

WHY I SHOULDN'T FEED WILDLIFE IN MY YARD

RI LAW PROHIBITS THE FEEDING OF WILDLIFE (RIGL TITLE 20)

- ❖ Gathering wild animals in one feeding location makes it easier for their predators to find them!



- ❖ Migratory species may not migrate when they should due to ample feed!



- ❖ Animals become too trusting of humans when they are fed regularly!



- ❖ Your food choice for a wild animal may not provide needed energy and nutrition!



- ❖ Feeding through part of the winter and then stopping can mean death to birds and animals!



- ❖ Feeding can bring animals and birds too closely into contact with civilization, creating nuisances and new hazards to their survival!



- ❖ Feeding wild animals does not help their survival in the majority of situations. Often, people do not understand the importance of animal survival instincts and how routine feeding may affect these instincts.
- ❖ Wild animals do not usually have an established feeding location, as this quickly attracts predators. Once predators find that you are feeding the animals, they will come regularly to this feeding location- example: house cats and hawks can easily determine patterns of prey animals that regularly frequent.
- ❖ Regular feeding may alter the migratory patterns of certain species. They may wait too long to make their migration; and as a result may succumb to bad weather and cold which they ordinarily would have not encountered as they migrate south.
- ❖ Feeding wild animals reduces their natural tendency to distrust humans - an important survival instinct! Recognizing a human is bringing them food may lead them to expect that all humans will do the same and will lead to a lessened fear of potential harm.
- ❖ Many of the foods commonly given to wild animals by well-meaning humans provide very little usable energy and nutrition sources. A good example is bread commonly fed to waterfowl. It simply fills the stomach of the bird, making it less likely to forage on its own; and with no nutritional value it offers nothing to help the bird survive the rigors of winter.
- ❖ One of the most detrimental practices that commonly occurs is that of establishing a feeding routine throughout the fall and early winter, and then going south, yourself, leaving the now-dependent birds without their food source.
- ❖ Feeding animals in your backyard entices wildlife into neighborhoods where they face unfamiliar hazards - bringing them closer to increased traffic on roads, into the proximity of natural enemies like domestic cats and dogs, and exposing them to trapping and poisoning from neighbors who do not like them tipping over garbage cans, eating shrubbery, and destroying plants.
- ❖ In their natural habitat, wild animals are subject to survival of the fittest - the most effective way to have a strong and healthy population. Feeding them artificially upsets this balance and may result in the overpopulation of sickly animals.