

Like many Americans, I have a bird feeder in my yard. Actually, I have more than one because the fussy little flyers don't all eat the same thing.

In the primary feeder, I have a mix that is mostly black oil sunflower seeds, with some cracked corn thrown in for the cardinals. This mix attracts the usual Northeast customers—chickadees, titmice, various sparrows, house finches and the occasional nuthatch. Below the feeder, birds that prefer to eat off the ground include the cardinals, mourning doves, juncos and some blue jays.

For my suet feeder, I buy preformed blocks of suet, which fit perfectly in a small cage, made for that purpose. The suet is mixed with various combinations of seeds and berries, but I have not noticed that the different recipes attract different birds. This feeder ensures that the woodpeckers, my favorites, are always around. I have a small wire tube feeder, filled with niger seed to keep the goldfinches happy and I thoroughly enjoy watching them change from their drab winter costumes to the brilliant summer yellow they sport so beautifully. I also get a kick out of their dainty eating habits. You cannot rush a goldfinch. They will sit on the same perch for what seems like forever, occasionally picking a single seed from the feeder and slowly savoring it. It must take them all day to get enough calories to survive. They are the opposites of the chickadees, which nip in rapidly for a single sunflower seed, then hurriedly "chew and screw."

Some years ago I kept a hummingbird feeder going, but the nectar turned bad after a few days, mold grew on the inside of the tank



**Flotsam and Jetsam**

By Donna Drago

and it was a real pain in the neck to keep this feeder humming. Now, I plant lots of red and purple tubular-shaped flowers like bee balm, red salvias and verbena bonariensis in my garden and have more hummingbirds than I ever did with a feeder.

Wherever I have lived, I have placed my bird feeders outside the kitchen window so they can entertain me as I perform mundane chores. My dog also regards the bird feeder as a great form of entertainment. He lays his big sloppy jowls on the kitchen windowsill for hours on end moving only his eyeballs from side to side, up and down, to follow incoming or outgoing birds. It's only when one of the dastardly squirrels tries to help himself, that the dog becomes animated—raising his eyebrows, shaking, and muttering under his breath. Then he'll run to the back door, begging to be let out to put a hit on the furry pest.

There are many products on the market that claim to be squirrel-proof bird feeders, but I have not encountered a single one that could make its claim over the long run. Squirrels are just too hungry and too tenacious to be sidelined by some patented mechanism. One of my birdfeeders is clear acrylic and has a dome-shaped hood on top of it. This hood is adjustable up or down to allow only

the smallest birds to get inside the dome to feed. I have experimented with the hood settings and no matter how tiny I make the entrance to the feeder, the squirrel manages to get his entire body inside. It's rather comical, actually, watching the poor, contorted rodent—tail curled around his body, one ear pressed to the side of the dome like a tiny suction cup. Yet, there he is, chomping happily away and barely noticing the inconvenience of the situation. If you're a squirrel, there is such a thing as a free lunch.

Unfortunately, bird feeding is becoming a pastime of the wealthy. When purchasing a bird feeder, there seems to be more choices made of enamel on copper or wrought iron. Someday, I'm certain somebody will make one out of platinum to be sold in one of the tony catalogs like Frontgate or Smith and Hawken, but I doubt it will be squirrel proof. And the cost of bird seed has skyrocketed. I went to a feed and seed shop recently and the cheapest 10-pound bag of seed was about \$15! Better quality "gourmet" blends were between \$22 and \$25.

This, unfortunately, could discourage those without excess means to forego bird feeding as a hobby. It shouldn't. Places like Job Lot carry sunflower seed for \$6.49 for a 10-pound bag, and you can get 40 pounds of a seed blend for \$22. They also carry inexpensive bird feeders made of plastic, which, when filled with seed, attract exactly the same birds and provide the same amount of joy as the expensive ones. The squirrels? Don't worry about them. Everybody's got to eat.

## Dock

Continued from page 1

extend perpendicularly from the wood pile pier to the north for 40-feet. One side would be exclusively for fishing, while the other side would be used for docking. He said that the docking side could also be used for fishing as long as boats were not docked or trying to dock.

Munger, who attended the harbor commission monthly meeting, was quick to say that the plan DiGiando was showing to the commissioners was not his plan.

Facilities Committee Chairman Robert Bowen said "the approved money was for a touch and go dock attached to the north side, running parallel to the wood pile pier for 40 feet." He also said "the plans for a dock running perpendicular to the pier were rejected by the Town Council at its Feb. 11 meeting." He continued to say there was not enough money approved for the engineering of two sets of plans.

DiGiando said the plan that was rejected "attached the touch and go dock to a 100-foot extension of the wood pile pier." He went on to say that "it wasn't the perpendicular design that was rejected; it was the 100-foot extension."

A meeting was planned with the facilities committee and the RT Engineering Group of East Providence, the company hired to engineer the waterfront projects, for Thursday, March 13. However, Committee Chairman Bowen cancelled the meeting when he learned that key personnel in the decision-making process were not available.

The meeting is being resched-

uled for the last week in March, but Bowen wants to know which plans are being engineered before the meeting takes place. That has yet to be determined.

In other harbor business, Executive Director Thomas Tighe reported that he, Keiser, and Town Solicitor Peter Ruggiero were scheduled to meet with Ribcraft of Marblehead, Mass., on March 19 to discuss the cost of repairs to the harbor master's boat. Harbor Management Commission Chairman Michael de Angeli asked if he could attend the meeting and Tighe readily agreed.

The 21-foot, 3-inch long by 8-foot, 6-inch beamed harbor master's patrol boat was made by Ribcraft at a cost of \$97,920 to the town. A month after the boat was first put in the water, it was hauled for routine maintenance. Extreme galvanic corrosion was discovered causing the antifouling bottom paint to peel and the gunnels to separate from the hull.

Tighe also reported that new channel markers and two new marker buoys were being installed at the town beach in the Jamestown Shores known to locals as Head's Beach. The marker buoys hold signs that say, "No boats beyond this point." The buoys are being installed to protect swimmers from boat traffic.

Traffic Committee Chairman Robert Bowen reported that the committee is making a recommendation for parking on Walcott Avenue to be moved from the east to the west side of the street from Brook Street to High Street. The committee is also recommending extended parking on Union Street and to restrict truck loading zones on Narragansett Avenue.

clip & mail



# LAST CHANCE!



## Customize Your Telephone Listing

- List your cell phone
- List your fax number
- List a second line
- Correct your listing

The Jamestown Women's Club and The Jamestown Press will publish the 2008 local directory this spring.

Listings are taken directly from the Newport Verizon Directory. If you are not listed in that directory, are listed incorrectly, or would like to add a spouse's name, cell phone or fax number, etc., please fill out the form below.

## YOUR TELEPHONE LISTING CHANGES ARE DUE NOW!

If you have previously only been listed in the Jamestown book and not the Newport book, you need to notify us again. *We do not save updates from previous books and you will not be included in the 2008 issue unless you inform us.*

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