

# Bird Feeding

## Bird Feeding and Pest Control

The Council's Pest Control Team has recently carried out treatment for rats in your neighbourhood and it is therefore important that the following information is brought to your attention.

A garden will often provide rats with food, water and shelter. Any attempt to eliminate an infestation and prevent further problems is likely to fail unless action is taken to address these issues.

Bird feeding provides rats with high-energy food at regular intervals in a fixed location. Birds are messy feeders and small amounts of food pecked off a feeder may be enough to support a population of rats. These may breed all year round and their young may move to the surrounding area to start new colonies.

The Pest Control Team do not want birds or red squirrels to miss out on seed, nuts and other titbits, especially in the winter, but would ask you to help in making the food less accessible to other species.

### Follow this simple guide when feeding birds;

Avoid leaving large amounts of food out, especially if scattered on the ground. Small amounts put out regularly will be eaten quickly by the birds and not remain accessible for rats to scavenge. Only leave enough that can be eaten in one day and do not leave food out on the ground over night.

Where possible use hanging nut, seed, fat or bird cake feeders, as these will help to keep the food out of reach of rodents.

Excessive bird feeding is by far the largest single reason for attracting rats onto properties in South Gloucestershire, and I would like to thank you in anticipation of your co-operation in helping to reduce this situation.

**Free Internet access is available at all South Gloucestershire libraries**

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