

**PLEASE DON'T FEED
THE DUCKS OR
GEESE**



CUPERTINO

**City of Cupertino
Parks and Recreation Department**
Creating a positive, healthy and
connected community

Why is feeding the waterfowl a problem?

We understand that feeding ducks and geese at a park can be an enjoyable activity for both children and adults. It may also seem like a good way to help support wildlife, but take a moment to consider these issues:

- **Feeding waterfowl can cause too many ducks and geese to remain in this area.**

As more ducks and geese remain in one area to take advantage of the free food hand-outs their population density will increase. Crowded conditions often lead to increased aggression between birds. Intense competition for good nesting sites in this area means some birds will nest in places that put their offspring at risk.

- **Feeding waterfowl degrades the environment.**

A large population of waterfowl in an area will cause water quality to decline due to high levels of animal waste. Unconsumed bread and other food also fouls the water.



- **Feeding ducks and geese spreads disease.**

The water quality degradation and the crowding that result from feeding ducks and geese are conditions that often lead to the spread of waterfowl diseases such as avian cholera, avian botulism and duck plague.

- **Feeding waterfowl can cause nutritional problems in ducks and geese.**

Wild ducks are adapted to a diet of fresh vegetation, seeds and protein-rich aquatic insects and other invertebrates. Canada Geese feed on shoots, roots, seeds, bulbs, berries, insects, crustaceans and mollusks. Stale bread, pastries and other highly processed human foods can impact their health and lead to nutritional deficits.

- **Feeding can cause waterfowl to lose their natural fear of humans.**

A healthy fear of humans protects wildlife. Wild animals can quickly lose this instinctive fear of humans when they are being fed. This can put both birds and humans at risk of injury.