

## ENVIRONMENTAL

# If you're feeling stressed and anxious, research says: feed the birds

NewsUSA

(NU) - In today's constant contact, cell-phone celebrated, digital world, most people can go days or even weeks without spending any time in natural sunlight. Instead, we eat breakfast inside, or on the go, only to race to an office, filled with artificial light and plastic plants, for 8 to 10 hours a day. It's no wonder why Americans' mental health is suffering.

Compare that hectic routine to those memorable moments when you're able to sit quietly, let the sunshine warm your face, hear the birds, and allow nature to envelope you. While everyone longs for less stress, actually relaxing can be dauntingly stressful!

However, a new study out of the United Kingdom sheds light on one way people can de-stress: bird watching. The study finds that people who watch birds from their home have lower depression, anxiety, and stress compared to those that live in less leafy areas that have fewer birds. People "felt relaxed and connected to nature when they watched birds in their garden," researchers say. These feelings increased with the level of bird feeding in the yard, they add.

Specifically, the number of birds people might see was directly associated with better mental health. "This study starts to unpick the role that some key components of nature play for our mental well-being. Birds around the home and nature in general, show great promise in preventive health care, making cities healthier, happier places to live.," says lead researcher Dr. Daniel Cox from the University of Exeter.

Dr. Tina Phillips, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, agrees. "Overwhelmingly, studies show that people feed birds because it makes them feel more relaxed, that it's something they're interested in and ultimately something that makes them feel good."

If you want to disconnect from the digital world and relieve some daily stress and anxiety, getting outside, bird watching could be the key to increasing your mindful, mental health. Since studies reveal the more birds you see, the less likely you are to be stressed and anxious, it's important to attract as many birds as possible.

The first step to attracting birds is to use an all-purpose tube feeder, which is the number one feeder choice, allowing birds to feed from multiple ports. Cole's Wild Bird Products, Co. offers the Terrific Tube feeder, it's made to last with state-of-the-art materials that prevent warping and discoloration and it features a "Quick Clean" removable base, so cleaning is super simple. Natural grip perch covers mimic the feel of a real branch, which encourages longer feeding times.



**Photo Credit: Cole's Wild Bird Seed Co.**

Once you have the right feeder, you'll need reliable seed that will bring birds to your backyard to deliver that dose of stress relief we all desire. According to Elaine Cole, President and owner of Cole's, the quality of birdseed will determine how many feathered friends will flock to your backyard.

Unlike other birdseed mixes, which typically contain cheap filler seed like milo and wheat, Cole's selects only the top 1 to 2 percent of the highest quality seeds birds like to eat. Plus, Cole's doesn't add pesticides or chemicals, preferring instead to keep the seed as close to its natural state as possible.

"If you use inferior seed, you're not going to like the results. Our seed is specifically formulated to attract the greatest number, variety, and species of birds. Birds are picky and birdseed matters. If you use cheap feed, they won't hesitate look for something else they prefer. Birds are like people, give them what they like to eat and they'll come back and bring their friends." Cole said.

Since we've learned that the more birds we attract, the more stress-free we'll be, it makes good sense to use the best bird feed you can buy. Cole's Special Feeder, attracts the greatest number of wild birds than any other mix out there. Add Cole's Blue Ribbon blend, which attracts the greatest variety of wild birds to the mix, and you've got the perfect prescription to help calm your anxiety and stress.

At the heart of it, everyone wants less stress and anxiety. Once you start watching birds in action, they'll engage your attention in a way that keeps you in the moment, a state that provides mental relief. Admiring their beauty, listening to their sweet song and enjoying their antics will calm your overactive mind and bring joy and renewal.

For more information on top quality feed and feeders, please visit: Cole's website.