

“PLEASE DON’T FEED THE WILDLIFE”

Feeding of wildlife is prohibited in the City of Mississauga as per the Mississauga Animal Care and Control By-law #0098-04, as noted below:

REQUIREMENTS OF ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL BY-LAW 0098-04

PART IV: FEEDING OF WILDLIFE

- 10) No person shall intentionally feed a wild animal or leave food or attractants of any type or in any form out of doors in such a manner as to attract, or be accessible by a wild animal, feral or stray domestic animal on private or public property. (242-11)
- 11) Section 10 does not apply to the feeding of song birds on a property, provided the following feeding requirements are met by the owner or occupier: (242-11)
- (1) seed is placed in a bird feeding device that is sufficiently above grade as to not attract or be accessible by wild animals; and
 - (2) bird feeding practices do not attract large flocks of homing birds such as wild, feral or domestic pigeons; and
 - (3) spillage of seed upon the ground is removed by the property owner or occupier forthwith and disposed of in such a manner that it does not attract wild animals, feral or stray domestic animals.
- 12) Section 10 does not apply in the following situations: (242-11)
- (1) the leaving of food as bait in a trap by a property owner to capture a nuisance animal inhabiting or habituating their property pursuant to the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*, 1997, S.O.1997, c.41
 - (2) the leaving of food as bait by a licensed trapper, and employee of a licensed wildlife or pest control agency, Municipal Law Enforcement Officer an Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Inspector or a Mississauga Peel Police Office, in the performance of their work.
 - (3) The leaving of food for a colony of stray or feral cats for the purposes of trap, neuter or spay and release program approved by the City of Mississauga.

Maximum Penalty for Contravention of this By-Law is \$5000.00

WHY YOU SHOULD NOT FEED WILDLIFE

Wildlife experts agree that feeding wildlife causes problems for the animals and discourages the feeding of wildlife for the following reasons;

- The feeding of wild animals causes them to become dependent on a food source making them unwilling to forage naturally for food which could seriously affect their health. For instance, squirrels are at risk of developing Metabolic Bone Disease if their diet consists mainly of nuts. This condition causes their bones to become brittle and break easily, and in advanced stages, is irreversible and fatal.
- The feeding of wild animals creates an unnatural increase in wildlife populations thereby causing an increase in nuisance wildlife activity. Squirrels and raccoons will take up residence in neighbouring attics while skunks prefer burrowing beneath sheds, decks and solariums so that they may be close to the food source. Raccoons maintain a common 'latrine' area on neighbouring properties which can become a health hazard to humans.

- This unwanted wildlife activity causes frustrated area residents to take unwanted action such as trapping and relocating animals that are merely trying to take advantage of a food source.
- Studies have shown that trapping and relocation causes orphaned young to die of starvation and diseases to spread, infecting healthy animal populations. NOTE: Re-location of trapped animals beyond 1km is prohibited under the Provincial Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.
- Excessive feeding of birds generates larger populations of hardy non-native birds such as feral pigeons, starlings and sparrows which compete for habitat with our rarer, native song bird species.
- Ducks naturally feed on vegetation and water insects. A nutritionally deficient diet of seed or bread will cause illness and disease. Birds may become ill from bacteria ridden food that is not consumed or bacteria levels in the watercourse due to large concentrations of birds and faeces. Ducks that have become dependant on human handouts may not fly south and starve or freeze during winter months.
- Improperly maintained bird feeders or poor quality bird feed can actually cause birds to die of illnesses such as salmonella, botulism or other deadly bacterial infections.
- Providing food for birds and squirrels often attracts rats and mice due to the spillage of seed.
- An increase in rodent activity can attract larger predators like coyotes and foxes which can also prey on neighbourhood pets.
- Predators such as coyotes that have eaten human food lose their natural fear for humans and as a result they can become predatory towards humans. If a predator such as a coyote becomes a danger to human safety wildlife authorities recommend the destruction of the offending animal as it can no longer coexist safely with humans.

The City of Mississauga encourages residents to enjoy and live in harmony with our native wildlife. This can only be accomplished if we do not interfere with a wild animal's natural instincts, behaviours and ability to forage for food. If you enjoy wildlife, a better alternative would be the planting of certain native flora that will enhance your property and attract wildlife naturally without altering their behaviour or diet.

RECOMMENDED CODES OF PRACTICE TO AVOID WILDLIFE CONFLICTS

- Store garbage, green bins, recycling, compost etc. in an area inaccessible to wildlife.
- Place garbage, recycling and green bins to the curb on the morning of collection.
- Remove any debris or materials from property/decks/balconies that may provide hiding or nesting sites for wild animals or rodents.
- Conduct a spring and fall exterior home inspection to ensure shingles, eaves, soffit, fascia, vents etc. are in good repair.
- Cap/screen roof, dryer, bathroom vents and chimney's with secure, safety approved mesh.
- Sheds, decks or any structure without a foundation should be screened below ground in a reverse L formation, (12" down, and 18" away from the structure) to prevent burrowing animals.
- Cover window wells with mesh or commercial window well covers.
- Trim tree branches away from the roof of your home.