

Bird feeding

Victorians are lucky to be able to share their backyards and neighbourhoods with a diverse range of wild birds. Some people have the belief that food handouts help birds to survive.

However, feeding wild birds can actually cause a range of problems for both the birds and humans, so please don't feed wild birds.

Some facts about bird feeding:

- Birds that have been fed over time can become dependent on this food source and lose the instinct to forage for themselves. Once this food source is removed (eg. when you go on holidays or if you move house), the birds may suffer.
- Feeding birds can affect the normal level of birds that can be sustained in an area. An overabundance of birds can damage the local habitat and reduce the ability for other wildlife in the area to survive.
- Wild birds adapt to a particular diet. Altering or supplementing their diets with human foods that they wouldn't otherwise eat can cause nutrient deficiencies or even death.
- An overabundance of birds gathered at a feeding source can result in the spread of diseases. In some cases, it can be transferred to people or make the birds vulnerable to predators.
- Birds gathered in abnormally large numbers can cause a build-up of bird droppings that harbour disease and can also be damaging to personal property.

Rather than encouraging wild birds to come into your yard by feeding them, attract birds to your garden naturally by planting local indigenous native trees and shrubs.

Also be aware that owners and occupiers are responsible for pest management on their properties and should minimise conditions that may harbour abnormally large numbers of wild birds.

For further information on why we shouldn't feed wildlife, visit the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning at www.delwp.vic.gov.au and for information on bird control, contact a licensed pest control company.