



2024–25 Project FeederWatch

End-of-Season News Note

Thank you for being part of the 38th FeederWatch season! *See inside this letter to read the latest FeederWatch news and more.* As we begin to analyze the data from this past season, you can see initial results in the Explore section of our website. Look for more details in *Winter Bird Highlights*, which will be emailed to all participants 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 birds and mammals. 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?

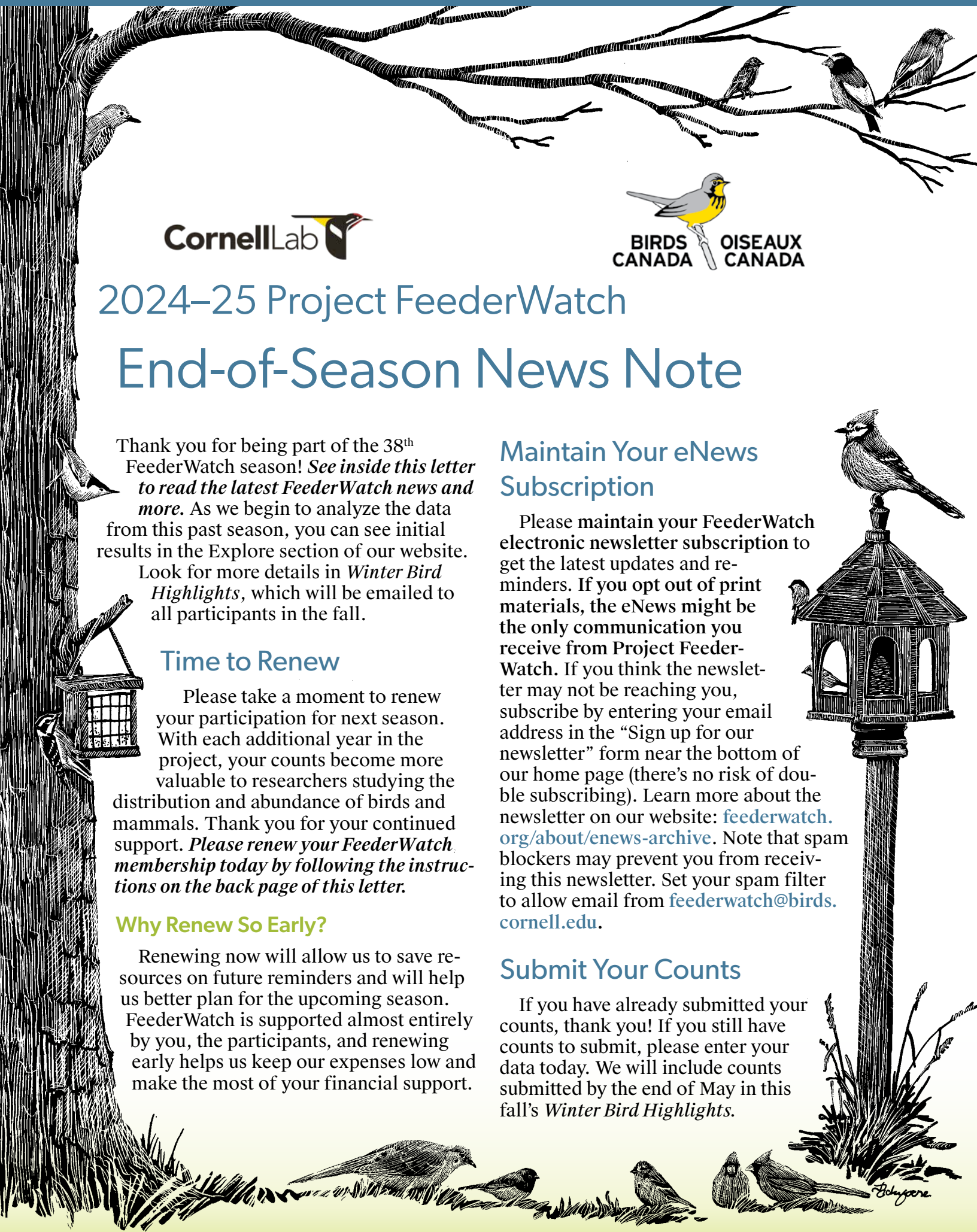
Renewing now will allow us to save resources on future reminders and will help us better plan for the upcoming season. FeederWatch is supported almost entirely by you, the participants, and renewing early helps us keep our expenses low and make the most of your financial support.

Maintain Your eNews Subscription

Please maintain your FeederWatch electronic newsletter subscription to get the latest updates and reminders. If you opt out of print materials, the eNews might be the only communication you receive 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 (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@birds.cornell.edu.

