

CARMEL, IN, September 12, 2013 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Spending quality time with grandparents isn't as common as it used to be. More often than not, both parents are out in the workforce, with little time in their busy schedules for visiting grandparents. Although there are currently 70 million grandparents in the nation who represent one-third of the population, more than 60 percent have never celebrated National Grandparents Day. Wild Birds Unlimited, the largest franchise system of backyard bird feeding and nature specialty stores, wants to reverse this trend by sharing ways children can bond with their grandparents through nature.

"Giving children the opportunity to spend quality time with their grandparents is a great way to strengthen family ties and create joyful memories," said John Schaust, Chief Naturalist at Wild Birds Unlimited. "Encouraging children to partake in outdoor activities with their grandparents teaches them to appreciate their natural surroundings. The outdoors provides a way to pass key values on from one generation to the next, such as sincerity, environmental stewardship and the importance of friendship."

Wild Birds Unlimited shares the following activities to help grandparents connect with their grandchildren and create a special bond through nature:

- Go on a Nature Walk - Enjoy a day of discovery by exploring a local park or forest preserve to learn what makes the natural areas unique and exciting. Along with a water bottle and some snacks, a few tools to enhance the experience could include a glass jar with holes poked into the lid to use for a bug trap, a field guide, a magnifying glass to discover new species of plants and animals and binoculars to locate small creatures.
- Participate in Bird Watching - Experience the exciting world of bird watching together. Visit a park or nature center where you can look for birds. Birding is about observing birds and their behaviors and listening to their songs. Many families participate in bird watching across generations, with grandparents and grandchildren often finding a shared interest when they bird watch together.
- Build a Bird Feeder - Creating your own bird feeder from basic everyday items you have around the home is a simple and fun activity. Attracting birds to your yard can bring hours of discovery and entertainment right to your window. The items you will need are; a clean, dry plastic milk jug, twine or a thin rope, two dowel rods 10" long, pen, scissors, ruler and bird seed. For downloadable assembly instructions go to;
<http://www.wbu.com/pathwaysforkids/activities.html>.

- **Create a Nature Journal** - Make a journal with colored paper to represent the colors of nature. The journal can be used to record outdoor observations and sightings which can include sketches of birds, insects, pressed flowers, leaf and tree rubbings and records of animal tracks. The natural curiosity of children makes them excellent candidates for nature journaling. It provides a healthy way to develop an awareness and appreciation of the natural world, while enhancing science, art, writing and research skills.

- **Plant a Garden** - Gardening can seem like magic to children and involving them in planting, weeding and watering offers a wonderful chance to spend time together. Planting a garden can help children develop important traits like creativity, responsibility, patience and wonder. Gardening together means companionship and a chance to talk about the day's events, about friends, values and future plans.

For additional activities to connect children with nature, visit <http://www.wbu.com/pathwaysforkids/activities.html>.

ABOUT WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED Wild Birds Unlimited is the original and largest franchise system of backyard bird feeding and nature specialty stores with more than 275 locations throughout the United States and Canada. Wild Birds Unlimited specializes in bringing people and nature together with bird feeding and nature products, expert advice and educational events. Visit our Web site and shop online at <http://www.wbu.com>. To learn how you can open your own Wild Birds Unlimited, visit <http://www.wbufranchise.com>.