



Everyday Engineering

Engineer a Bird Feeder

In the winter many birds migrate, or move, to warmer parts of the world in order to find food and avoid colder temperature. However, not all birds migrate - some stay in the same area all year long. During the winter, birds can have a harder time finding food because many plants have lost their leaves, flowers, and seeds. Help birds out and build a bird feeder!

Bird Feeder Challenge: Can you make a bird feeder that is refillable, has a place for a bird to perch, and can be hung from a tree?

What you need:

- Building materials. Check your recycling bin or craft supplies for items such as plastic cups, bottles, yogurt containers, wood scraps, string/yarn, popsicle sticks, or pipe cleaners.
* *Note, to help children be successful, be mindful of the weather. For example cardboard and paper might not hold up well for a birdfeeder.
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Hole punch
- Cheerios or bird seed

What you do:

- Collect your materials.
- Use your problem solving skills to engineer a bird feeder that is refillable, has a place for a bird(s) to perch, and can be hung from a tree or post. How many birds might be able to eat from your feeder? Will it hold more than one bird? How will you hang it? What will happen if a squirrel comes to snack? Do you think it will hold a squirrel?
- Another fun activity to feed the birds is to string Cheerios and cranberries together for the birds. Children, and adults, love this activity. Thread a long piece of string through a plastic needle, or add a bit of tape to the end of a string to help materials slide on easier and encourage children to add Cheerios and cranberries. Could you make a pattern with the food? Then tie it off and string it on a plant or railing for birds.
- Experiment with different materials. Try making more than one feeder and see if different birds are attracted to different feeders.

