



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

Johnson's Garden Talk

VOLUME 19 / ISSUE 3

September / October 2007



Johnson's
Garden Centers

WEST 13th STORE

2707 West 13th St. N.
Wichita, KS 67203
316-942-1443

EAST STORE

6225 E. Shadybrook
(21st @ Woodlawn)
Wichita, KS 67203
316-687-5451

RIDGE ROAD STORE

802 N. Ridge Rd.
Wichita, KS 67212
316-943-0494

LANDSCAPE DESIGN & INSTALLATION NIGHTSCAPING

316-943-6886

CORPORATE OFFICE

316-942-3751

TOLL-FREE NUMBER

888-542-8463

EMAIL

askus@johnsonsgarden.com

WEB PAGE

www.johnsonsgarden.com

Cardinals Rule!

Mike Hargrove, Ridge Rd. Store Manager

The star of the backyard birdfeeders has to be the Northern Cardinal. The brilliant red of the male makes it a standout in the garden. The female is less conspicuous with a grayish brown back and red highlights. The Northern Cardinal was a bird of the southeast in the 1800s. It has expanded its range to Southern Canada and to the Rocky Mountains. At one time cardinals were trapped to be sold as caged birds in Europe and the U.S., but the Migratory Bird Act in the early 1900s outlawed marketing of native birds.

It is not only the bright color of the cardinal that endears it to backyard birders. In the winter and spring, the loud clear song of the cardinal is heard from treetops. In the winter, cardinals usually flock together and frequent our feeders. By spring, they pair up for the nesting season. The courtship rituals of the male and female are another reason for their popularity. The male will pick out a choice bit of food, take it to his mate and place it in her bill. The female does the nest building but both male and female feed the nestlings and fledglings.

Cardinals prefer to feed on the ground but they will perch on a hopper feeder or tube feeder. Their favorite food is oil sunflower and safflower seed. Offering these seeds in a ground or hanging tray feeder is the easiest way to attract them to your backyard.

Fall Birdfeeding Projects

1. Clean your feeders. Use a mild detergent solution and a stiff brush to get any caked-on seeds out of the feeders.
2. Clean up under the feeders if you use seeds with shells. Sunflower shells contaminate the soil and prevent grass and plants from growing if allowed to build up. Shell and bird droppings will also harbor mold and disease if allowed to build up.
3. Check your birdbath warmer. Concrete and ceramic birdbaths will crack if kept out in freezing weather. ■