

Born Wild, Stay Wild in Ohio: Please Do Not Feed our Wildlife

POSTED ON NOVEMBER 15, 2018 BY JAMEY EMMERT

We have all visited a pond and thrown bread to the ducks and geese. Most people think they are helping but they actually not helping these wild animals. Most people think that handfeeding wild animals is a harmless and fun way to interact with wildlife.

Unfortunately, this is not true, feeding Ohio wildlife human food can cause unforeseen harm to them. It can even lead to potentially dangerous learned behaviors.


Why we should not feed Ohio wildlife!

1. Ohio wildlife can carry diseases and parasites that can be transmissible to people or your household pets. Diseases like rabies can cause very serious health problems if you or your pet are bitten by wildlife stricken with this disease.
2. Ohio wildlife actually have complex nutritional needs that don't come from human food. If wildlife consumes human foods, they can have nutritional deficiencies that can lead to deformity. If you have ever seen a goose or duck with a wing that looks crooked or drooped, they have "angel wing" which is a result of an unhealthy diets. This could be from human foods like bread and popcorn.
3. Hand feeding Ohio wildlife (such as ducks, geese, raccoons, deer, etc.) teaches them to not fear people and expect food from them. If they don't get it, they can become aggressive. Next, the adult Ohio wildlife will teach this behavior to their offspring. Once humans stop feeding the offspring, they don't know how to be wild and find sustenance on their own.
4. Feeding Ohio wildlife can attract a lot of animals in one location that can then causes diseases and parasites to spread more quickly, as well as concentrates waste material.


Although feeding Ohio wildlife is not good for them, this is not the same as having a bird feeder in your backyard. This is the exception to the rule. Keep your backyard bird feeders stocked with nutritious seed, nuts, berries, or sugar water. Learn more about responsible [backyard bird feeding](#) at [wildohio.gov](#).

Learn more about what you should and should not do to help keep wild animals happy and healthy at [wildohio.gov/staywild](#)


PLEASE DON'T FEED ME



Feeding me is bad for my health.



I can become aggressive and destructive if I expect food.



Human food is not good for me.

GOOD INTENTIONS CAN HURT; LEAVE WILDLIFE TO EAT WILD FOOD
wildohio.gov/staywild

