

2019–20 Project FeederWatch

End-of-Season News Note

Thank you for another successful FeederWatch season! See inside this letter to read about an increase in Ruby-crowned Kinglet reports, the FeederWatch app, and an injured Red-bellied Woodpecker who recovered, perhaps thanks to a participant's feeders. As we begin to analyze the data from this past season, you can see initial results in the Explore Data section of our website. Look for more details in *Winter Bird Highlights*, published in the fall.

Time to renew

Please take a moment to renew your participation for next season. With each additional year in the project, your counts become more valuable to researchers studying the distribution and abundance of feeder birds. Thank you for your continued support. **Please renew your FeederWatch membership today by following the instructions on the back page of this letter.**

Why renew so early?

Renewing now will allow us to save paper on future reminders and will help us better plan for the upcoming season. FeederWatch is supported almost entirely by you, the participants, and renewing early helps us keep our expenses low and make the most of your financial support.

Save paper—skip the kit

All renewing participants receive a kit with a calendar and *Winter Bird Highlights* unless you choose the option to save paper.

If you would like to forego the kit:

- ◆ Please **select the “Save paper” option** on the enclosed coupon or in our online store.
- ◆ Please **write down your ID number** (printed near your address on the renewal coupon) and save it.
- ◆ Please **note that next season starts on November 14.**
- ◆ Please **maintain your electronic newsletter subscription** to get the latest updates and reminders. **Otherwise, you may not receive any communication from Project FeederWatch.** If you think the newsletter may not be reaching you, subscribe by entering your email address in the “Sign up for our newsletter” form near the bottom of our home page or on the right side of any of our other web pages (there's no risk of double subscribing). Learn more about the newsletter on our website: feederwatch.org/about/enews-archive. Note that spam blockers may prevent you from receiving this newsletter. Set your spam filter to allow email from feederwatch@cornell.edu.



Submit your counts

If you have already submitted your counts, thank you! If you still have counts to report, please submit your data today. Counts reported by the end of May will be included in this fall's *Winter Bird Highlights*.



FeederWatcher's feeders help injured bird

FeederWatch participant Gary Mueller, of Rolla, Missouri, wrote to us about a male Red-bellied Woodpecker with what appeared to be a massive injury to his belly and right leg. Gary observed the bird hanging on the suet feeder with his left leg to eat and then struggling to fly a very short distance to a nearby oak tree where Gary watched him cling there for several minutes only moving to adjust his grip. The woodpecker returned to the feeder by way of Gary's deck railing, which held the post the feeder was attached to. Gary wrote, "Seeing the severity of his injuries and his severely impaired performance, I was convinced that this woodpecker would not last 48 hours and that I would find him on the ground or never see him again."



GARY MUELLER (2)

Injured Red-bellied Woodpecker before (left) and after (right) several months of recovery.

Fortunately, Gary had underestimated the woodpecker, which visited Gary's feeders daily as his injuries began to heal. Eventually he began to fly directly to the suet feeder and back to the oak tree, and he gradually developed the ability to maneuver around the tree. Although he never recovered the use of his right leg, after many months, the woodpecker was mostly back to normal and looked healthy. He even started success-

fully competing with other birds at the feeders, and he started caching seeds and nuts in trees throughout Gary's yard.

Gary wrote, "I am convinced that there is no way this bird could have found enough food to overcome such a devastating injury. In my opinion, the presence of supplementary food is the reason this woodpecker was able to recover and eventually thrive."

A tiny suet visitor is on the rise



YOGI MILLER

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

In the wake of recent research showing that many bird species are in decline in North America (3 billion birds lost since 1970, published in *Science*, Sept. 2019), we are always glad to learn about some species that are doing well. We dove into FeederWatch data to check on one of the smallest North American passerines and were happy to see that they are thriving. Ruby-crowned Kinglets are an energetic species that flit around backyards and sometimes visit suet feeders, especially in winter. Their tendency to use backyard habitat and their willingness to eat suet probably helps them persist.

FeederWatch launched a mobile app!

FeederWatch participants can now choose how they want to keep track of their counts. If you love keeping track of your counts on paper and then transferring them to our website when your two-day count is over, you are welcome to continue doing that. If you would prefer to keep track of your counts on your mobile device and automatically upload them to our website, we now have an app that allows you to do that instead. The FeederWatch app is available for both Apple and Android mobile devices.

