

PRESS RELEASE

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**RESEARCH
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WBFI Research Foundation launches one million dollar feed and feeder preferences study.

Sioux Falls, SD - Which wild bird feed attracts more birds?

That's the question the WBFI Research Foundation seeks to answer throughout a three year, one million dollar study, aptly named *PROJECT WILDBIRD*.

This landmark study is an unprecedented scientific investigation into the feeding habits of wild birds across the United States and Canada. Comprehensive research data generated by the study will provide invaluable insight and guidelines for consumers regarding wild bird feed and feeder-type preferences during all seasons of the year in 13 eco-regions.

A United States Government survey conducted in 2001 reported that 54 million Americans spend over \$3 billion annually feeding wild birds and other wildlife. With wild bird feeding and watching one of the fastest growing hobbies in North America, consumers simply want to know which feed attracts preferred species.

"In order to determine which feed attracts more birds, we must also look at the various feeder styles, geographical location and seasonal influences," according to George Petrides, Sr., Project Leader for the study. "What draws birds to one feeder location in Virginia may not offer the same results for feeders in Colorado."

PROJECT WILDBIRD is a two-phase scientific study, and began September 22.

"The observational approach provides a snapshot of the birds that visit one's backyard," according to Dr. David J. Horn, Ph.D, Principal Investigator for the study. "It's an ideal way for backyard birders to participate in the study, while continuing to enjoy feeding and watching birds as they normally do."

In the second phase, or experimental approach, participants will be given feed and feeders and asked to monitor birds at feeders in a more structured manner. "The experimental approach will allow us to answer important questions about feed and feeder preferences of wild birds using a more controlled approach," stated Horn.

"At the conclusion of this study in 2008, we'll have definitive answers to these questions: what are the feed and feeder preferences of wild birds, and are those preferences the same across different regions and through various seasons?"

"These are extremely important questions that consumers want answered. They want to reduce wasted feed, and purchase those products that attract more birds," stated Dick Hebert, President of the WBFI Research Foundation.

For more information on participating or contributing to *PROJECT WILDBIRD* visit www.projectwildbird.org .