



How to Prevent the Spread of Salmonella in Birds

The disease *Salmonellosis* is a common cause of disease and death in wild birds. Bird feeders bring large numbers of birds into close contact with each other, which means diseases can spread quickly through multiple populations. Sick birds may be lethargic, puffed up and thin and may have swollen eyelids.

Please note: this form of *Salmonellosis* is not contagious to humans.

WildCare discourages the feeding of any wildlife. However, we recognize that millions of people love their birdfeeders! If you are feeding birds, you have a responsibility to the birds and local wildlife to follow the "intelligent feeding" guidelines as endorsed by WildCare, the Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (see preventative measures below.)

If You Have Dead or Sick Birds In Your Yard:

- Immediately REMOVE bird feeders and birdbaths.
- Disinfect feeders and baths with a bleach solution made of 9 parts water to 1 part bleach.
- Scrub well and allow to soak 10 - 20 minutes.
- Rinse very well and allow to dry.
- Do not rehang feeders or birdbaths for at least **one month** after the last sick or dead bird is seen in your yard.
- Resterilize and allow to dry before rehangng.
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If You Have Not Yet Seen Sick or Dead Birds:

Please take the following **preventative measures**. These measures should also be practiced as regularly scheduled maintenance to ensure healthy birds:

- Birdfeeders should be disinfected every two weeks regardless of disease outbreaks.
- Birdbaths should be emptied and cleaned **daily** regardless of disease outbreaks.
- **For feeders:** Do not use wood feeders. Immerse feeders in bleach solution (9 parts water to 1 part bleach.) Soak 10 minutes, scrub, rinse thoroughly and allow to dry fully before refilling (a dry feeder will deter mold growth on seeds).
- **For baths:** You can make a 9:1 bleach solution in a jug to bring outside. Scrub with a hard brush and soak for 10 – 20 minutes. Cover with board while soaking to prevent birds bathing in bleach, rinse very thoroughly, allow to dry before refilling.

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- **For hummingbird feeders:** NO BLEACH! Change food often. Clean and fill with only enough to last 1-2 days (sooner if gets cloudy/moldy). Use vinegar and water in a 9:1 solution (9 parts water to 1 part vinegar) and special bottle brushes to get into small holes. Rinse thoroughly!

Additional Tips

- Always wear gloves (latex or dishwashing) to keep bleach off your skin and a facemask to keep from accidentally ingesting feces, bleach, etc.
- Always keep a large tray under feeder to collect hulls/seed that fall. Empty discards every evening. This will prevent mold & disease for ground feeding birds and also prevent rodent infestations.
- Another suggestion to prevent wildlife problems (from rats, raccoons, skunks, etc.) is to bring feeders inside at night.