



Kings Lake

Don't Feed Wildlife

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Keep wildlife wild and healthy. State and federal wildlife agencies encourage you to avoid feeding wildlife including ducks, waterfowl, raccoons, rabbits, otters and coyotes. One way you can help reduce wildlife conflicts with people is by **not feeding wildlife near human populations and in parks.**

Wildlife experts are often asked to assist with wildlife damage problems related to animals that have been accidentally or intentionally fed by people. Feeding wildlife can lead to a number of serious problems.

Human food is not healthy for wild animals. They do not need supplemental food from humans to survive. **Wild animals have specialized diets and can become malnourished or die if fed the wrong foods.** Also, animals cannot distinguish food from wrappers or foil and can get sick eating these items.

Feeding leads to public health concerns. Too many animals in one place increases the **chance of disease transmission** among other wildlife and to humans.

Animals accustomed to people often **lose their fear of people and can become aggressive or vulnerable to unkind humans, dogs, and other predators.** Those that become too aggressive may have to be removed to protect people and property.

Large concentrations of waterfowl can contribute to the polluting of lakes and waterways.

How You Can Help

Many people enjoy living near and watching wildlife. You can help keep animals wild by keeping the following tips in mind.

- Do not encourage wildlife by feeding or leaving food for them.
- Don't allow bird food to accumulate on the ground. The food attracts unwanted wildlife including rats and wildlife that prey on birds.
- Don't place food scraps in gardens or compost bins, and use a closed compost bin.
- Keep grills, pet food and water containers indoors, especially at night.

- If you have fruit trees, harvest or dispose of fruit when it is ripe or dropped.

Enjoy viewing wildlife at a distance. Respect their space and remember they are wild animals that should stay wild.

Source:

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https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/wildlifedamage/SA_Program_Overview/CT_Dontfeedwildlife

Additional Sources:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<https://www.fws.gov/refuges/features/to-feed-or-not-to-feed-wild-birds.html>

<https://www.fws.gov/midwest/feedingwaterfowl.htm>

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/feeding-wildlife.htm>

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

<https://myfwc.com/conservation/you-serve/wildlife/tips/>

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