

House Finch Eye Disease

Be nice to the birds! House Finch eye disease is caused by bacteria that can accumulate on bird feeders when visited by sick finches. Birds with the disease have red, swollen, runny, or crusty eyes (conjunctivitis). In the worst cases, the eyes can swell shut and the bird becomes blind. You might observe an infected bird sitting quietly in your yard or clumsily scratching its eye with its foot or on its perch. Goldfinches, Grosbeaks, and Purple Finches are also commonly infected.

Doing these things can help minimize the risk of disease and makes you a bird-hero!

- Clean your feeders at least every month with diluted bleach solution. Rinse well and allow your feeders to dry completely before for recharging them.
- Consider using tube feeders that can be completely disassembled and washed. Use a diluted bleach solution in the sink or put them in the dishwasher.
- Keep the area under your feeder raked to remove droppings, and old, moldy seed.
- Space your feeders widely to discourage crowding among birds.
- If you see diseased birds, take your feeders down and clean them, then wait a few days before putting them back up. This will encourage the sick birds to disperse. (You can contact a wildlife rehabilitator for help with sick birds.)
- Our wildlife rehabilitators are Wildlife Vet Care (540-664-9494 or www.wildlifestvcare.com) or PVAS Wildlife Coordinator Diana Mullis (dianamullis@aol.com)

Find out even more at Feederwatch! <http://feederwatch.org/learn/house-finch-eye-disease/>

