

SQUIRRELS

AND HOW TO KEEP THEM FROM RAIDING YOUR BIRDFEEDERS

Eastern gray squirrels (our most common urban squirrel) can jump large distances, so to protect your bird food, your feeders must be *at least* 6 feet off the ground *and* 8 feet from the closest tree, overhanging branch or building.

To prevent squirrels from climbing up or down to feeders:

- Mount the feeder on a PVC or metal pole with a diameter of at least 5 inches.
- Use a "squirrel baffle" over the top of the feeder or on the pole (available commercially or may be hand-made with pie pans, two-liter juice or soda bottles, gallon milk jugs, garbage can lids, old phonograph records or ... use your imagination!).

Buy a hanging feeder surrounded by a wire screen. This allows small birds to enter and feed but excludes squirrels (and large birds).

- There are other commercially made squirrel-proof birdfeeders available which work on the principle that the weight of the squirrel on the feeder platform will drop a protective shield over the food supply.

Switch from sunflower seeds to safflower seeds. Finches, chickadees, nuthatches, grosbeaks, and Steller's jays enjoy safflower seeds but they don't appeal to squirrels.

Provide separate food for squirrels to keep them away from your bird feeders. They especially enjoy peanuts and corn.