



Squirrel Wars

Squirrels love birdseed! Eastern Gray squirrels are all over the Bay Area. Both Western and Eastern Grays live in the Santa Cruz Mountains; the Eastern Grays being more aggressive. Extremely clever and acrobatic, they can leap 6-8 feet sideways, 4 feet from the ground and 9 feet from above. Squirrels will try and fail many times but once they win, they never fail again.

SQUIRREL-PROOF FEEDERS

Many tube feeders are considered “squirrel resistant” which means they have, at the minimum, metal perches and ports to help prevent squirrels from destroying the feeder. “Squirrel-proof feeders” on the other hand, actually prevent the squirrels from accessing the seed even if they access the feeder.

FEEDER PLACEMENT

Squirrels can leap 6-8 feet sideways. Place the

feeders 8 feet away from tree trunks, fences, pergolas, shrubs, garden furniture — anything that a squirrel can use as a launch pad — and at least 4 feet from the ground. Sometimes five feet is better if you have a good jumper!

SPECIAL TACTICS

1. Bribery: Providing squirrels their own feeder with dried corn, peanuts, striped sunflower or Nature’s Trail Mix has been shown in some instances to discourage squirrels from feeders.

2. Cole’s Flaming Squirrel is capsicum pepper, that when mixed with bird seed, gives squirrels and other mammals temporary “hot mouth.” Squirrel Away is not recommended when dogs or small children will be around the feeder.

3. Nyjer: The exclusive use of safflower or Nyjer, two seeds that squirrels are not terribly fond of, has also proven successful.

4. Combined Effect: Generally, the most satisfying approach to squirrel



problems is to combine the use of well-placed baffle protected feeders or squirrel-proof feeders with diversion feeders made specifically for squirrels.

SQUIRRELS AS ALLIES

Squirrels do perform a service by cleaning up seed spilled by the birds. If there is too much kick out from your mix, switch to a single seed. Although they can be aggravating, squirrels are also intelligent, inquisitive, energetic, and amusing to watch. Once you are able to effectively deal with them, their presence becomes just one more fascinating wildlife addition to your backyard.

Squirrel Buster

The Squirrel Buster series, an excellent style that is very attractive to our perching birds, shuts off seed access when the squirrel “lands” on the feeder. Available in Mini, Standard, Classic or Plus sizes, the Squirrel Buster is a very effective tactic.



The Brome Squirrel Buster Classic. Los Gatos Birdwatcher is an authorized dealer for Brome feeders.

Droll Yankees All Weather Feeder

Squirrel Proof Bird Feeder & Shelter. 1-1/2" cage openings let songbirds in and keep pesky squirrels out. The All Weather Feeder with Cage works well to keep squirrels and large birds out and also protects the seed from rain. The cage allows the smaller birds to get even closer to the seed.

