

BEAT THE HEAT

Bird & bee sanctuary

Create a birdbath with a natural sandstone paint effect.

Words and styling Sarah Heeringa. Photography Amanda Reelick

Birds and bees need fresh water to drink to stay healthy, and birds also need water to help stay cool and to preen themselves. The late summer months can be tough for birds and bees when there are few natural water sources available.

Using a few upcycled items together with a special Resene paint, you can create a birdbath that will help your garden be more bird- and bee-friendly, as well as looking fantastic.

Resene Sandtex is a tough waterborne acrylic finish that is ideal for covering imperfect surfaces, protecting and enhancing any outdoor structures, and for creating a classic textured Mediterranean look. Resene Sandtex can be tinted to a muted shade such as Resene Quarter Napa or Resene Eighth Stonewall (used here) to create a natural sandstone effect.

You will need • 4-6 ceramic, metal or terracotta pots and saucers, plates, platters, bowls, shallow dishes or fluted glasses • Resene Sandtex tinted in a colour of your choice • strong adhesive suitable for ceramics • medium-sized paintbrush • Resene Aquapel & Terracotta Sealer • small dropcloth or scrap paper

A good host

- Keep the water level low (about 5cm or less). Birds like shallow water to splash about in and bees can drown easily, so add a handful of pebbles for visual effect and to make the birdbath safer for them.

- The ideal birdbath location is out of direct sunshine (to keep the water cool and save it from evaporating) and with some protective cover nearby, providing the birds a safe way to approach the bath, and somewhere to flee to if cats are prowling about.

- Avoid spreading disease between birds by keep the your birdbath clean. Scrub out any algae that forms and top up with fresh water.

- Rinse paint brushes in an inside sink, or onto the lawn away from protected trees, vegetable gardens or stormwater drains.

Step-by-step

Collect assorted small terracotta pots and saucers, or any unwanted or chipped plates, platters and bowls. Shallow metal dishes also work well.

Most natural sources of water for birds are on or near the ground, so keep your structure low. Choose a platter or plate as a sturdy base and a wide shallow dish for holding the water. Glue the items together using strong glue (don't worry about any dribbles, it will add to the textured effect) and allow to fully dry.

If using a terracotta vessel as your water dish, first seal the inside of it using Resene Aquapel & Terracotta Sealer. Saturate the surface, ensuring the treatment fully penetrates the base and sides. Allow to fully dry, then rinse with water before filling with water.

Paint the outer surface of your birdbath with a thick, dribbly coat of Resene Sandtex. I used Resene Eighth Stonewall for a natural sandstone look. Allow to dry before filling with water. **g**



Sarah is a contributing editor for Good and author of two books. Her latest title is *Upcycling With Style*.

@reclaim_that
sarahheeringa.com



Collect assorted vessels, assemble into a structure and glue together using a strong glue.



Seal the inside of terracotta vessels with Resene Aquapel & Terracotta Sealer before using for water.



Paint the outside of the bird bath with Resene Sandtex tinted in a colour of your choice.



Top tip

Every few years, empty and clean the bird bath then re-apply Resene Aquapel & Terracotta Sealer. Allow to fully dry then give a quick rinse with water before filling with water.

Resene

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