



## Do you have any clever birds in your garden?

You can use your bird feeding station in your garden, or on a balcony, to do an experiment to find out how clever the birds in your garden are.

### The experiment

In your recycling, find some stiff cardboard (cereal packet thickness is fine) and two clear, plastic pots that are not too deep. Turn one pot upside down on the cardboard and draw around it. Cut around the circle, just outside the line, leaving a tab sticking out on one side. This is going to be the lid for the pot.

Tape the cardboard lid to the pot, on the opposite side to the tab. To make this hinge strong it is a good idea to use tape on the inside and outside. Leave the other pot without a lid. Put stones or large gravel in the bottom of both pots, to make sure that they won't tip over if a bird perches on the edge. Put a circle of card or some kitchen paper over the stones then pour a good amount of bird seed on top.

Now put both pots outside, together, in a place that is safe from cats. If you don't normally put out bird food, it might take quite a while for birds to realise it is there, so be patient. When they do finally come to the pots, the birds will eat from the open pot, until it is empty, but then a clever bird may try to get into the pot with the lid. Some birds may push under the lid, others may use the tab to lift the lid. What do your birds do? You can keep a chart of the types of birds that come to the feeding station and tick the ones that were clever enough to lift the lid.

You could also invent some other puzzles for the birds to try, but do remember not to have any sharp edges, or have anywhere a bird could get trapped.

Send us an email, and photos if you have them, on the results of your experiment.