

**News from  
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**For Immediate Release: January 25, 2012  
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**2012 Lehigh Gap Area Feeder Watch  
Needs Volunteers**

The Lehigh Gap Nature Center will conduct its 16th annual Lehigh Gap Area Feeder Watch on the weekend of February 17-19, 2012. Seventy four volunteers participated in the 15th annual survey last February and sighted over 4,000 birds of 41 different species. Over 37,000 birds have been tallied in the fifteen years of counting.

The Feeder Watch is one of the long-term research projects of the Lehigh Gap Nature Center. Since birds are excellent indicators of environmental quality, a long-term study like the Feeder Watch may provide valuable data about environmental quality in the study area. It is important to have a large number of volunteers to gather enough data for the survey to be more accurate. Former participants will automatically be sent a packet for the 2012 survey, but additional feeder watchers are welcome and needed.

The objective of the Feeder Watch is to sample the numbers and species of birds visiting back-yard feeders on a particular winter day at as many feeders as possible in an area around Lehigh Gap. The results will be published by the Nature Center and distributed to local news media.

*The Feeder Watch survey is conducted by volunteers who live approximately within a 15-mile radius of Lehigh Gap.* Anyone in that geographic area with one or more bird feeders of any type in their yard, and who can identify the individual species of birds that visit the feeders, is invited to participate in the 2012 Feeder Watch. Volunteers are asked to spend a few hours throughout the day on February 17, 18, or 19 observing their feeders and recording any visitors. The Lehigh Gap Area Feeder Watch is an opportunity for back-yard bird watchers -- ordinary citizens -- to make a contribution to a scientific study.

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society started a similar project one year after the LGNC count began, and LGNC officials encourage their participants to submit their count data to Cornell's Great Backyard Bird Count as well as to LGNC.

Volunteers will receive a Feeder Watch data sheet and instructions via email or regular mail as requested. To volunteer, contact the Nature Center at 610-760-8889 or at *lgnc@ptd.net*, and provide your name, address, and phone number/email address and note that you are volunteering for the Feeder Watch program.

Lehigh Gap Nature Center is a member supported environmental education and wildlife conservation organization located at Lehigh Gap between Slatington and Palmerton, PA.

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