



Dear Fresno State Community,

I am reaching out to you all to take part in a unique and exciting community-based research project being conducted by the [bird biology lab](#) at Fresno State. Our team is dedicated in understanding how humans may be impacting the health of local bird species, particularly finches.

This National Science Foundation funded project ([Award # 2233633](#)) aims to better understand the impact of urbanization on the health of local finches. To make this study successful, we need the help of our Bulldog community – and that's where you come in!

We are inviting community members to participate in this research by installing bird feeders in their backyards. By doing so, you will not only provide a valuable resource for these beautiful birds but also contribute to important scientific research.

We are looking to recruit 10 homes in each one of these four main regions:

- The City of Fresno
- Suburban Fresno/Clovis
- Foothill Communities
- Bass and Shaver Lake

#### How You Can Help:

1. **Install a Bird Feeder:** Participants will be provided bird feeders, bird seed, and feeding stations (e.g., poles) if there is a lack of tree branches on their property.
2. **Observe and Record:** If you're interested, we'll guide you on how to observe and record the finches' visits to your feeder. This data is invaluable to our research.
3. **Allow our Team to Collect Data:** Once finches start eating from your feeders, we will arrange opportunities to visit your property to sample the birds.
  - **What Does Sampling Entail?** We capture the finches, take a small blood sample, give them an aluminum band around their leg with a unique ID number, take measurements (e.g., wing length and mass), and then release the birds back to the wild. All participants will get the opportunity to watch the sampling process and even help if they wish.
4. **Be Part of Community Science:** This is a wonderful opportunity to engage with nature, learn about local wildlife, and contribute to scientific knowledge.

#### Benefits to You and the Community:

- **Educational Opportunity:** Learn more about local bird species and their behaviors.
- **Contribute to Conservation:** Help in the conservation efforts of local bird populations.
- **Community Engagement:** Join a network of local residents participating in this project, with opportunities for workshops and community events.

**Next Steps:** If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact the head principal investigator Dr. Joel Slade ([joelslade@csufresno.edu](mailto:joelslade@csufresno.edu); 559-278-5242). We would be delighted to discuss the project further and answer any questions you may have.



We are excited about the potential of this project and the positive impact it can have on both our local environment and the broader scientific community. We hope you will consider joining us in this endeavor.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a difference in our community and for the finches that call it home.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joel Slade,  
Assistant Professor of Avian Ecoimmunology  
Department of Biology  
California State University, Fresno