

Bird Nesting Materials You Can Find Around the House and in Your Own Backyard

A Baby Bird Rescue Ranger is always prepared! As you'll read in our step-by-step rescue instructions in Step 3, you can simply line your container from Step 1 with some dried grass or even a wash cloth, but here's a list of things birds like to use to build their own nests.

Why not go on a scavenger hunt with your Mom or Dad to collect some of these items just in case you ever need to rescue a baby bird?

- Dead twigs
- Dead leaves
- Dry grass (make sure the grass hadn't been treated with pesticides)
- Yarn, string or thread —cut into 4- to 8-inch pieces
- Human or animal hair (especially horse hair) (use short lengths—no longer than 4-6 inches long)
- Pet fur (Never use fur from pets that received flea or tick treatments)
- Sheep's wool
- Feathers
- Plant fluff or down (e.g. cattail fluff, cottonwood down)
- Moss or lichen
- Kapok, cotton batting, cotton balls or other stuffing material
- Bark strips
- Pine needles
- Thin strips of cloth, about 1 inch wide by 6 inches long
- Mud
- Pebbles or tiny rocks
- Straw or other plant stems
- Dental floss
- Shredded paper
- Broom bristles or mop string
- Snake skins (if you find one laying around, leave it for a bird to discover)
- Spider webs and caterpillar silk (stretchy binding material for nests)

THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT USE:

- Dryer lint from synthetic fibers becomes crumbly after it's rained on and dries. Some laundry detergents and fabric softeners may leave harmful residues. **We don't recommend offering dryer lint.**
- **Do not offer any plastic or nylon material, including fishing line.** These materials can be deadly to the birds and are frequently responsible for bird injuries.

NOTE: Even if no baby birds need rescuing in your yard, why not leave some of these nesting materials out for the birds to help them build their nests? See page 2 for the best way to do this.

How to Attract Birds in Your Yard by Offering Them the Nesting Materials You've Collected

Here are a few ways you can offer nesting material to invite birds to build a nest in your yard:

- Make small piles of the items you've collected and put them in places where the wind and rain won't get them (E.g. a tray feeder might make a good temporary spot)
- Loosely fill a mesh bag or basket or clean suet cage with your nesting materials, and hang it where the birds will see it. Make sure the mesh is wide enough so that the birds can easily pull out the goods. (A

regular kitchen whisk makes a great "cage" for your nesting material!)



- Hang material over trees or shrubs near any birdfeeders you might have in your yard, or in other sheltered spots where birds might build nests. Don't tie any of the material down as you want the birds to be able to easily take it away!

Different birds will like different types of nesting materials, so offer several different items from your list in several different ways.

Kitchen Whisk

