

You Can Do It: Suet!

Suet is a great treat for birds (especially in the wintertime), and it's easy to make at home. When you make your own, you avoid all of the single-use plastic trays and packaging that usually come with store-bought suet. This recipe makes about five slabs of suet. Suet feeders look like little cages, and you can buy them at many grocery or general stores.

YOU'LL NEED:

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| 5 empty and clean half-gallon milk cartons or other square molds (see Note) | 1 cup crunchy nut or seed butter (I use peanut butter) |
| | 3½ cups birdseed |
| 2 cups squishy fat (shortening, lard, or rendered fat) | 1 cup uncooked quick oats |
| | ½ cup cracked corn (it's in the pet food section) |

- 1 Cut the bottom inch or so off of each milk carton to make a shallow open box. Set these aside. You will use them as molds after you've mixed your suet. Recycle the scraps.

NOTE: You can also use plastic or silicone lunchbox sandwich containers, the empty trays from store-bought suet, small pans, or even old ice-cube trays as molds. You just want something you can freeze that will make a shape that fits into your suet feeder.



Many woodpeckers love suet.

- 2 Put the fat and nut butter in a large glass mixing bowl. Microwave for 1 to 2 minutes so it melts a little and gets soft. It doesn't need to be totally liquid.
- 3 Mix in the remaining ingredients. Stir well so everything is coated in fat and nut butter.
- 4 Scoop the mixture into the milk carton molds. Smooth it down with the back of your spoon until the top of the suet is mostly flat.
- 5 Put the filled suet molds in the freezer for a couple of hours. You can even store them there if you don't want to put them all out in your yard at once. When you're ready to feed the birds, peel the suet out of the mold and place it in a suet feeder basket.
- 6 Wait and watch!



What kinds of birds visit your suet feeder? You can add them to your life list!