



by Cindy Steele

Welcome to our first installment of Puddle's Craft Corner! Have you missed bringing the kids out to Hagerman for a fun nature activity? We sure have missed seeing all the excited faces ready to learn about nature and have a great time! Since we haven't been able to host any activities at the refuge due to the pandemic, we want to give you some monthly ideas for nature activities that can be done with mostly things found around the house and outside in nature. And, it just might get them excited about nature and learn a little bit, too.

The blue goose is the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System. It has been used on refuge boundary markers, entrance signs, brochures, and exhibits since 1936. Puddles, the Blue Goose, is the official mascot of the refuge system and Puddles loves to make appearances at special events, festivals, and refuge programs, especially when kids and fun activities are involved! Puddles' love for doing crafts and activities with kids makes him a perfect host for this newsletter feature. So, as Puddles would say, "Let's get started!"

It's March and now is the perfect time to help out our birds as they wait for spring. Your local wild birds will surely thank you for taking the time to make a bird feeder especially for them. It's a simple craft that is easy and fun for kids of all ages, especially preschoolers.

Although there are tons of different beautiful store-bought bird feeders, it's so exciting for kids to make their own and find that special tree to hang it on. Their excitement continues as they watch to see when the birds will discover their treat. The kids will love trying to identify the different birds.

Ice Cream Cone Bird Feeder

Materials

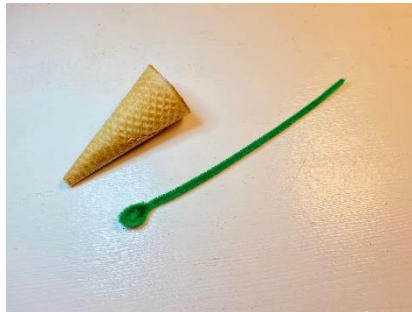
- 1 Sugar Cone
- 1 Cup Bird Seed
- 1/4 Cup Peanut Butter (I used 100% natural peanut butter)
- 1 Chenille Stem
- Table Knife

Instructions

1. Gather all of your supplies.



2. Cut the tip off an ice cream cone with your fingers or a knife. Next, make a large knot on one end of your chenille stem. Thread the chenille stem through the hole in the tip and tie a loop at the top end so you can hang your bird feeder on a limb.



3. Cover the outside of the cone in peanut butter.



4. Roll the cone around in bird seed until it is completely covered. Use your hands to add bird seed to gaps or uncovered areas.



5. Your bird feeder is complete and ready to hang outside for the birds!



See you next month for another nature craft with Puddles!