

Bird-Friendly Pumpkin Bran Muffins

Share this recipe with your bird and family this holiday season.

By Crystal Apilado

Holiday feasts are just around the corner, are you prepared? BIRD TALK editors took this holiday favorite and gave it a healthy makeover, making it less fattening and bird-friendly.

Recipe Ingredients

12-cup sugar-free applesauce
12-cup all-bran cereal
1 1/2-cups whole-wheat flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2-teaspoon baking soda
1 1/2-cups canned pumpkin
1 egg, beaten
1/4-teaspoon ground ginger
1/4-teaspoon ground cloves
1 1/4-teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1-cup cranberries
1 banana, mashed
Plain pumpkin seeds (optional)

Preparation

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit
Blend all-bran cereal and applesauce together in a large bowl. Set aside for 5 minutes to allow the cereal to soften
Mix the flour, baking powder and baking soda in another bowl
Add canned pumpkin, egg, ground ginger, ground cloves, ground cinnamon, vanilla extract, cranberries and mashed banana into the cereal-applesauce mixture
Fold in the dry mixture. Make sure to blend it in, don't over mix. The batter should be lumpy. (Over-mixing the batter will make it tough.)
Spoon 1/3 cup of the batter into muffin cups
Top each with three to four plain pumpkin seeds on top for decoration
Bake for 20 to 25 minutes (depending on how hot your stove cooks). Cool muffins on a wire rack for three minutes before you remove them from the muffin pan

How We Made It Bird-Friendly

We removed the sugar and the milk from the original recipe. We used cranberries and banana as natural sweeteners, the amounts of which you can adjust depending on your preferred sweetness levels. Experiment with other natural sweeteners like apples or blueberries. You can also substitute 1 1/4-teaspoons of pumpkin pie spice in place of the ground ginger, ground cloves and ground cinnamon. Sugar-free applesauce was used instead of milk to add moisture and additional sweetness to the recipe.