

# Feeding Superior Wildlife

While so many people appreciate our native wildlife and the many opportunities to see them in our parks and yards, we can sometimes love them TOO much. The desire to increase our opportunities to be around wildlife can lead some people to baiting them closer, by feeding them. Before you decide to feed ANY type of wildlife, please consider the following:

1. Are you feeding them a food they may find naturally? Most human foods can have a negative impact on the health of wild animals. Take feeding ducks and geese bread for example, they enjoy it and it tastes good, but they can overeat it, then not eat healthy food found naturally. This may result in serious health problems.
2. Are you going to teach them to lose their natural fear of people? The vast majority of incidents where a human is bitten by a wild animal can be traced back to feeding. It is not always the person feeding that gets bitten, but unprepared people nearby.
3. If too many animals are lured into your neighborhood, what impact will that have on you, your neighbors and the animals? If people feel threatened or disturbed by wildlife, they can take it out on the animals themselves. Also, when food is easily available, animals can gather in unnaturally high numbers because who doesn't like a free meal? Since many animals do not typically interact with others of their own species except during mating season and when raising their young it naturally limits diseases among the wild population. Contrasting, if one of the animals in a larger lured group has an illness or disease it can spread throughout the group. You never want to create a situation that causes problems for you, your neighbors or your neighborhood wildlife.
4. If you choose to feed, feed sparingly and at a time when it is most helpful to the wildlife. Acts like putting out small, supplementary amounts of appropriate food directly before a large storm or weather change or providing fresh water when it is hard to come by may be helpful. In normal times though, there is plenty of food available naturally, which is why they live here in our great Town!