

## Fouling the Waterfowl

### Why shouldn't we feed the ducks bread?

Most people are unaware of the consequences that can result from feeding bread to local waterfowl – a seemingly harmless activity that we were exposed to as children. Below are some of the repercussions that can occur from this widely practiced tradition:



- Regular consumption of bread leads to poor nutrition in waterfowl; they consume more empty calories than the nutritive calories they need to stay warm in winter.
- Uneaten bread becomes pollution, which can cause spread of disease and disrupt local ecology
- Regular feeding of waterfowl can lead to overpopulation/overcrowding, which leads to increasingly aggressive behavior
- Feeding of bread can lead to delayed migration
- Creates a dependence on humans instead of developing natural foraging tendencies
- Attracts vermin, pests, and predators that prey on their young and spread disease

Ideally, what is best is to allow the waterfowl to use their innate instincts to forage for food. However, if you must supplement their wild diet, please do so sparingly and choose from some of these far better options:

- Cracked corn
- Uncooked, rolled oats
- Grapes cut in half
- Birdseed
- Frozen peas or corn, defrosted
- Chopped lettuce or other greens

Please avoid bread, chips, crackers, popcorn, and any other non-nutritive food sources, and only offer what the ducks will eat to avoid pollution.

Thank you for your cooperation!

For more information please visit [CityofIrving.org/Stormwater](http://CityofIrving.org/Stormwater)

