



Marvellous Aunt Maneka

Aunt Maneka is an environmentalist, a Minister of State, and an animal lover. She is here to answer all your questions on animals and birds so that you can take better care of the animals around you and be a better friend of nature.

Q. I have bird feeders in my garden but the squirrels keep taking away all the food. What should I do?

Natasha Deboo, 12 years, Pune

Dear Natasha,

A. Squirrel-proof birdfeeders are available. These feeders are covered by a metal cage that allows the birds to get through, but not the squirrels. If your bird feeders are sitting on wood posts, consider changing them to a metal or PVC pole. These materials make it hard for the squirrels to climb. For added protection, grease the pole with vegetable oil to make it slippery.



Q. Can dogs get sunburn? What should I do to prevent and treat it?

Dharmendra Jore, 12 years, Nagpur

Dear Dharmendra,

A. Yes, just like us, dogs can get sunburn. Dogs that are most likely to suffer from sunburn are those that are white, hairless, fine-haired or have light-coloured fur. You can reduce the risk of sunburn and skin cancer in dogs by applying sunscreen on them. Apply sunscreen on your

dog before it goes outside—especially if it will be spending a lot of time out in the sun. It should be applied on your dog's nose, belly, ears, and groin—any spot that is normally pink in colour. Avoid applying it around the eyes. If possible, keep your dog indoors from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. as this is the hottest part of day. If your dog is in the backyard or in the garden for long periods of time, make sure to provide some shade. If your dog does happen to become sunburned, applying pure aloe vera gel is the best way to quickly and easily soothe its skin.



If you have questions about pets/animals/birds, write to us and we'll ask Aunt Maneka to answer.

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