and night time hours when bears are active or not hibernating.***

### RECOMMENDED MATERIALS / TOOLS:

- \* Empty egg carton
- \* Twine or fine wire
- \* Push Pin
- \* Utility Knife
- \* Plastic Bottle
- \* Medium size nail
- \* Extra key ring holder
- \* Scissors
- \* Chop sticks / pencils or twigs

**PLATFORM FEEDERS** - Platform feeders can be hung two to six feet above the ground. These feeders attract the widest variety of birds from small perching birds to larger ground feeding birds. Small birds feed on the feeder and spill seeds on the ground for bigger birds to feed on. You can make your own inexpensive platform feeder by using empty egg cartons and twine.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- a. Take an empty egg carton and cut off the cover. Cut the bottom of the carton where the eggs are placed into two six cup feeders. Use a nail to poke a hole in each corner of the feeder for better balance. Poking holes in the middle of the feeder is acceptable as well.
- b. Cut four pieces of twine or thin wire and insert the twine/wire into the hole from above and under the cups and up to the opposite hole. Repeat the process and tie each of the four pieces of twine/wire together so the feeder can be hung a few feet above the ground.
- c. Pour bird seed into the cups and hang in an open area, preferably near trees or shrubs where birds can perch, feel safe and can fly into quickly if alarmed.

**HANGING FEEDERS** - Turn an ordinary plastic bottle into a functional bird feeder. These feeders are simple and inexpensive to make and they work very well. The most common bottles used are two-liter

soda bottles or half-gallon plastic milk containers but just about any size of plastic bottle works well. For perches, you can use woodworking dowels, pencils, chopsticks, twigs or small sticks.

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- a. Clean and dry the bottle thoroughly, removing the label. Use a weak bleach solution to be sure the bottle is sanitized, then rinse thoroughly. Allow the bottle to air dry completely.
- b. Screw a metal screw hook into the center of the bottle's cap by using a push pin to puncture the cap which will make it easier to screw in the hook.
- c. Using a utility knife carefully cut four feeding ports  $1/8 - 1/4$  inches wide. Cut two ports directly across from each other. Additional perches can be placed higher on the bottle by rotating the bottle and cutting two more ports around 2 – 3 inches above where the first two ports were cut. The ports should be small so the seeds do not fall out but big enough for the birds to feed. Feeding holes should be taller than they are wide. This creates the most space for birds to perch. The top perch should be three to four inches below the cap.
- d. Use the push pin to poke 4 holes in the bottle for the perches. Widen the holes with a medium size nail and push the perch through the bottle leaving the perch sticking out equal on both sides. The perches should fit snugly into the holes and extend through the bottle and out the matching hole on the opposite side. Balance the length of the perch on each end to allow birds to feed comfortably.
- e. Slowly fill the feeder with the desired seed. Hang the feeder outside from a tree branch or other support structure and wait for birds to discover it.

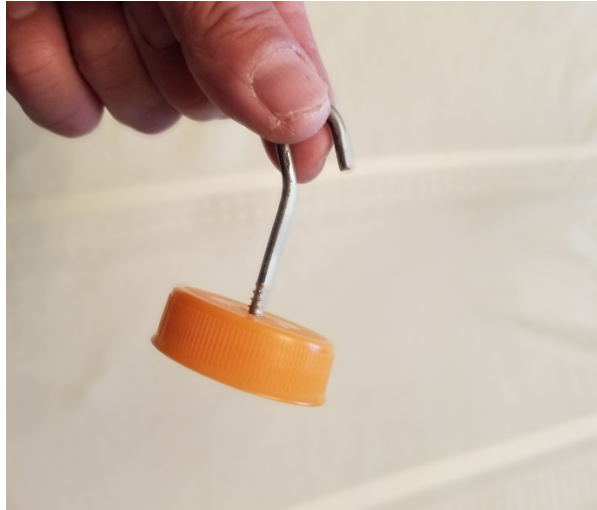
### INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING BIRD FEEDERS

#### HANGING BIRD FEEDER

Step #1 - Use a push pin to pop a hole in the cap of the plastic bottle.



Step # 2 – Screw a metal screw hook through the pin hole of the bottle cap firmly.



Step # 3 - Using a utility knife cut 2 feeding ports 1/8 – 1/4 of an inch wide directly across from each other. Feeding ports should be longer than being wider for better feeding and to keep the seeds in the bottle. **(please be very careful using a utility knife)**

Cut two additional feeding ports placed 2 – 3 inches higher by rotating the bottle around from where the first ports were located. This creates the most space for birds to perch.



Step # 4 - Use the push pin to poke 4 holes for the perches.



Step # 5 - Widen the 4 holes with a medium size nail to make them larger for the perches.



Step # 6 - Push the perch through the bottle leaving the perch sticking out equal on both sides. The perches should fit snugly into the holes and extend through the bottle and out the matching hole on the opposite side. Balance the length of the perch on each end to allow birds to feed comfortably.

Additional perches can be placed higher on the bottle under the feeding ports. Again, each additional perch should be 2 - 3 inches higher than the last and rotated around the bottle from where the last perch was located.



Step # 7 - Tie a piece of twine to the hook on the cap, make a loop at the end of the twine and you are ready to fill with birdseed and hang in your yard.



## PLATFORM FEEDERS

Step # 1- Take an empty egg carton and carefully cut it in half. Trim all edges off.



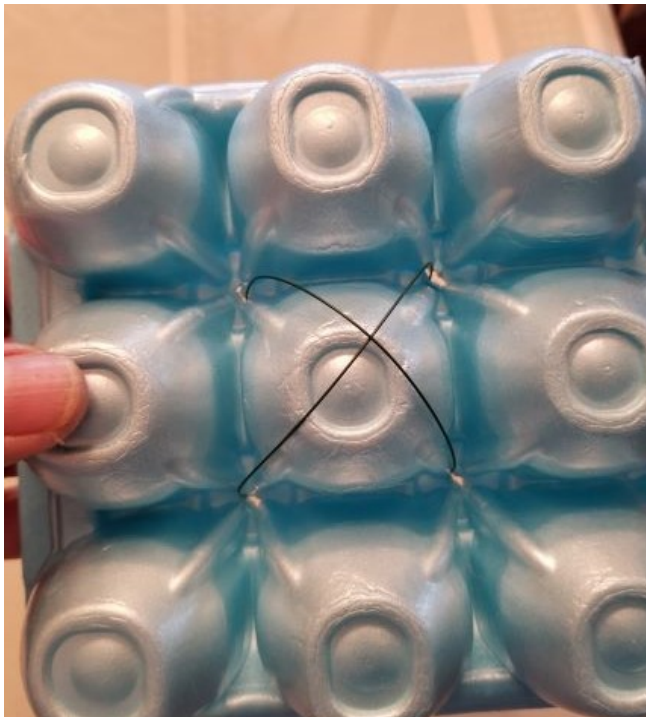
Step # 2 – Cut the egg carton in half, this helps with stability.



Step # 3 - Use a nail to poke a hole in each corner of the feeder for better balance. Poking holes in the middle of the feeder is acceptable as well.



Step # 4 - Cut four pieces of twine or thin wire and insert the twine/wire into the hole from above and under the cups and up to the opposite hole. Repeat the process and tie each of the four pieces of twine/wire together so the feeder can be hung a two - four feet above the ground.



Step # 5 – Pour bird seed into the cups and hang in an open area, preferably near trees or shrubs where birds can perch, feel safe and can fly into quickly if alarmed. It will take birds a day or so to discover the feeder. Re-fill the feeder as needed. Once birds discover it, they will come back!