What you will find in the app

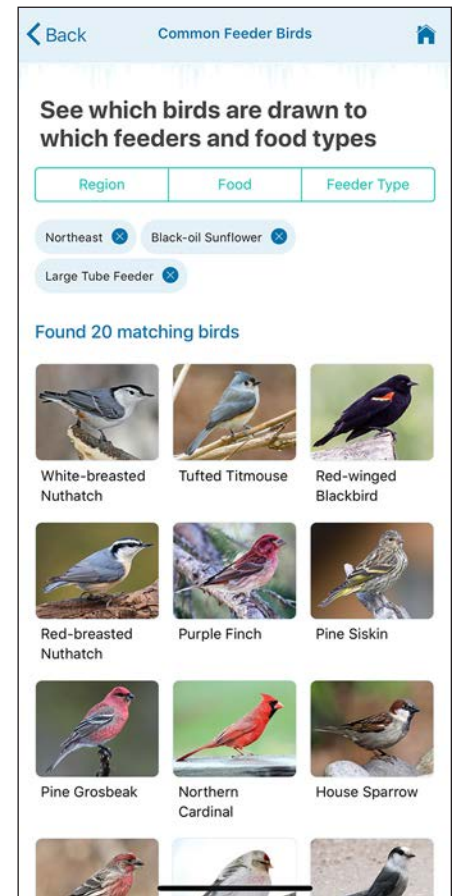
The app is more than just a tool for tallying counts and submitting data. You can access FeederWatch's common feeder birds interactive tool at the bottom of the app's home page. Use the tool to see which birds prefer which foods in any region of the U.S. or Canada. And the app is connected to the Cornell Lab's All About Birds online guide. You can press and hold any species image to see detailed information about that species, including photos, identification tips, natural history, and a range map.

Tips for using the app

- ◆ **You must be connected to the Internet** to use the app. If you become disconnected, the app will lock until the connection is restored.
- ◆ You need to have **iOS 9** (Sept. 2015) or higher or **Android 6** (Marshmallow, 2015) or higher to use the app.

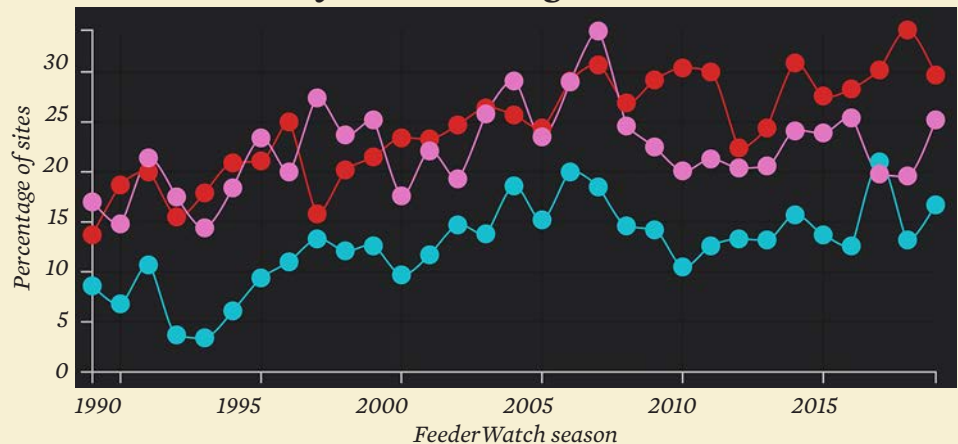
Learn more and download the app

Find more information about the app, and find links to the app in the Apple Store and Google Play on our website at feederwatch.org/about/feederwatch-app.



You can spot them in your yard by looking for tiny, active birds that are olive green with a white wing bar and bright broken eyering. If you are lucky, you might even see one raise its ruby crest! You can help birds like Ruby-crowned Kinglets by maintaining a bird-friendly backyard, which means not using pesticides (weeds and insects are good for wildlife), encouraging native plants, and providing a fresh water source. Suet is an added bonus that will bring them out of the shrubs and give you a better view.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet trends



Percentage of FeederWatch sites visited by Ruby-crowned Kinglets since 1989 in the Southwest (pink), the Southeast (red), and the Northwest (blue).



Three easy steps for renewing your FeederWatch participation

Step 1. Select a renewal option

- ◆ **Send me the calendar and *Winter Bird Highlights*.** With this option we will send you a letter, *Winter Bird Highlights*, and a Bird-Watching Days calendar in the fall.
- ◆ **Save paper—I do not need a calendar or a print copy of *Winter Bird Highlights*.** With this option, we will send a message with a link to a PDF of *Winter Bird Highlights* in the fall to the email address printed on the renewal coupon. Please use the provided line on the coupon or contact us by phone or email to correct your email address if needed. We recommend that you **keep track of your ID number** (printed near your address on the enclosed coupon) and **maintain your eNews subscription** (see electronic newsletter information on the front page of this letter).

Note: Renewing FeederWatchers do not receive the FeederWatch Handbook & Instructions or the Common Feeder Birds poster, so be sure to save them from your first kit.

Step 2. Send \$18 (\$15 for Lab members) annual fee

- ◆ **Over the Internet.** Sign up using a credit card (VISA, Mastercard, DISCOVER, or American Express) over our secure server at feederwatch.org by clicking on the **Join or Renew button** on our home page.
- ◆ **By mail.** Indicate your renewal option on the enclosed renewal coupon and return the coupon with your personal check or credit card information in the enclosed envelope.

Note: A tax-deductible contribution to FeederWatch above your \$18 renewal fee will help fund bird research and conservation at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Thanks for your support!

Step 3. Renew today!

Your early renewal helps us plan how many kits to print and saves on the cost of sending future reminders. We transfer the savings into research, project improvements, and keeping the participation fee low.

The **Cornell** Lab  of Ornithology
Project FeederWatch

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