



Attracting Birds to your Garden

There's nothing more enjoyable than watching native birds such as tiny, acrobatic spinebills or a small flock of parrots feasting on nectar, insects and seeds in your garden. Birds can be enticed into your garden by providing the right conditions and a safe environment.

Providing food in your garden for birds

Not all birds have the same food requirements.

- Honeyeaters (like the White-plumed Honeyeater on the right) are specialist nectar feeders and also eat copious amounts of insects. They use their brush-like tongues to collect nectar from flowers such as *Grevilleas* and *Banksias*. They also need to consume protein from insects and feed tiny insects to their chicks.
- Small flycatchers such as fantails and thornbills eat insects – so will benefit from plants in your garden that are insect-attracting.
- Rosellas and lorikeets will feed on Eucalypt blossoms and seeds. Larger parrots such as cockatoos feed on the seeds of *Eucalyptus*, *Hakeas* and *Callistemons*.
- Some smaller parrots (Red-rumped Parrot) and finches feed on grass seeds.
- Pigeons feed on berries and seed.
- Birds such as kookaburras and butcherbirds are predators and will visit your garden when it is more established to find small lizards, skinks and larger insects.



When planning your garden include a selection of native plants that produce copious nectar. These include various species of *Grevillea*, *Banksia*, *Hakea*, and *Eucalyptus*. Small plants such as *Correas* and *Kangaroo Paws* are also popular with honeyeaters.

Include grasses (*Poa Grass*, *Kangaroo or Wallaby Grass*) as a source of seed for finches, and native daisies and wattles to attract insects.

Including a variety of shrubs and trees in your garden can help to attract birds as different plants flower in different seasons. A diversity of plants will also encourage a diversity of insects which again encourages lots of insect-eating birds.

If you have natural bushland or regenerating bushland nearby that is being planted and maintained by a Friends Group – walk through the reserve and find out which plant species are being planted. By planting some of the same shrubs and trees you may encourage local native birds to visit your garden as well as the Reserve.





Providing shelter in your garden

All birds need somewhere to hide in the event of danger from predatory birds, cats or dogs. Providing shrubs and trees at various levels - low, medium and high - and especially dense or prickly shrubs and trees, will provide a safe spot for birds to hide and escape. Native gardens that include various layers also tend to more closely mimic natural bushland.

Water is an essential garden feature for birds

Provide a source of water for birds in your garden – and they are likely to visit your garden frequently –especially in summer if water is scarce. Bird baths should be elevated so that birds do not feel vulnerable to attack from cats. The bird bath should also be close to shrubs or trees so that birds can escape into the foliage if frightened. See our **Fact Sheet on Bird Baths** for further information.

Flower colours

Red and Yellow flowers are attractive to birds. Plants with red and yellow flowers include: *Callistemons*, *Grevilleas*, some *Correas*, *Banksias*, *Melaleucas Kangaroo Paws* and *Waratahs*.

Nest Boxes

Some birds will create nests in trees and shrubs using twigs, moss and other plant materials. Other birds rely on tree hollows for nesting. Hollows can take a hundred years or more to form in a tree and, there are few mature trees in urban areas. An alternative to a tree hollow is a nest box. Many good nurseries and garden centres sell nest boxes or you can build your own. See our *Fact Sheet on Nest Boxes* for further information.

Household pets

Cats will frighten native birds from your garden. Keep your cat indoors at all times and take your cat for a walk (with a leash) – or create an enclosed play area outside for your feline friend.

Finally a good bird book, pair of binoculars and a notebook will help you identify and record the birds visiting your garden.

Be patient. It may take a little time for your plants to become established and for birds to begin feeding from your Flora for Fauna garden.

