

Jim is a push-over when it comes to his birds. In fact, he warms bread and buns in the micro so "the children" get a nice soft meal in their birdfeeders (along with a steady supply of birdseed.) They wait in the bushes for him to spread out the goodies for them, and then they descend in force.

This evening Jim called me to peek out the window at a bread-snatcher. Mr. Squirrel was trying his utmost to get at those two feeders. He had climbed up in the tree branches and would jump to the feeder roofs. Each time he landed on the roof, he slid off and landed on the ground. He immediately scampered up the tree to try again. This went on 5 or 6 times.

At last he gingerly climbed down the wire and was perfectly balanced on one of the roofs. Ah, almost success! Carefully he stretched over the roof edge to get at the gold mine of bread scraps just beneath him. Oh, no! He lost his balance and went down head first, legs and tail flailing as he dropped. He landed in a heap on his head. For a few moments he just lay there. Slowly he shook the cobwebs out of his pea-size brain and staggered like a drunk across the street, tail angrily twitching.

I'm thinking he was not the friendliest companion for his squirrel family and friends the rest of the evening. I'm also wondering if he is a descendent of the squirrel that got the treatment when he climbed over the electric-fence-protected feeder many years ago. (See the story, "Electric Fences" for more about the squirrel episode.)

This morning Mr. Squirrel was back for more action. You could tell he had an attitude because he threw caution to the wind and made one desperate leap for the feeder pan. Same result! He barreled away and we haven't seen him since.

Do you hear Jim chuckling?

