



# Feeding Wildlife

## What can I do for wildlife in my backyard?

Wildlife thrive on native vegetation which also attracts insects for them to feed on as well. Give wildlife a natural diet by planting local indigenous shrubs or trees in your garden to provide a healthy food source. Ask your local nursery what plants would be suitable for your backyard.

## What can happen if I feed them?

It's never a good idea to feed wildlife non-native food. Wildlife feed on a variety of native vegetation and small insects and need to forage for their food as part of their daily behavioural activities. Wildlife Victoria strongly discourages the feeding of wildlife for the following reasons:

- Creating a dependence on humans for food.
- Dietary deficiencies from feeding on unnatural food sources.
- Over time, they can become very comfortable and familiar with human interactions and not see us as potential predators.
- Adversely, they could become aggressive towards humans as they are forced to compete for the food source.
- Feeding bread to birds can harm some species as they are unable to process refined foods.
- Setting up a feeding station for birds can encourage the spread of diseases like Beak & Feather Disease which is fatal and untreatable. (See separate factsheet)
- Uneaten bread given to ducks or swans can end up in the water source creating a fatal algae for these animals. Food scraps also attract rats.



Cockatoo with Beak & Feather Disease

Please remember:

**It's best to keep wildlife wild!**

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).