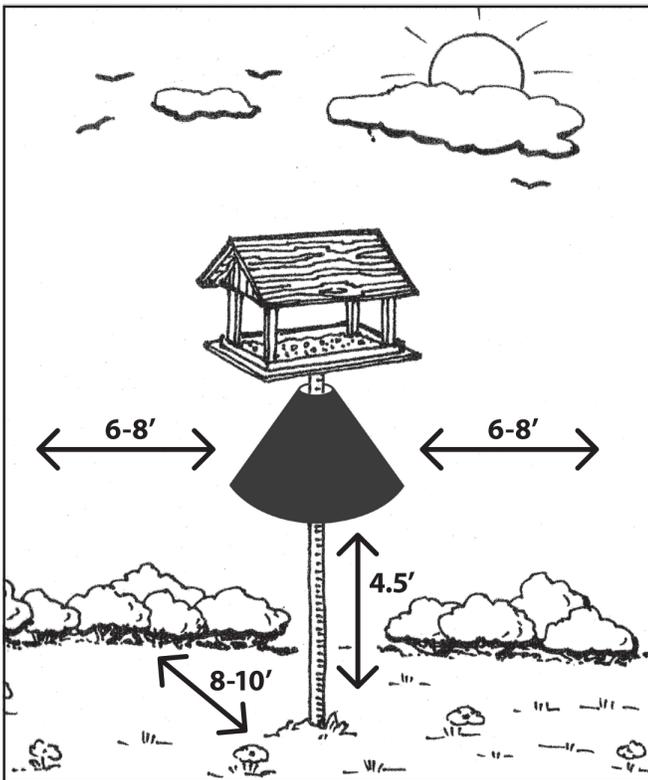
Sky Café

The Sky Café by Arundale features a 17" squirrel-proof selective dome ensuring that birds are the only ones who eat from your feeder. The large easy-flow tray feeds ten or more birds at a time.

How to Baffle the Squirrels with Baffles

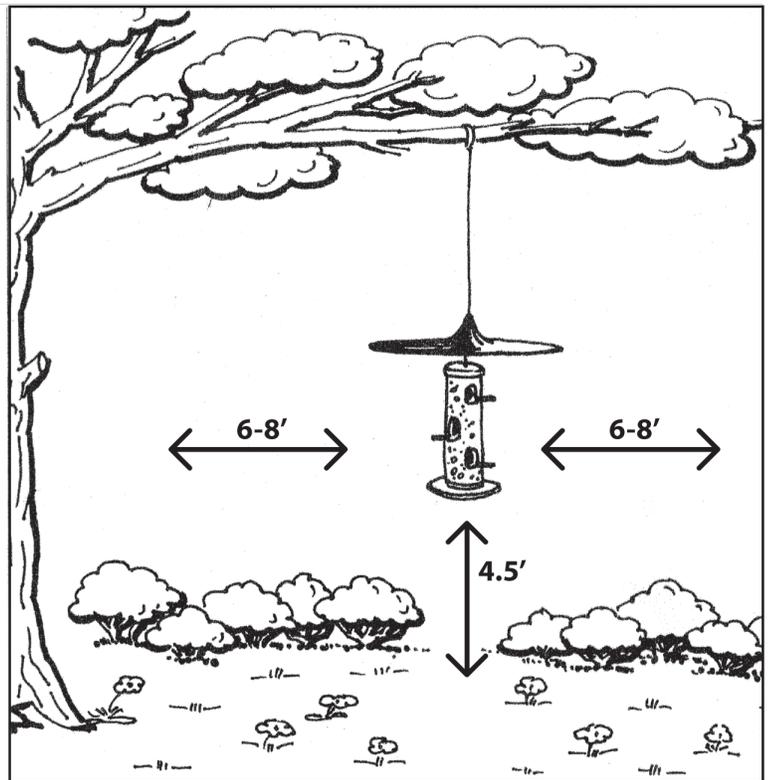
Remember that the placement of your feeder is crucial. Choose a spot that has 6–8 feet of clearance on all sides with bushes, shrubs, or trees 8–10 feet away (provides cover for birds) and can be seen easily from your viewing place.

Baffles resemble large disks, cans or upside down salad bowls. A diameter of 16” to 20” is the most effective in keeping squirrels at bay. The smaller ones work better as rain guards. For pole and post-mounted feeders, baffles should be placed at least four feet off the ground, below the feeder, so that the squirrel can’t leap over it from the ground. For hanging feeders, baffles work best if suspended above the feeder by hook, wire, or chain. Avoid the use of nylon or cotton line due to the ease in which squirrels can chew through these materials. Protect the tree limb with a piece of plastic tubing.



POLE-MOUNTED FEEDERS:

Use either a cone, disk, or can-shaped baffle on your pole-mounted feeder to prevent squirrels from climbing up the pole to the feeder.



HANGING FEEDERS:

A disc or dome-shaped baffle will keep squirrels from a feeder hung 6–8 feet away from the tree trunk.



LOS GATOS BIRDWATCHER

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