



# Bird Bath

## Purpose

To provide animals, especially birds, with a safe watering point for drinking and bathing.

## Animals

Birds, potentially frogs and some mammals.

## Difficulty

Medium.

## Cost

\$55.00.

*Note: Citizen Scientists involved in the project will receive a discount on this item!*



## Purchase

The materials you need are available from Bunnings. You can search the product code on their website:

<https://www.bunnings.com.au/>.

To install your bird bath, you will need to purchase:

- Northcote Pottery 47 x 57cm Terracotta Cottaseal Bird Bath
  - Search product code (I/N): 2800745

## Equipment

Hose or watering can, water, one fist-sized rock.

## Positioning

- ✓ Ensure bird bath is placed on firm, level ground.
- ✓ Place bird bath under dappled shade to prevent algal growth in warm water.
- ✓ Place bird bath close to medium shrubs (within 2-3m from plants approximately 1-1.5m high). This will encourage birds to use the bath as they can view it from safety first. Additionally, planting or placing the bath near a 'prickly' plant species will provide protection for smaller birds.
- ✗ Avoid putting the bath within 3m of structures that a cat can reach and stalk birds (e.g. avoid placement next to large tree branches and solid fences).
- ✗ Avoid placing directly under trees that drop leaves regularly (e.g. deciduous trees) to prevent the bath filling with leaves.

**NOTE (Urban Possums Project Addition):** Possums and other tree dwelling mammals will visit water containers located in the high in the forks of tree branches or on a platform near the trunk of a tree. Locating water in the canopy can provide a safe place for mammals to drink without risking an incident between a possum and the family cat or dog.

# Bird Bath

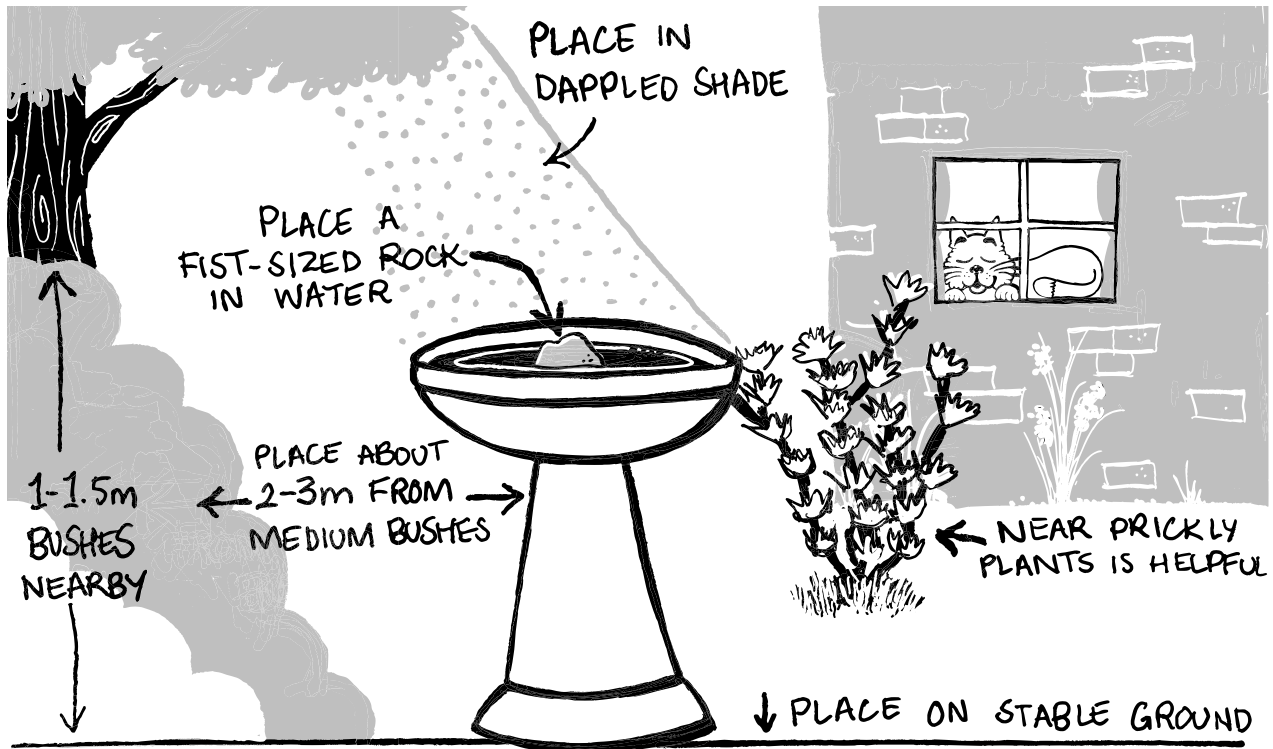


Figure 4: Tips for positioning your bird bath.

## Installation

1. Once you've picked the location for your bird bath, push the pedestal base of the bath into the earth and check it is level and not wobbling. If you are concerned about the bath tipping, you can secure it further by hammering a short star picket into the ground and then placing the pedestal over it.
2. Fit the bowl onto the pedestal.
3. Fill the bath with water.
4. Place one fist-sized rock in the middle of the bird bath to provide an additional perching spot and exit location for animals using your bird bath.

## Tips

- Ensure that the bird bath is regularly topped up with fresh water. Depending on the season and rainfall, this is normally 2 to 3 times a week. However, in summer this may be as frequently as every day.
- Keep the bath clean. Clean the bath approximately once a week with a scrubbing brush and clean water (no soap). Cleaning the bath each week will also help prevent the spread of bird diseases, breeding of mosquitoes, or algae growth.
- Do not use household cleaners to clean your bird bath as this may be toxic to animals that come to drink. Calcium build-up can be removed by soaking with dilute vinegar for a few hours and then rinsing thoroughly.

# Why This Design?



Figure 5: Recommended bird bath available to purchase from Bunnings: a terra cotta pedestal bird bath.



Pedestal-style bird baths are **elevated** and provide good predator protection while being easy to set up.

**Shallow bowls** are preferred by birds for bathing and will allow birds and other animals to enter and exit the bath easily. This also minimises the risk of drownings.

**Terra cotta** provides some grip which can help birds enter and exit the bath compared to more slippery plastic or ceramic styles.

Terra cotta is **heavier** than plastics so is less likely to fall over in strong winds.