

BACKYARD BIRDBATHS: TIPS AND BASICS

The summer heat can be difficult for songbirds in our community. Birds need water for drinking, and for bathing to cool down. We can make a real difference with birdbaths in our yards; here are some simple steps for their success:

- Choose a birdbath that's no deeper than three inches, and has a surface that birds can stand on without slipping. Avoid metal; it heats up too much in the hot weather;
- Place the bath in a shady area close to shrubs or a tree that the birds can use for cover;
- Ensure that any nearby windows have screens, 'Bird Friendly' reflective decals or dot treatments so that birds don't fly into the glass;
- It's best to refresh the water every day in the hot weather. Refreshing at least every three days is needed to prevent the growth of mosquito larvae; also 'mosquito dunks' (available at hardware stores and on-line) can be used for that purpose;
- To keep a birdbath fresh, periodically scrub it with a mixture of one part vinegar/nine parts water. Then rinse with water and let dry. Avoid use of synthetic soaps and cleaners, since they will destroy the essential oils on birds' feathers;
- Ensure that there are no outdoor cats in the area, so that your birdbath doesn't attract birds to a place that could be fatal to them.

And enjoy knowing that you have helped songbirds survive the heat!

(Info sources: American Bird Conservancy and National Audubon Society)

Compiled by: Nether Providence Township Bird Town Committee, July 2026