

## Bird Baths

All Ages

A bird bath is an effective way to lure birds to your yard. All birds need a reliable, clean source of water, not just for drinking, but also for bathing and preening (cleaning and straightening feathers). Providing this necessity can be as simple as setting out a shallow basin of water. Place it where you can watch the fun.



### Bird Bath Basics

- ⇒ Keep it **shallow**, no deeper than 5 cm, you can use almost any shallow container
- ⇒ Keep it **in the open**, 75 cm of open space all around, birds need to see danger coming particular house cats - the number one cause of death for song birds.
- ⇒ Keep it **safe**, a textured surface for sure footing, a flat rock ramp from the rim for gradual access, a rock "perch island" in the centre if the bath is wide
- ⇒ Keep it **clean**, a quick rinse and refill daily and a scrub weekly will do, avoid concrete baths as they encourage algae growth and are difficult to clean thoroughly
- ⇒ If possible, keep it under an overhanging branch to provide a safe place to fly up to if the bird feels threatened, a resting place to preen, and shade to keep the water cool

There are endless possibilities for homemade bird baths. Here are a few ideas; a plant saucer on a tomato cage, a textured dish on a decorative pot, a simple trash can lid, painted clay flower pots and a large plant saucer on the ground with shepherd's hook and jug dripper. Place the bath on the ground, a pedestal or hang from a tree, as long as it is easy to keep fresh and clean, the birds will be happy and you will be entertained.



Dripping water makes a bird bath even more attractive to birds. Recycle a container, punch a tiny hole in the bottom, fill with water, and hang it so it drips into the bath.

Try capturing a slow motion video of a bird taking a bath.

Record the time of day birds most often visit your bath. Refresh the water just ahead of their favorite "bath time".

Keep a log of the visitors to your bath. [Merlin](#), a free app, can help you identify the birds. You could learn more about each one at [All About Birds](#).

Watch your bird bath closely to discover what type of bird drinks without tipping its head back like all the other birds do.

