



TN.gov Newsroom

[Home](#)

Songbird Deaths Attributed to Salmonella

Released on Thu, Feb 26, 2009 - 9:41 am under [Wildlife Resources](#)

MORRISTOWN, Tenn. --- A number of reports have come into Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency regional offices over the past few weeks about songbirds dying around feeders, according to TWRA officials.

"Region III and Region IV offices have had calls about dead birds in several counties," said Scott Dykes, TWRA non-game biologist. "Most affected are purple finches, pine siskins, and American goldfinches."

Some of the dead birds were sent to the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study Center (SCWDS) in Athens, Ga. for analysis.

"The results of the examination indicated that salmonella poisoning was the cause of death," said Dykes.

Salmonella bacteria are present in the gut of many wild and domestic birds and periods of stress can cause sickness or death.

"To try to narrow down the cause, we have collected bird seed samples from the affected areas to send to SCWDS for analysis as well," said Dykes

It is recommended that people maintaining bird feeders should periodically empty the feeders and thoroughly wash them in a solution of one part bleach and nine parts water. Any dead birds found around the feeders should be buried to help prevent disease spread to other wildlife. Individuals should wear rubber gloves when handling sick or dead birds.

The TWRA has four regions in the state. Region III consists of Bledsoe, Bradley, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Grundy, Hamilton, Jackson, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Morgan, Overton, Pickett, Polk, Putnam, Rhea, Roane, Sequatchie, Scott, Van Buren, Warren, and White counties.

Counties in TWRA's Region IV are Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon, Monroe, Sevier, Sullivan, Washington, Unicoi, and Union.

---TWRA---