

BAD NEWS BIRDS

Now, I love my fine feathered friends as much as the next guy, but now that the gardening season is upon us, it's time to make sure those birds stay away from your gardens and where they belong—at their feeders. Here's my lowdown on how to outsmart the winged munchers:

- **Get a net**—because it's the only surefire way to keep birds away from your crops. Build a framework of bamboo poles, stakes, or fence posts, and drape the netting over so it reaches the ground. Keep it in place with rocks or garden staples.



- **Throw 'em a party**—with lots of balloons! You can either buy scary-faced balloons at your local garden center, or make your own by drawing faces on those shiny Mylar balloons. Attach the balloons to posts around your garden, and tie shiny ribbons to them for more effectiveness. Move your balloons every few days to keep the birds from getting used to them.

- **Go fishin'**—set up posts around your garden and weave fishing line or black thread over your crops. The birds'll be confused by the "wires," and will soon head elsewhere for lunch.
- **Block 'em**—by placing upside-down crates or disposable cups (cut out the bottoms) over your seedlings. Lay chicken wire over your seedbeds, and raise it onto boards or bricks as the seedlings grow.
- **Get technical**—there are lots of great products to send those birds packing. My Bye-Bye Birdie (*Item #1922*) uses a magnetic field to confuse the birds' sense of direction, without harming anybody! And my Rotating Head Great Horned Owl (*Item #2702*), will scare 'em off for good! This scary looking owl has a head that moves in the wind, giving the illusion of life. Try either of these for easy bird relief.

Now that you're armed, you're dangerous! Keep these tips handy and you'll have a garden full of goodies to share with your neighbors, instead of the neighborhood birds.