

Chilli Con Carnage For Squirrels

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Gardeners being driven nuts by squirrels have a new secret weapon in their armoury - chilli powder.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds says the spice is a safe and effective way to keep grey squirrels away from nuts and seeds, without harming garden birds.

Dusting a small amount on seed and suet mixes in feeders and on bird tables appears to have no effect on the birds, but stops the squirrels helping themselves, the charity said.

The RSPB says the chilli powder should be put in a bag with seed mix and shaken up.

And if householders do not have any chilli powder to hand, curry powder, Tabasco, or peri-peri sauce will all do the trick.

But it may just be another false glimmer of hope for weary gardeners. The animals have learnt to jump over squirrel-proof obstacles, defy sonic barriers, and even lion dung.

Lloyd Scott, RSPB wildlife adviser, said: "Using chilli powder to deter squirrels is a cheap, easy and effective solution.

"Squirrels can consume large amounts of peanuts and seeds and quite frequently destroy bird feeders in the process.

"Chilli powder will stop them helping themselves but doesn't seem to have any effect on birds at all.

"This is much simpler than erecting barriers and trying to prevent access to feeders for squirrels - they are nimble, clever animals and will usually find a way in anyway."

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