Submit Your Counts

If you have already submitted your counts, thank you! If you still have counts to submit, please enter your data today. We will include counts submitted by the end of May in this fall’s *Winter Bird Highlights*.



Grant-Funded Research Updates

Emotional and Site-Management Data Collection Nearly Complete

For the past two seasons we have invited FeederWatch participants to report how they feel while FeederWatching, and how they change their count sites over time. We've also invited participants to complete pre- and post-season surveys and to participate in a variety of extra research projects. All of this research was

funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation designed to study how the practice of feeding birds affects both people and the birds. After this season ends in April, the data collection phase of this research will be complete, and we will stop asking questions

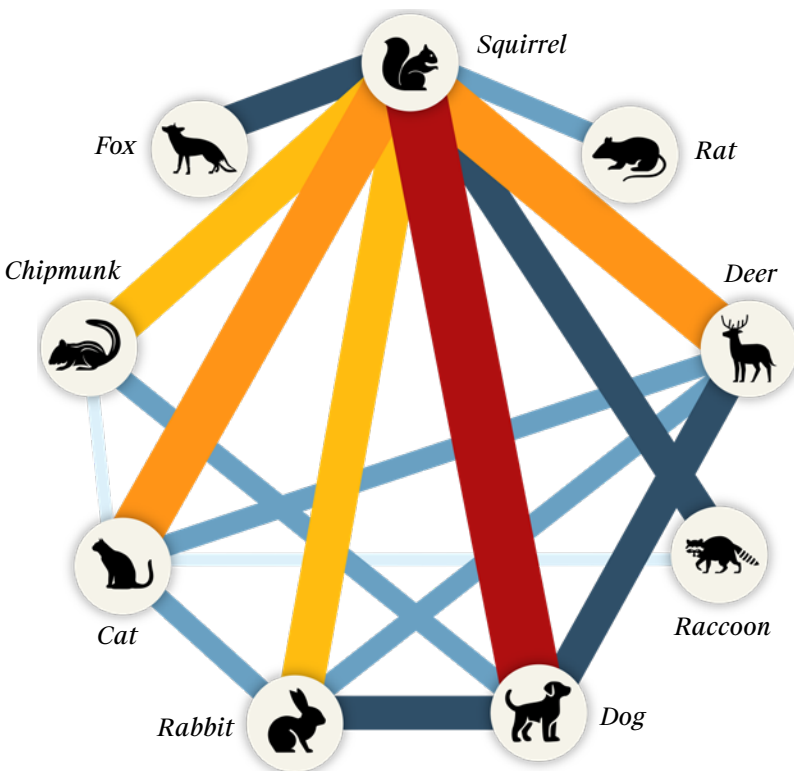
about emotions and site management. The research team will then shift their attention to pouring through the massive dataset and looking for patterns. We will share what we discover in upcoming eNews messages and issues of Winter Bird Highlights. We are excited to learn from all the data you have provided!

Mammals Are Here to Stay

While you will no longer be asked questions about emotions or site management next season, you will continue to have the option of telling us about the mammals you see and about sick and dead birds you observe during your counts. Of all the new data sections, reporting mammals has been the most popular. It will take

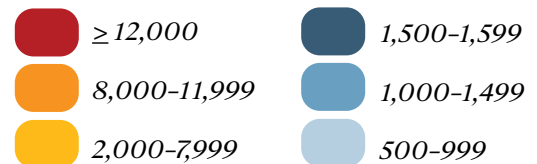
some time before we are able to assess long-term patterns from mammal data, but we are already finding interesting relationships. For example, the graphic below shows mammals frequently reported on the same counts with other mammals, allowing us to see which

species (or species groups) tend to be found at the same Feeder-Watch locations. Because squirrels are found at most sites, they are reported most frequently at the same locations as other mammals, while some other pairings are rarely reported together.



Chipmunk by FeederWatcher David Smith of Grand Junction, Colorado.

Number of reports that included both species or species groups



Mammals reported on the same counts with other mammals. The lines connecting species represent the number of times the two species were reported on the same checklists. While squirrels and cats were often reported on the same checklists (note the thick orange line connecting those species), cats and chipmunks were rarely reported together (less than 1,000 checklists in common). In order to improve readability, no lines are shown connecting species reported on the same checklists less than 500 times. Note that categories may lump multiple related species (e.g., "squirrels" includes all squirrel species).

FeederWatcher Tips for Improving Habitat for Birds

You may offer a variety of bird seed in your count site, but do you offer water? Just like us, birds need water to survive. They use water for drinking and bathing, as many FeederWatch participants have observed at water features in their own yards. By providing a water feature, you not only improve your habitat for wildlife, but you may also attract more birds to your yard.

