

Biological Implications of Feeding Wildlife

"Food for Thought"



- One of the biggest consequences of recreational feeding from an ecological perspective is that it can contribute to a variety of health problems within the wildlife populations
- Artificial feeding increases the amount of animals attracted to certain areas and therefore makes those locations more concentrated with animals
- Areas become more concentrated than the species natural population
- Transmission of diseases is increased due to the larger population size and close proximity of the animals

Disease Transfer

- When wild animals are continually fed by humans they become comfortable in environments that are commonly inhabited by people.
- Animals that have been repeatedly fed may become aggressive when they are hungry.
- Larger more aggressive animals may be tempted by the promise of food as well.



Danger to Humans

What Can You Do?

- Appreciate wildlife from a distance
- Keep household waste, compost, and pet food out-of-reach from wild animals
- Don't put garbage out until the morning of collection
- Do not litter, especially on roadways
- Remove materials from deck or backyards that may provide nesting spots for rodents



Lack of Nutrition

Nutrition

- Cause serious health problems
 - Especially for young and still developing animals
- Wild animals are opportunistic
 - Switch from a varied diet to human-provided food
 - Won't get the nutrients they need (E.g., processed seeds, bread)

Reproduction

- Number of animals being born is related to amount of natural food available
- Number of surviving animals also depends on how much food is available
- Unnatural food supply may increase the number of offspring
 - Natural food sources in the area can't support them all

Behaviour

- Animals can become aggressive and harass people for food
- Once they have determined you are a reliable food source