

## Seed Guide

### Sunflower

Black oil sunflower was designed specifically to feed wild birds. It is all black with a thin papery shell. Most song birds that eat sunflower prefer it. It is good for the birds because it is rich in oil and fat, which helps birds through cold winter nights. It is also a good buy because 70 percent of the seed is meat. It can be put in feeders or just thrown on the ground.

**Sunflower hearts** can be purchased unshelled to lessen the mess. They are more expensive than shelled seeds, but they last significantly longer. They do not last long if exposed to the weather so it is best to only use them in feeders.

### Safflower\*\*

This seed will help you attract favorite birds, and discourage unpopular birds. It has hard shells, and some birds like starlings have more trouble eating it. Other birds like cardinals, chickadees and nuthatches will love it. It is also good for birds because it is rich in oil. Like sunflower seeds this can be offered either in feeders or spread on the ground.

### Nyjer Seed

This small black seed is a favorite of certain birds like goldfinches, and Pine siskin. Many other birds will prefer other seeds. Again the best way to know is to test.

### Millet

This is a small, round, shiny cream colored seed, found often in mixed bird seed. Birds like sparrows, cardinals, and juncos will eat this.

### Corn

There are a number of forms corn can be offered in. Northern cardinals, sparrows, blackbirds, and many others love cracked corn. Corn cobs, or corn meal mush are also popular. This makes a great winter food because the high carbohydrates are good for keeping birds warm.

### Nutmeats

Nuts are a great winter food because they are high in calories, and fat. Some birds may have trouble with harder shelled nuts. Peanuts have a lighter shell than most.

### Suet

Next to black-oil sunflower, suet is a favorite of people who feed birds. Woodpeckers, nuthatches, bluebirds, chickadees, and many more birds are attracted to suet.

**\*\* Squirrels and Grackles Begone!** A great alternative to squirrel proof bird feeders and squirrel baffles that will eliminate not only squirrels from your bird feeders but Grackles as well is to use Safflower seed.

Safflower seed (*Carthamus tinctorius*) is an annual oil seed crop grown in the United States and Canada. It has a rather hard, white, outer hull. Safflower provides three principle products: oil, meal, and bird seed. As a bird seed product, Safflower seed is high in protein. It can be used in any type of a bird feeder such as: tube feeders for house finch, Chickadees, and nuthatches, elevated feeders for Blue Jays, Cardinals, and other Grosbeaks, and on ground feeders for doves. For many people who feed birds they have added Safflower seed to their backyard bird feeding program along with other feed products. It attracts a large variety of birds.

Squirrels will not eat Safflower seed, even if the feeder is hanging right outside their front door or placed on the ground. But caution! Do not mix other seeds with it or they will sift through the feeder picking out the other products. Use Safflower seed in feeders where you have a squirrel problem, or when there are no other alternatives to keep them off the bird feeder.

Safflower seed is also an excellent feed to use when Grackles are over-powering the bird feeder, driving off all the other birds. It is not a very desirable food for Grackles, and often they just ignore it. You can virtually eliminate Grackles from your bird feeders by using Safflower. Again, however, do not mix in other seeds such as black oil sunflower, or the Grackles will sweep through it picking out their favorites. Use it straight in any bird feeder. If you live in central or northern states, immature Grackles may attempt to feed on it prior to migrating south. But when they return the following year as adults they show little interest in it.