

City of McPherson**Public Lands and Facilities**

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MEDIA ALERT 2/10/2021**Reasons Not to Feed Geese** By Geese Relief

Feeding geese and other waterfowl bread, crackers any human food is a common pastime for many adults and children, but many people do not know that this can be harmful to the birds, as well as the environment. Here are several reasons why you should not feed geese and other birds.

Bread, crackers, popcorn, and other high-carbohydrate foods are like junk food to birds. They provide very little nutritional content, and birds that fill up on them will not seek out other, nutritious food. This can cause the birds to become malnourished, which can contribute to a host of health problems for both adults and babies.

Even though you may only choose to feed geese and other birds small amounts of bread or other foods, other families may be doing the same thing. The result could be that the birds' diet consists primarily of unhealthy foods.

If an abundant supply of food is readily available from humans, the geese population will grow because the birds will be attracted to the handouts. This can cause the area to become overcrowded. A supply of easy-to-acquire food will also lead the birds to lay more eggs, which can further contribute to overpopulation.

Feeding geese bread can also contribute to the spread of disease. A diet rich in carbohydrates will cause the birds to defecate more, which can spread bacteria that can contribute to disease. Moldy bread that is not eaten and left on the ground can cause aspergillosis, a lung infection that can be fatal to waterfowl. In addition, rotting bread can attract pests, such as rats, mice, and insects, which can spread disease.

Feeding geese can also pollute the environment. Uneaten bread is unsightly. It can rot and release noxious odors, and it can also lead to the growth of algae, which can clog natural waterways and endanger the health of fish and other wildlife.

Geese and other birds that rely on humans for food lose their natural fear and may place themselves in dangerous situations, such as crossing roads in search of food. They may also become aggressive toward humans who do not provide them with the food they want.

While you may think that you are helping geese by providing them with food, you can be jeopardizing the health of the birds, other animals, and humans, as well as polluting the environment. Wild geese have plenty of healthy food in their habitat to sustain them. Let the geese find food on their own so that they and other animals in the environment can stay healthy.

Wild ducks and geese can be great fun to watch. If you really enjoy them, please keep them healthy and wild—do not feed them.

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