

Bird Resources and Nesting Materials

Different species of birds use different items to build their nests. They are very fussy about what they select. For instance, a hummingbird will use bits of lichen held together by spider webbing (pretty plucky birds to steal a spider's nest). An eagle will use large branches. See what materials your birds select so you can replenish them as needed. If you provide a bird box (also called a bird house), make sure it is appropriate for the species you want to attract. You may have to experiment with its location to induce your birds to use it. Once it's in use try not to disturb it; some birds are shy and may flee their nest if it is not secure. After the birds have fledged, remove the old nest and use a stiff brush to freshen the floor of the house. Cleanup will be a breeze if you buy a bird house that opens up for easy access.. The Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology's NestWatch site has information on boxes for various species: nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses The Audubon site has family friendly activities for learning about and supporting birds: www.audubon.org



Used for Structure

- Twigs
- Dried leaves
- Dried grass clippings (esp longer grasses)
- Pine straw needles(dry)

For Binding

- String or yarn (natural)
- Dental floss
- Aluminum or tin foil
- Spider webs
- Paper strips
- Pieces of cloth (cut into strips)/linen
- Thread (cotton)
- Shed snake skin
- Moss/Lichen
- Mud
- raffia/hay

Lining Material

- Cotton/cotton batting
- Small pieces of fabric or cloth
- Cattail fuzz or any fluff from plants
- Cocoons (empty of insect)
- Clean Feathers
- Dog or Cat Hair (not treated with flea killer)

Don't glue items together. You want to make it easy for the birds to remove them. Some birds forage for materials on the ground and some look up higher. Try out different locations for your offerings. You can decorate your arrangement with dried flowers (be sure they haven't been treated with pesticides). The birds may not use them, but they make the collection prettier.

