



Bird watching tips:

- Keep your distance
- Move slowly with little noise
- Stay on trails, paths, boardwalks
- Do not touch nests, eggs or young birds

Observe so they don't know you are there...



Contact City's Environmental Services Department for more busy bills and fancy feet watching tips!

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Feed a Bird? How Absurd!

Why we should let birds feed themselves.



Why let birds feed themselves?

When we feed birds in our local wetlands we can unintentionally harm them and pollute their homes.

Water birds in particular are adapted to their watery homes with specialised beaks or bills for feeding. Foot design can also tell us a lot about a bird's diet.

Wild birds are meant to look after themselves for a number of reasons relating to their health, survival and their natural environment.

Impact on Birds

Feeding birds bread or other food matter in your local lake or wetland can be detrimental to a birds' survival. The main impacts relate to sickness or disease and food dependency.

Sickness and Disease

Just like humans birds have an inability to digest particular foods. Eating 'human' food like bread rather than natural food sources like insects, snails and worms can cause malnourishment and sickness. Rotting bread in the water can lead to additional sickness and disease spread.

Food Dependency

Birds can become dependant on human feeding and can concentrate in high numbers around wetlands and lakes. This reliance can lead to aggressive behaviour, overpopulation and even delay migration patterns. Young birds can die as they lack skills to forage for food. Overpopulation then leads to over grazing, disease spread, loss of offspring and crowding out of other species' breeding sites.

Impact on Lakes and Wetlands

Did you know bird feeding can lead to unhealthy wetlands and lakes? The main impact relates to a reduction in water quality and subsequent environmental degradation.

Water Quality

Uneaten decaying bread and other food matter can cause a build-up of nutrients (eutrophication). It only takes 1-2 grams of phosphorus from bread to turn a lake the size of a backyard pool nutrient rich. Excess nutrients and overpopulation can also be linked to:

- Algal blooms (including toxic blue-green algae) and aquatic weeds;
- Botulism and other bird diseases spreading between wetlands;

- Decreases in water quality;
- Reduction in dissolved oxygen leading to fish kills and other fauna deaths; and
- Reduced animal and plant diversity

Interaction without Interference

If you are interested in interacting with our wetland birds why not try the following:

Bird Watching!

Use the map in this brochure to locate wetlands for bird watching in the City of Cockburn. Grab some binoculars and get spotting!

Plant a Native Garden!

Native gardens full of flowers are one of the best ways to attract birds. Flowering plants attract insects also which encourages even more birds!

Build a Bird Bath!

Bush birds like honeyeaters love to frolic in bird baths. Remember to locate the bath off the ground away from predators and clean it regularly!

Please help our birds feed themselves!