

PRESS RELEASE

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Frigid weather in Mid-Atlantic states no deterrent to study of wild bird feed and feeder preferences

Sioux Falls, SD - The WBFI Research Foundation continues its three year, one million dollar study into the feed and feeder preferences of wild birds.

PROJECT WILDBIRD is a two-phase scientific study consisting of both observational and experimental research. The observational phase began in September of 2005 and offers backyard birders throughout the United States and Canada the opportunity to participate in the study.

"The first phase, or observational approach, is proving successful," according to Dr. David J. Horn, Ph.D, Assistant Professor of Biology at Millikin University and Principal Investigator for the study. "We've had a very positive response from all participants and are currently collecting data from our observers."

While it's too soon to identify which feeds or feeders birds in the observational approach prefer, the study will gain additional momentum with the launch of the experimental phase, which began in December of 2005.

"The frigid weather in the Mid-Atlantic region will not have a negative impact on the study," stated Dr. Jeff Brawn, Associate Professor at the University of Illinois and Scientific Consultant to *PROJECT WILDBIRD*. "Wild birds are efficient foragers and their preferences for food under different conditions will be very informative. The observational and experimental phases of the study will provide valuable data, and it is great to have the public involved."

Schools, birding organizations and individuals are encouraged to participate in the experimental phase. "Initially, we'll focus on the states of Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia and West Virginia. Participants will be provided with feed and feeders, as well as the study requirements," stated George Petrides, Sr., of Wild Bird Centers of America and Project Leader of the study.

The WBFI Research Foundation is receiving tremendous support for this study from manufacturers, packagers, and distributors of birdfeeding products.

All feed needed for the first year of the study has been donated by D&D Commodities and Anderson Seed Company. Feeders have been provided by ArtLine, Backyard Nature Products, Cabin Fever, Droll Yankees, Heath Outdoor Products, Heritage Farms, Vari-Craft and Woodstream. Poles, shepherd's hooks and baffles have been donated by Erva. NovaBird provided digital cameras for the experimental approach, and percevia.com is helping participants in the bird identification process by offering access to its software (whatbird.projectwildbird.org).

In addition to those items donated to *PROJECT WILDBIRD*, many of the bird feeding industry's leading companies are providing financial support.

"The generosity and support of these industry leaders is unparalleled," stated Dick Hebert, President of the WBFI Research Foundation. "Consumers want to know which feed and feeders wild birds prefer. *PROJECT WILDBIRD* will help them purchase products proven to reduce waste, attract more birds, and increase the pleasure of their bird feeding experience."

To participate in the experimental phase, visit www.projectwildbird.org/exp. Additional information and contributor information is available at www.projectwildbird.org.