



FEEDING WILDLIFE? PLEASE DON'T

- 1. A wild animal will lose its skill in foraging if fed by humans.** Young, wild animals that have been taught to depend on humans for food will become less experienced at foraging and consequently less likely to survive. If you move away, wildlife that has become dependent will lose a source of food and suffer.
- 2. Wild animals that are used to being fed by humans commonly lose their fear of people.** Wildlife must have an instinctive wariness of humans in order for them to survive. They also become easy targets for those who may harm them.
- 3. In most cases, the food people feed to wildlife is nutritionally inadequate and can cause serious health problems, especially when the animal is young and still developing.** Most people will give animals food that they have in their house, which bears no resemblance to what the animal would eat in the wild. Please do not feed bread to birds. Although many people do this, bread is very unhealthy for birds and can cause death.
- 4. Your neighbour may not appreciate it.** Wildlife Rescue receives many calls from people whose neighbours have been feeding wild animals. Often, they have become a nuisance and the caller wants to remove or kill them. Many people do not think about the neighbourhood impact when they start feeding wildlife. They may also cause damage to homes and property because they expect to be fed.
- 5. It is okay to have a bird feeder if it is carefully maintained.** Seed-eating birds that use feeders will not lose their fear of humans and birdseed is nutritionally close to what these birds would find in nature. It is important, however, to clean the feeder with dish soap and bleach and every week or ten days, especially during the winter. Raking the ground to remove rotting seed and feces is also important as this will decrease the spread of disease. Wildlife Rescue receives many birds that have become sick from dirty bird feeders. Also ensure that cats cannot prey upon the birds around the feeder. If cats are a problem in your yard, perhaps it may be wise not to have a bird feeder.