



Please Help the Waterfowl!



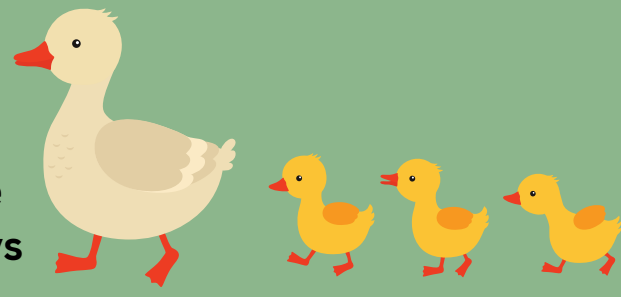
HUMAN FOOD IS JUNK FOOD FOR DUCKS AND GEESE. FEEDING WATERFOWL IS NOT GOOD FOR THEM OR THE ENVIRONMENT.

Doornbos Park is home to many kinds of colorful ducks that we all love. While feeding the ducks is a tradition in many families, eating bread and other human food is not good for them. Nature provides them with everything they need to stay healthy.

It may be hard to imagine that a handful of bread or a stray french fry could hurt the birds. But in most cases, one well-intentioned person leaves and another soon arrives, and before long, the birds are only eating human food.

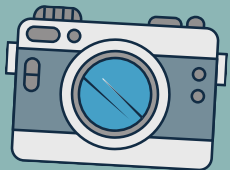
What can you do to help?

- Please don't feed the waterfowl
- Help educate others about why feeding ducks and geese is not good for the birds
- Pick up your trash, and any other trash you see in the park, litter can hurt birds in so many ways
- Don't let kids or dogs chase the waterfowl



Alternative Interactive Activities

Photography: Take up a new hobby and share it with your family. Photography is a great way to witness wildlife in it's natural state, admire its beauty and see its natural behavior.



Research various species: Find a new species of waterfowl and then research at the local library or online to learn more about it. Make a game to identify the most species in your family.

Bird Watching: Enjoy some time in the parks hiking and watching birds with binoculars. Let that be time to learn more about birds' natural behavior. Log each bird you have seen, research it and see if you can later identify by site or audio

Why is human food bad?

Foods such as bread, popcorn and chips are tasty to humans, but don't provide the nutrients waterfowl need to survive. Waterfowl that are malnourished or devoid of vital nutrients result in:

- The development of deformed wings (propeller wings)
- A decrease in reproductive rates
- An increased susceptibility to predators
- The loss of flight ability
- Lowered energy
- Lowered life expectancy



Eating bread has side effects?

Another problem when people start feeding ducks and geese is the birds lose their fear of humans and can become more **aggressive**, while also being easier prey for animals that eat ducks and geese. Some birds will also die because they cannot compete for the natural resources or the human handouts.

Having too many birds in one place is also **not good for the environment**. The birds can become a nuisance by grazing on grass, and excess nutrients in ponds caused by bird droppings can result in water quality problems. Uneaten food can pollute the water and can also attract other animals and pests.

Ducks and geese will eat almost anything they find including litter and old fishing supplies like lead weights. Please leave the natural environment in its natural state and throw away your trash.



Typical waterfowl diet:

Even though these are the foods ducks and geese should eat, please don't feed them to the birds - waterfowl will become dependent on us for food.

- Grass, weeds and clippings
- Earthworms
- Small fish and fish eggs
- Small crustaceans
- Algae, aquatic plants and roots
- Frogs, salamanders and other amphibians
- Aquatic and land insects
- Seeds and grain
- Small berries, fruits and nuts

