



CANADIAN  
WILDLIFE HEALTH  
COOPERATIVE

## BACKYARD BIRDS

CREATING A WORLD  
THAT IS SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE  
FOR WILDLIFE AND SOCIETY

### Maintaining A HEALTHY PRESENCE

Many Canadians enjoy the presence of wild birds in their yards, and feeders and baths help attract birds in large numbers. However, bird feeders and baths are potential transmission sites for communicable diseases. Wild birds are susceptible to a variety of infectious diseases [e.g. mycoplasmosis, trichomonosis, etc.], including ones that pose serious health risks to people and/or domestic animals [i.e. *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Campylobacter*]. Therefore, precautions should be taken to ensure the health of backyard birds and other wildlife, domestic animals, and people.

### Care, PREVENTION, & REPORTING

The following precautions can be used to help reduce the risk of transmitting most common diseases of backyard birds:

- During outbreaks remove bird feeders and baths for the duration of the potential transmission period.
- Regularly disinfect feeders and baths using a weak solution of domestic bleach [10% sodium hypochlorite]. Feeders should be rinsed and dried before re-use.
- Use bird feeders that keep food dry and ensure bird baths contain clean water.
- Brushes and equipment used to clean bird feeders and baths should not be used for any other purpose. Keep them outside and away from food preparation areas.
- Wear rubber gloves when cleaning feeders and thoroughly wash hands and forearms afterwards with soap and water, especially before eating and drinking. Avoid handling sick or dead birds directly.

The CWHC relies on reports from the public and our partners to assist our surveillance efforts. This surveillance allows us to inform the public and government agencies of any significant outbreaks in order to help reduce the risk of further transmission of these diseases. Report any sick or dead birds to the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative. Find your closest regional centre at: <http://www.cwhc-rccsf.ca/>

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