



This is a Plain Language Statement and Consent Form for The Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study

Your Consent

You are invited to take part in the Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study! This Plain Language Statement and Consent Form contains detailed information about the Study. Its purpose is to explain to you as openly and clearly as possible all the steps involved in this study so that you can make a fully informed decision about whether you wish to participate. If you have questions about any information in the document please feel free to email the research team Dr Gráinne Cleary at g.cleary@deakin.edu.au, Dr Mike Weston at mike.weston@deakin.edu.au or Dr Kelly Miller at kelly.miller@deakin.edu.au. You can download this document as a PDF file to keep for your records.

Purpose and background to the Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study

We are conducting an on-line study which aims to examine garden bird feeding and watering across Australia. Providing food and water to birds is a popular activity for many people however little is known about what species are attracted to the resource and why people like to provide these resources to birds. We wish to investigate the motivations and perceptions of people who provide food and/or water in their gardens. We will also consider the different species of birds that are using bird-feeders/baths and how garden habits and behaviours may impact or influence the birds that visit. The survey period where we ask you to record what birds are visiting will run for four weeks and over two seasons. During the survey period (four weeks) you are asked to monitor and record what birds are visiting your bird bath for 20 minutes, 3 times a week.

Procedure for participation in the Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study

After reading this Statement you may choose to participate in the Study by completing your registration details (first name, last name, username and email address) on this website. **Your consent to participate in the study is implied by your decision to register to take part and ticking the box that says you have read this Plain Language Statement and Consent Form.** Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated and is completely voluntary. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you can withdraw from the study at any time. However, once data has been de-identified, it will no longer be possible to remove your specific records.

Once you have registered at www.feedingbirds.org.au or www.bathingbirds.org.au, you can set up the location of your birdbath/feeder and answer our survey questions regarding your garden and your interactions with birds. If there are any questions you do not wish to answer, simply leave the question blank. You can answer these questions at any time during the Study. Once the survey has started, you can start monitoring your bird feeder/bath and record what birds visit once a day for 20 minutes and 3 times a week.



Possible risk and benefits to you and/or the wider community

There is no anticipated risks associated with this study. Dr Gráinne Cleary will ensure participant confidentiality and anonymity is maintained at all times.

Our findings may provide wildlife managers with a better understanding of community perceptions and how the community can become involved with bird conservation at a localised level. In addition the benefits of our study to participants is education on the conservation of birds in backyards. We will produce a detailed report on our findings and conservation recommendations which will be sent to all participants who request a copy.

Results of the study

We will aggregate and de-identify the results and use the data for research purposes and they may be reported in scientific or academic journals. Any personal information you provided is kept in strict confidence and at no time will you be named or your location be identifiable. Once the study has finished we will produce a report on the findings and outcomes which will be available to all participants by email.

Privacy, confidentiality and disclosure of information

All information will be handled by the researchers with strict confidentiality and accessed only by the research team. Once the survey is finished, the data will be downloaded and stored securely, in electronic format on a password-protected computer for a period of six years following the last publication of the research.

Complaints

Approval to undertake this research project has been given by the Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG), Faculty of Science, Engineering and Built Environment, Deakin University. If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact: The Manager, Ethics and Biosafety Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, BURWOOD VIC 3125 , Telephone: 9251 7123, research-ethics@deakin.edu.au. Please quote project number STEC-62-2015-Cleary.

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this research. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of this research, please feel free to contact me (details below).

Your sincerely

Gráinne

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