



NH Fish & Game Department
11 Hazen Drive, Concord NH 03301

BEARS AND BIRD WATCHING

Bird feeders are bear feeders. Enclosed is information on bear in New Hampshire and suggestions to reduce their attraction to your property. Bear are looking to put on weight quickly in the spring and summer and can smell the high fat content found in bird seed from as far as two miles away. To reduce nuisance bear problems, everyone should take down feeders each spring and keep them down until the snow accumulates again in the winter. You should also keep foods out of compost piles. Your BBQ grills should be cleaned after each use. Double bag your trash and store it in a secure location. Wash your trash barrels with ammonia to mask the food odors. Bear are quick to learn where to get the easy goodies. They need far more time to “unlearn” the attraction to your yard, so remain diligent even when you don’t see any sign of them.

This does not mean you have to give up bird watching! Birds, unlike bear, don't need high fat items in the spring and summer. Bird diets are primarily insect and vegetative matter during the spring and summer. The simplest alternative to bird feeders is to fill your back yard with clean birdbaths and fine dust-baths. Something as simple as a plant pot's saucer will work – as long as the bird can perch on its edge without tipping the saucer. Some species prefer baths high and in open areas while others prefer them low to the ground or near quick cover – like a bush. Others prefer moving water and a slow drip from your garden hose will do the job nicely. All birds need water so you may see a larger variety of birds at these baths.

Sources for information on attracting birds **year-round** include your town Conservation Commission, local garden clubs, nurseries, your library, local Audubon chapters or your County Cooperative Extension Office (see below). The "backyard as habitat" is a very popular and timely topic in recent years and there is a lot of information available. Your county conservation district, the Department of Resources, State Forestry Nursery, and many organizations offer some terrific (and very inexpensive) shrubs and tree packages set up specifically for songbirds or wildlife, etc. Planting trees and shrubs that are attractive to birds provides them with nesting sites, food and cover. This is more beneficial for the birds than a bird feeder.

If you have questions on bear, you may contact your regional Fish and Game office at the numbers below. Also listed are useful web addresses and phone numbers.

NH Fish & Game, Hqts: **271-3421** or check us out on the web: www.wildlife.state.nh.us
Region 1, Lancaster 788-3127 or email: Reg1@wildlife.nh.gov
Region 2, New Hampton 744-5470 or email: Reg2@wildlife.nh.gov
Region 3, Durham 868-1095 or email: Reg3@wildlife.nh.gov
Region 4, Keene 352-9669 or email: Reg4@wildlife.nh.gov

USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services 1-888-SHY-BEAR or 603/223-6832

UNH Cooperative Extension Offices or on the web: <http://ceinfo.unh.edu/home.html>
Belknap County: 527-5475 Hillsboro County: 673-2510
Carroll County 539-3331 Merrimack County 225-5505
Cheshire County 352-4550 Rockingham County: 679-5616
Coos County: 788-4961 Strafford County: 749-4445
Grafton County: 787-6944 Sullivan County: 863-9200