

Guidance for Householders

How to stop rats from eating bird food



Here are some measures you can take to keep rats and mice away from your bird feeders.

"North Kesteven District Council is committed to providing a safe, clean and healthy environment for all residents to enjoy"



North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Do bird feeders attract rats?

Yes bird feeders do attract rodents.

Rodents are always looking for food, so can we blame them for trying to steal some bird seeds? It's in their nature to constantly be on the lookout for food, so it's safe to say that mice and rats will most likely eat anything they get their tiny hands on. With that in mind, we all know that rodents usually carry lots of diseases that can endanger both other people and the birds you are trying to feed.



How to stop rats from eating bird food

Here are some measures you can take to keep rats and mice away from your bird feeders.



Install rodent-proof bird feeders

The quality of your bird feeder plays an important role in whether rodents will get to steal the birds' food or not.

When choosing a bird feeder for your garden, make sure the one you purchase can be installed out of rodents' reach. If possible, go for a hanging bird feeder. Pick a sturdy one that won't be knocked off easily by the weight of the birds - if seeds from your bird feeder fall on the ground, it's only natural for rats to find them and stay in the area looking for more. To further proof your bird feeding pole, you can invest in a birdseed catcher or install a tray.



Remove water sources

The next thing you can do to discourage rodents from getting in your garden is to remove water sources. Mice, for instance, can go a month or even more without consuming water, however, this is not the case for rats. They need water to survive, so they may enter your garden in the search for it.

It's difficult to remove all water sources from your garden, especially when it comes to ponds or pools. However, you can at least empty birdbaths at night and fix any leaks to discourage the nasty rodents.



Store bird seeds properly

Rats and mice are notorious for their scavenging skills so you must be extra careful with how you store the seeds.

Galvanised metal bins with a secure lid could be what you are looking for. Rodents like to chew holes through many other materials such as wood or plastic. Keep the metal bins in a shed, and do not place them in your home to avoid inviting rodents there.



Keep your garden and feeding areas clean

Birds often look through the seeds to find the bits they like best and flick aside anything else. Seeds on the ground are not a good idea if you are trying to avoid rodents. We advise you to clean your garden and feeding areas regularly. Sweep up the discarded seeds as often as possible, at least once per day (preferably before night falls).



Add a baffle to your bird table

Rats on bird feeders are not a pretty sight. The nasty pests can easily climb up trees and land in your birdseed catchers. That means that if you have a bird table, the rodents will be able to get to the food. So, your best option is to install a baffle on your bird table.

Baffles will prevent not only mice and rats but also squirrels from getting anywhere near the birds' food. It's a cone-shaped piece of plastic or metal that you can attach to the feeding poles. Baffles are designed to be slippery, meaning that no animal will manage to climb on top of them.



Consult a pest control professional

If you believe you have an infestation the safest way to deal with a rodent problem is to hire a pest control professional.





North Kesteven
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Phone: **01529 414155**

Fax: **01529 413956**

Web: **www.n-kesteven.gov.uk**

Email: **customer_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk**

North Kesteven District Council
Kesteven Street
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 7EF