

Interesting Facts

- Goldfinches are primarily monogamous birds, but a few females will seek a different partner after producing the first brood. These prolific females leave their original mate behind to raise their fledglings while they journey off to start a new family.
- The American Goldfinch is the only member of its family to complete two full molts a year. All other species only molt once in the fall.
- When other songbirds are finished with breeding season, the American Goldfinch is just getting started. They are one of the latest birds to breed, typically waiting until late June or early July.
- A group of Goldfinches is called a charm.
- Having a source of water is critical to attract Goldfinches as they only eat seeds, which contain little to no moisture. For proper digestion a Goldfinch must have water available at all times. Providing a birdbath or other water source will greatly increase the number of Finches in your yard.



The More You Know

Habitat can also be a key to attracting Goldfinches. Gardening with them in mind allows you less work in the long run. No need to worry about dandelions as Finches enjoy them and other weed like plants and grasses. Other favorites include seed-producing flowers like coneflowers, sunflowers, and thistles.



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Songbird Essentials'
Tips for Attracting
Goldfinches

About Goldfinches

Goldfinches are a favorite backyard songbird for their graceful flight, enchanting song, and lemony color. However, many don't realize that this beauty does not stay bright gold all year long. As the nesting season winds down and fall colors begin to appear, Goldfinches molt - that is, they replace their worn, tattered feathers with a set of fresh, new feathers. The appearance of males changes drastically at this time. The brilliant yellow feathers are replaced by dull, brownish plumes and the striking black cap disappears leaving them to resemble the female.



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Food

Unlike most other birds that come to your feeders, Goldfinches eat seed almost exclusively. In fact, unlike many other Finches, Goldfinch chicks are fed few, if any, insects. Instead, they get the seeds their parents eat. When a parent returns to feed its young, its crop is full of enough partially digested seed they are able to feed the entire brood. Because of the amount of food brought each time, the young are only fed twice each hour.

For years, Nyjer seed, a sterilized imported seed, has been a favorite Finch seed in America.

It has also been found that Goldfinches readily consume 100% sunflower kernels like our Hearty Hearts. Their favorite feeder for this seed is an open tray or fly through feeder.



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Feeders

Because of the small size of seed that Goldfinches consume, they require a feeder that has very small openings, such as a fine mesh feeder or a tube feeder with several small openings down the length. To avoid moist seed at the bottom of the feeder, choose one that easily allows mixing the bottom seed with newly added seed.

Consider a feeder with a spiral for the Goldfinches to run up and down while they eat. This allows them to easily move from one opening to another without needing to fly to another perch. It also allows more birds to feed at the same time.

If you do choose a feeder with perches, select a multi-tube feeder with several perches allowing many Goldfinches to feed at the same time.

Another great feeder option is a metal mesh feeder with a tray. The mesh allows the Finches to cling while the tray catches any seed that may fall.

One of the keys to keeping Goldfinches around is eliminating their need to compete. Goldfinches will often give up and fly away when other species crowd around the feeder. For this reason, many birders will offer extra Finch feeders utilizing inexpensive thistle sacks.



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