



Observing the Food Preferences of Birds at a Feeder

Birds have different food preferences, just like we do! In this experiment, you will observe which foods the birds visit most often at your feeder.



OBJECTIVE

To determine which types of food are most popular with birds at your feeder.



MATERIALS

- Bird feeder with separate sections (or multiple small feeders)
- Different types of bird food, such as:
 - Black oil sunflower seeds
 - Millet
 - Nyjer (thistle) seeds
 - Suet
 - Cracked corn or mealworms (optional)
- Observation chart (on this sheet)
- Pencil
- Stopwatch or clock
- Field guide or bird ID app (optional)
- Notebook (optional)



PROCEDURE

1. **Set Up:** Fill each section of your feeder (or each feeder) with a different type of bird food. Place the feeder in the same location where birds visit regularly.
2. **Observe:** Choose a time to observe (for example, 20 minutes). Watch quietly from a distance.
3. **Record:** Each time a bird lands at the feeder, record:
 - The type of food it eats
 - The kind of bird (or best description)
 - Tally one visit in the chart
4. **Repeat:** Observe at the same time each day for at least 3–5 days for the best results.
5. **Analyze:** Add up your tallies to see which food was visited most often.

OBSERVATION CHART

Date	Type of Food	Number of Visits (Tally Marks)					Total Visits
		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	
	Black oil sunflower seeds						
	Millet						
	Nyjer (thistle) seeds						
	Suet						
	Cracked corn / Mealworms						
	Other (describe): _____						
	Total Visits Each Day						



ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

1. Which type of food had the most visits overall?

2. Which type of food had the least visits?

3. Did any birds prefer more than one type of food?
What did you notice? _____
4. What do you think other factors (weather, time of day, season) might have affected your results?



CONCLUSION

Write a conclusion sentence that tells what you learned from your experiment.



THINK LIKE A SCIENTIST!

Scientists observe, record, and compare to learn about the natural world.
What other questions could you investigate about birds?