

# Why bread is bad for our local wildlife



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We might think we're helping our wildlife out when we bring a little extra bread for them - after all they seem to love it - but the truth is, we're doing a lot more harm than good.

#### Here's why:

- **Malnourishment** – Bread is like junk food for birds, eels and fish. Wildlife naturally feed on a range of vegetation, insects and fish. Eating human food like bread, rather than their natural diet can cause malnourishment and make them sick. It's just extra calories!
- **Sickness and disease** – These extra calories mean wildlife have to poo more often, which leads to more bacteria and pathogens in the water, which can cause animal diseases.
- **Water quality** – Uneaten bread decays and the extra animal poo in the water releases nutrients, which can reduce the oxygen levels and kill fish.
- **Weeds** – The extra nutrients in the water lead to the growth of water weeds and algae that can choke the water ways and damage aquatic life.
- **Behaviour** – Birds can become dependent on handouts and can become a nuisance and aggressive. They can also lose their natural ability to forage and parents can fail to teach their young how to find natural foods. Birds that are routinely fed can become easier to catch by predators such as cats, dogs and foxes.
- **Population** – The overabundance of food can increase the populations of birds, fish and eels to unsustainable levels. Their numbers can become too large for the habitat in which they live.



- **Pests** – Extra food lying around in our parks or ponds invites pests and can attract rats, mice, flies and cockroaches.
- **Unwanted pets** – Please do not release fish, birds or fish tank plants you no longer want into the ponds or parks. These domestic species are often larger and more aggressive than the wild species and can dominate when released into the wild, which is bad for our native wildlife. If you no longer want your fish or birds, please find another suitable home for them.

We understand that feeding the local wildlife is a fun activity to do. However, we ask that you help us help the animals by leaving your food at home and letting the animals collect their own feed naturally.



For more information, visit  
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Image by 2016 Macarthur Nature Photography Competition entrant, Silvia Grimm