



Bird-Sit Tips and Tricks:



Become a Deer:

Birds and deer coexist peacefully in the ecosystem. Deer have large ears that they can tilt to enhance their hearing... they also have eyes on the sides of their head so that they have a better view all around them. This is because they have lots of predators to watch out for. As we know, the birds are always on alert for predators as well. The birds know that the deer is an herbivore, looking simply to graze on plants, who means them no harm. The deer use their excellent hearing to listen to the birds...that way they will know a predator is coming with plenty of time to escape. Here are some ways you can make yourself more like a deer.

- **Bring a snack to your sit spot:** When the birds see that you have your own food to nibble on, they will realize that you are less of a threat. Imagine the difference between a cat slowly stalking up towards a bird, or a cat sitting and lazily enjoying a bowl of food. Which would you rather see if you were a bird? Choose any snack that you will enjoy and that you can eat slowly. My personal favorite sit-spot snack are carrots, because the crunch they make ensures the birds will hear the sound and see that you are eating something else!
- **Invisibility Cloak / Low Profile:** Before walking out to your sit spot, I suggest taking a few minutes to put on an “invisibility cloak.” As humans, we have various moods, also known as a state of mind. Sometimes you are in a hurry, or feeling stressed, and this creates a high profile in nature because it makes the birds feel more nervous about you. Other times, you may be happy but have a very busy mind with lots of thoughts. That creates a medium profile. With effort, you can have a calm, peaceful mind, creating a low profile. One way to do this is to spend a few minutes thinking of things you are grateful for. You can think about those things, write about them, or tell someone in your family the things that you are thankful for. Another way to get a relaxed and peaceful mind is to step outside, and spend a little bit of time using each of your senses one at a time. Start by closing your eyes and take a deep, slow breath in through your nose. How does the air smell? Moving on to taste, does the air taste moist, or dry? For feeling, try to feel your feet being held up by the ground. Perhaps you can feel the dirt or the plants around you. Activate your hearing... see if you can notice the loudest noise, and then the quietest. Very last, you can slowly open your eyes, and try to remain as relaxed as you can.
- **Frequency is Key:** If you’ve ever fed the birds where you live, you may have noticed, whenever you put a new bird feeder out, it often takes the birds a week or so before they will touch the bird feeder.... Even if they are hungry! If you are a bird, something as seemingly welcoming as a new bird feeder can appear to be a predator until you have had enough time to observe and come to the conclusion that the bird feeder is not going to eat you. The same goes for humans in their environment. Birds won’t come near until they trust you... but the more frequently you go to your sit spot, the longer the birds will have to build trust that neither you, nor the bird feeder, will eat them.