

Nesting material for birds

Age:3-11 Group size: 20

Duration: 5 mins



Preparation time: 10 mins

Resources

- Wire mesh/cardboard box/kitchen roll tube
- Hay
- Straw
- Animal fur
- Moss
- Sheep wool



Preparation

Gather suitable containers. In the photograph, the soft nesting materials were stuffed into a piece of wire mesh that had been rolled

into a tube. Basically you need a container that won't blow away. Kitchen roll tubes can have large holes punched in them so that the birds can pull the material out, and can be tied to a branch with string. Old bird feeders such as metal peanut feeders are also a good alternative. Do not use the type of mesh bags found around onions from the supermarkets, birds can get feet trapped in these.



Activity

This is really successful if you already have a feeding station that the birds visit regularly, that is sited near to a window. Watch out for signs that birds are collecting nesting material. Take the container you have chosen and stuff it with all the soft material. Try to use natural materials. The birds love fine animal fur, so you might ask any dog owners to brush their dogs and donate the hair!



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Children could make one to put in their own gardens. Once the container is ready, put it near the feeding station and then watch the fun from the window.

This activity, lends itself to science investigation. Predict which material will be most popular and why? Record the birds on camera, return after an hour to see if the material has been disturbed.

As you can see from the photos, the birds in my garden were very keen, and in every case they took the dog hair and left everything else!