FeederWatch participant Judy McCord told us, “The best thing I’ve done is provide a birdbath with year-round moving water. I keep an eye on the water feature and frequently see birds on it that are attracted to the water. I’ve had a number of migrants over the years!”

When migrating, birds may need a lot of fuel for their flight, and it’s helpful to provide them with a place to drink and rest. To make your birdbath more attractive, you can provide dripping water, a bubbler, a fountain, or a pump that creates movement in the water. Birds tend to prefer ground-level, shallow water features that have a natural appearance, so consider arranging stones in the water or branches around the bath for birds to perch on while they drink.

Offering places where birds can seek protection from predators is also important. Providing habitat near your water feature, as participant Kathleen Olson does, can help birds take cover when needed. “A third of my yard is kept wooded and wild with evergreen and maple trees and piles of brush and leaves for shelter,” Kathleen said. “I also have a birdbath and a big dog bowl that I



Birdbath surrounded by cover by Fran Rutkovsky in Tallahassee, Florida. Fran has been FeederWatching since 1999 and is featured on our website at feederwatch.org/community/featured-participants/fran-rutkovsky.

keep filled with water and heated in the winter. The water is a big draw, along with shrubs by my house and in the yard, which provide shelter and food.”

If you do decide to install a birdbath in your yard this spring, please note that it is important to maintain and clean it by changing water frequently and scrubbing off any build up of algae. We hope these tips help you improve your habitat, encouraging new species and more frequent visits from wildlife to your yard.

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Follow Project FeederWatch on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ProjectFeederWatch or on X (formerly Twitter) at [@FeederWatch](https://twitter.com/FeederWatch) for updates, fun feeder bird facts, bird ID trivia, and more! You can find links to our feeds at feederwatch.org/socialmedia.

Join or Renew at FeederWatch.org

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Blackburnian Warbler by Jonathan Iorns | ML581704891

Join or renew for the 39th season of Project FeederWatch!

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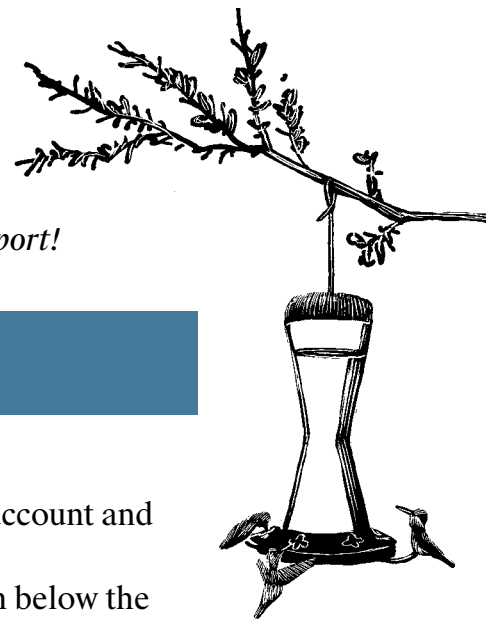
Renew Today

Note: A tax-deductible contribution to FeederWatch beyond your renewal fee will help fund bird research and education programs. Thank you for your support!

Renew Online

Sign Up at Join.FeederWatch.org

- ◆ Click the Sign-in link in the top right corner to log into your data entry account and automatically apply your payment to your account.
- ◆ Fill in any missing contact information and select a print material option below the address fields. Those who sign up online have the option of receiving a poster and calendar, a calendar, or no print materials.
- ◆ Enter a payment method and click the red button to sign up. Then on the Thank You page, follow the Complete Setup link to see your renewed status on the Your Data home page.
- ◆ Follow the link in the Thank You email you receive to learn about any additional benefits, like a discount to *Birds of the World*, only available to those who sign up online.



Renew by Mail

Fill Out the Enclosed Renewal Slip

Select a Print Material Option

- ◆ Please send a calendar. With this option we will send you a Bird-Watching Days calendar in the fall and a letter with a summary of our counting instructions.
- ◆ Save paper—please don't send any print materials. We recommend that you keep track of your ID number (printed near your address on the enclosed renewal slip) and maintain your eNews subscription (see electronic newsletter information on the front of this letter).

Select a Payment Method

Indicate how you would like to pay the \$18 annual renewal fee (\$15 for Lab members).

Return the renewal slip with your payment in the enclosed envelope.

Send the renewal slip, along with your check made out to Project Feeder-Watch or your credit card information, to us in the enclosed envelope, or mail them to Project FeederWatch, PO Box 37329, Boone IA 50037-0329.

Thank you for your support!

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159 Sapsucker Woods Rd, Ithaca NY 14850

