

# Bird Spot

*The place for birds*



## Christmas Food For Birds

At Christmas time you'll probably find that you have a lot of extra kitchen waste particularly after Christmas dinner. During the winter birds will find that their natural sources of food are scarce, so feeding the birds in your garden is an ideal way to get rid of those Christmas leftovers.

It is important that you know which foods you can feed to your birds and which foods you shouldn't.

### **Do feed**

- Cakes & puddings - Mince pies, Christmas pudding and Christmas cake are all full of fat, fruit and energy and are an ideal winter food for birds.
- Roast potatoes - Roast potatoes are high in fat. Cut them into bite-sized chunks and leave on your bird table or in a ground feeder.
- Cheese - Mild cheese is full of energy and fat and can be grated or crumbled.
- Fruit - Chopped apples and soaked dried fruit will be appreciated, particularly by blackbirds, thrushes and other ground feeding birds.
- Nuts - Unsalted nuts are ideal – crush or crumble them first. You can also put out any leftover finger food as long as it is unsalted.

## **Don't feed**

- Meat - Leftover cooked meat is likely to attract cats and vermin which will scare away the birds.
- Salted snacks - Salted nuts and other snacks including crisps. Salt is very bad for birds and you shouldn't leave out any salted food for them. You can wash and soak peanuts to remove the salt.
- Chocolate - Chocolate contains theobromine and caffeine which are both highly toxic to birds. It can upset their digestive system and can lead to an increased heart rate, tremors, seizures, or even death.
- Roasting fat - The leftover fat from your roasting tin can't be fed to birds even if mixed with seeds and nuts. It will be high in salt and remains soft so it can get smeared on birds' feathers which can damage them and make it difficult for them to fly.
- Stuffing - Shop-bought stuffing usually contains many artificial ingredients that can dehydrate birds.
- Bread - Bread will expand in a bird's stomach and contains very little nutrients – it is important that birds are fed high-energy food.
- Vegetables - Birds are unlikely to eat leftover cooked vegetables and they will rot if left in your garden and can attract rats and other vermin.

Whatever you choose to feed your birds at Christmas, ensure there is a fresh supply of clean drinking water. Even if you don't have a bird bath you can use an upturned dustbin lid or shallow roasting tray.

Do you want to attract even more birds to your garden over the holiday season? You may want to decorate a Christmas tree for your garden birds.

<https://www.birdspot.co.uk/bird-food/christmas-food-for-birds>