Field Guide to Backyard Birds

This short guide covers the birds most often seen at a suburban feeder in the eastern United States. The **bold** names are species you can expect in every season; the *italic* names are winter visitors only.

What to Watch For

- Size relative to a sparrow or a robin
- Beak shape: thick for seed eaters, thin for insect eaters
- Wing bars and tail markings seen in flight

Getting Started

1. Hang the feeder where it can be seen from a window.
2. Fill it with black oil sunflower seed, which almost every species takes.
3. Keep a notebook by the window and write down the date of each first sighting.

For regional checklists and recordings of each song, see the online bird atlas.

Common Visitors

Species	Size	Season	Preferred Food
Northern Cardinal	Robin	All year	Sunflower seed
Black-capped Chickadee	Sparrow	All year	Sunflower seed, suet
Dark-eyed Junco	Sparrow	Winter	Millet on the ground
Downy Woodpecker	Sparrow	All year	Suet