

GROWING BIRDSEED

In the last activity we mentioned that some plants grow from animal scat. How wonderful it is that something icky, like animal poop, is used to grow beautiful things like flowers, grass, and trees! Birds are one of the many animals that help spread seeds. Some plants contain seeds that are eaten by birds. Birds then fly to a new area and disperse the seeds in their droppings. Did you know that the birdseed you buy at the store can grow, too? By providing birds with seeds, you could be helping new plants grow!

Skills

ARTS AND CRAFTS
SURVIVAL

Materials

SMALL POTTING CONTAINER OR HOLLOWED-OUT ORANGE HALF
POTTING SOIL
BAG OF MIXED BIRDSEED (WITH VARIETY OF SEED TYPES, LIKE CORN, SUNFLOWER SEEDS, AND MORE)
WATER
SCISSORS (OPTIONAL)
MARKERS AND OTHER DECORATING TOOLS (OPTIONAL)

- 1 Fill the container with potting soil. Sprinkle the top of the soil with birdseed and cover with a thin layer of soil.
- 2 Water your seeds right away, and continue watering, as needed, when the first few inches of soil are dry.
- 3 If you have leftover birdseed, sprinkle it outside for the birds to enjoy.
- 4 Store your plant by a sunny window inside and check its growth daily. You should see small sprouts by the end of the week. Once your sprouts (or plant hair) is long enough, you can cut and style your birdseed hair. Use markers or other craft materials to decorate your pot as you see fit!
- 5 You may want to move your planter outdoors, and regularly sprinkle new birdseed on the soil's surface. You never know what bird visitors you may get, or where the seeds will travel as a result.



TRY THIS AT HOME

Sunflowers are a wonderful plant to grow for the birds. There are many varieties of sunflowers you can purchase. Mammoth sunflowers will grow bigger than you! In the spring, try planting some of the sunflower seeds from your birdseed pack, or purchase sunflower seed packets of your choice at your local garden center. After your flowers bloom and begin to dry, birds will enjoy the feast of seeds left over. Remaining seeds can be saved for next spring or, with the help of an adult, cooked in the oven and eaten.