

SEED & BEAN MOSAIC BIRD FEEDERS

Residents will create unique mosaics of birds using edible seeds for beautiful bird feeders!

Please amend this lesson to adapt to the abilities and interest of your residents. You know your residents best!

If you don't have a garden, you can still interact with nature by collecting other bits of nature during a garden courtyard or walk. You can also safely enjoy nature from a window!

Wellness Objectives:

- 1: Resident will use motor skills (MS)
- 2: Resident will engage creative expression (CE)
- 3: Resident will engage cognitive stimulation (CS)

Eldergrow offers a **therapeutic connection** to nature where residents engage in meaningful ways – cognitively, socially, spiritually, emotionally, & physically.

MATERIALS: BUDGET: \$8 - \$15



- Seeds - ½ cup of each (black oil sunflower seed, cracked corn, safflower seed, red beans, peanuts, peas, etc) (grocery, Dollar or hardware stores) (Sample of 4 small seed bags [here](#))
- Print out the **Bird Images** pages (or find ones you know your residents will like) & give blank paper for anyone wanting to draw their own birds/ designs
- Elmer's Glues
- Spoon for pouring seeds onto page
- Toothpicks or pencils, for poking down seeds
- Cardboard to mount the bird images onto
- Paint or colored pencils to add more color to the page
- Bowls or Paper Cups to hold the different types of seeds
- Merlin **Bird ID app** (for smartphones) or see our instructions for the **Feeder Watch** website if you have iPad or laptop (Bring speakers or arrange with community beforehand to use theirs.)
- Talking Points: "**Benefits of Birds**"
- *Optional: "How to Use the Bird Apps", if needed*

PREPARATION:

- If you have a garden, have residents gather around it, or at table by a window with a view of nature. Have journal ready for garden/nature observations.
- Pour the different seed types into bowls for residents to use. Set out materials, printed Bird Images, and Talking Points to the side.
- Have an example mosaic or photo to show residents to encourage them to join in the activity.

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS – CHOOSE 1 OR ALL 3 PARTS:

1. GARDEN OBSERVATIONS & CONVERSATIONS:

- If you have a garden, gather around it so residents can make observations, or gather around a window. These are options to connect with nature. Skip to #2 for the Lesson Plan.
- Bring safe scissors for leggy plants and garden tools, journal with pen, and half full watering can (keep it light).
- Jot down 3 things in the journal (or ask for a volunteer resident to be today's garden/nature secretary)
- Bring a ruler & have residents measure plants. Mark their heights in the journal & observe their growth over time!
- Do you notice anything different or new about the garden? There are no wrong answers.
- How does the soil feel - Too wet? Too dry? If too dry, ask a volunteer to water.

2. ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS: CREATING BIRD FEEDER MOSAICS

Watch our short video on the Nature Connect portal for tips & tricks on this activity.

- Hand out the Bird Images that each resident participating would like to fill in with a mosaic, or they can draw their own bird images to fill in..
- Spread glue over a cardboard piece to fit each bird image and have residents attached their bird (can cut out the shape first) cardboard to create a stiff mosaic holder.
- Have each person work in one section at a time, adding a layer of glue where they want to start, and filling in with the one kind of seed before moving to a new section. It's recommended to start with smaller more detailed sections first. Spread glue between the lines of sections.
- Some may find **pouring seeds** onto the glue with the spoons easier to do than placing individual seeds, especially for small seeds.
- Use a toothpick or pencil to press seeds down into the glue and adjust their position as needed.
- Add details in areas with out glue using paint or colored pencils (like the skinny feet or tree branches).
- Allow mosaics to sit on table or safe spot undisturbed for the rest of class.
- When ready to feed the birds, set mosaics outside where the visiting birds can be observed by residents, either hanging from a tree if the backing is firm enough, or taped to a fence or table.



3. BIRD APPS FOR BIRD CALLS

- Listen to bird calls and find out which birds might be in our backyards now- residents love this!
- Use the Merlin App (on smartphone, set up prior) or Feederwatch.org (iPad/laptop) to explore which birds might be found in your region & what their bird calls sound like!
 - Refer to our **"How to Use the Bird Apps"** document for extra help on set up.
- Take notes in a garden journal with highlights from the bird discussion
 - *What birds will return first and be heard calling for our spring?*
 - *Which bird are you hoping to see this year?*
 - *Does anyone have a favorite bird? Would anyone like to share their favorite bird story?*

CLOSING & AMENDMENTS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS

Have your **garden journal ready** again to write down resident **comments, garden, or activity highlights**.

- If residents are tired or sleepy from dreary winter, warm up the crowd before you start observing the garden or reading the Talking Points. In the Daily Programming, you'll find some silly garden jokes or ask residents what their favorite songs are and create a playlist to start each lesson!
- For residents who are visually-impaired, **bring plants and objects to their eyes and describe** or place in their hands to explore. They may enjoy feeling the texture of a finished mosaic and each seed type.
- Assist as minimally as possible to the particular resident's ability. **This way it's a collaboration that plays to the resident's strengths, allowing them to be successful and fulfilled with the work they can do!**
- **Compare the different seeds** as well and make guesses which ones certain birds will want to eat the most.
- **Assist residents with walkers or wheelchairs** to either the Eldergrow garden, outside, or a window to make nature observations, and tend to the garden when possible. If a resident can't make it to the garden, **bring the garden to them** - take pruned leaves or plant parts in a bowl for them to explore!
- If some residents complete the lesson before others, you can ask them to **tend to their garden**, e.g. prune dead leaves or till/aerate the soil or help another resident who may need some extra help
- **For something a little more challenging for IL participants-** have residents try placing each seed on the glue using tweezers, or filling the entire page with a full mosaic design (like the one pictured below).
- Give everyone a round of happy applause for a job well done!

