



# Ducks and Ducklings

The most common native duck species in Victoria are the Pacific Black Duck (left) and the Australian Wood Duck (right).



## Be aware of nesting sites

- A mother duck will seek out a nesting site away from her home watercourse. This increases the chance of the ducklings' survival by removing the nest from an area frequented by predators. Usually, the nest is in a little nook in a yard, often not seen until the ducklings have hatched.
- Sometimes they choose to nest atop a chimney; ensuring that your chimney is bird-safe could save lives.
- A mother duck will usually return to the same nesting site year after year.
- Ducks will commonly choose to nest in suburban backyards, especially those with a pool. The cover and safety of a fenced-in area and access to water is the perfect place for the mother duck to incubate her eggs.
- Within 24 hours of hatching, a parent duck will take the ducklings for a quick swim and then walk them back to their home territory. This journey back to the home watercourse is the most important trip of the ducklings' lives - the parents are teaching them how to make this trek by themselves and learn their way home. Parents will also show their ducklings how to avoid predators and hopefully, cars too, and how to feed and navigate around the neighbourhood.

We hope that by increasing your understanding and awareness of our beautiful wildlife, you feel empowered to deal with wildlife situations confidently in an informed, safe and appropriate manner. For support at any time, please call our emergency response service for advice on **03 8400 7300** or report the details on our website: [www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au](http://www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au).



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## How you can help

- Avoid intervening. Their best chance of survival is if we don't intervene.
- Keep a safe distance as parent ducks can become extremely stressed and may abandon their ducklings.
- If relocated, a mother duck will attempt to find her way back to the lost ducklings, risking her life by crossing busy roads and dangerous paths.
- If you see a family of ducks crossing the road, please observe from a distance and allow the family to cross safely without stress. If safe, alert oncoming traffic.
- If you often notice ducklings in the area, you can print out a wildlife notice from our website, under 'How To Help'.

## I've found a clutch of ducklings in my pool - what can I do?

- Remove pets from your backyard as the little duck family will only be there for a few days.
- Make sure the ducks are able to get themselves out of the pool by providing makeshift ramps e.g. branches, planks of wood etc.
- If the ducklings are alone please leave the backyard and observe from a distance so parent ducks feel safe to return.
- Ensure all pumps/filters are turned off.
- Do not feed adults or babies.



Image: froglog.us



Image: Kim Strong

### Pool ramps

Consider buying or making a pool ramp to enable wildlife to easily escape.

If you have found parentless ducklings and the parents have not returned to their little ducklings, they will need to be hand-reared by specialist carers, so give Wildlife Victoria a call and we will organise their rescue and find a foster home for them.

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