



Will the goose eat the granules? What about the wildlife?

Lenny and Helen love to watch the wild birds and deer that frequently visit their feeders down by the pond. They can see the pond, the feeders, and the animals from their kitchen table. After reading several reports about [Lyme disease](#), Lenny learned that humans and wildlife can be impacted by the disease. Lenny decided to treat his yard with insecticide granules to control ticks, which can act as vectors, or carriers of Lyme disease. When he brought the pesticide product home, Helen asked if the birds would eat the small [granules](#). Lenny wasn't sure... then he wondered what the risk might be to their beloved wildlife.

Helen and Lenny called [NPIC](#) to get some answers. To find out what they learned, [click here](#).



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If not used properly, Lenny learned that some insecticide granules can poison wild birds easily. First, the NPIC specialist encouraged Lenny to read the “ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS” on the [label](#) of the product he purchased. The product label indicated that it cannot be used within 75 feet of a body of water that could attract waterfowl such as ducks, geese, and other birds. Lenny realized that his feeders are within 50 feet of his pond.

Always read pesticide labels before buying products to ensure you have selected the right one for the job. Read the label again before applying the product so you fully understand how it is intended to be used. Check out this [interactive label](#) that will show you where “ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS” would appear on a pesticide label. Sometimes the label includes annual bird migration times, when pesticide applications should be postponed to protect birds. Sometimes the label indicates how close you can legally apply the pesticide near water; these “buffer zones” are intended to protect aquatic life and the environment. Always follow the label directions and use caution when applying pesticides where [wildlife](#) or humans may be impacted.

To learn more about ways to manage your lawn in an environmentally friendly way, please review [Healthy Lawn, Healthy Environment](#), an EPA brochure that provides tips on working with nature to grow a healthy lawn while minimizing the use of pesticides.

The [Avian Incident Monitoring System](#), a cooperative effort between the American Bird Conservancy and U.S. Environmental Agency, tracks incidents reported of wild birds impacted by pesticides. Pesticide effects to wildlife can also be reported to NPIC’s [Ecological Pesticide Incident Reporting](#) system.

