HOW-TO-DO ACTIVITY- BIRD BEAK BUFFET
BIRD BEAK BUFFET FOOD

Hazelnuts
These native nuts are also called filberts and are available at most grocery stores. Nuts are available with or without shells. Generally the nut without shell works best. Make sure that the clothespins to be used as ‘beaks’ will open wide enough to pick up the nut. Ideally the forceps used as robins beaks will not open as wide as the clothespins, thus limiting the ‘beak’ types that work with this food.

If setting up the stations ahead of time, make sure to cover container so that squirrels and birds do not make off with this very real and favorite food.

Worms
These can be made from thick yarn or other ‘wormlike’ material cut to about 4” long. Avoid the plastic worms available at sports supplies; they are very unpleasant to smell. Specialty hobby stores may carry useable fake worms.

While forceps and clothespins are the intended ‘beak’ for this ‘food’, children will quickly realize they can scoop the worms with their plastic pipettes. During the activity you might need to point out that scooping does not get the worm into the ‘beak mouth’ and therefore the worm is not really ‘eaten’.

Flowers
Flowers are easily made using plastic test tubes. Pipe cleaner stems let them hang from branches. An added touch is the addition of petals. Using the petals pattern, cut felt, paper, or plastic cloth. Then wrap and tape the petals around the throat of the test tube.

Flower nectar can simply be water, or water dyed red with food dye. Be sure to have extra water to refill test tubes as they are emptied or spilled. Place test tubes along trail, wrapping them around branches low enough for students to reach.

Five-petal flowers can represent many native plant species including wild rose, salmonberry, dewberry, bitter cherry and black hawthorn all of which are favorite nectar flowers for hummingbirds.

Bugs
Plastic bugs, especially spiders, are often readily available at stores around Halloween. Place ‘bugs’ on blocks of wood or stones. For long term use, a block of wood can be drilled with numerous holes to ‘hide’ bugs and making forceps ‘beaks’ necessary.

Forceps are the best ‘beak’ for this activity, though clothespins are also a usable ‘beak’ and represent the diversity of ways beaks are used in food gathering.