

# FOUR REASONS NOT TO FEED DUCKS AND GEESE

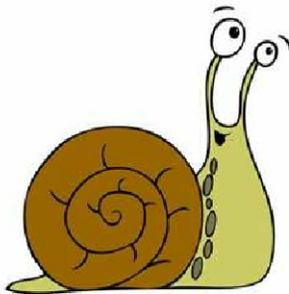
Many people like to feed wild ducks and geese but what seems like kindness can be very harmful. Here are several good reasons not to feed them:

## 1. HUMAN FOOD IS NOT GOOD FOR WATERFOWL

Human food is junk food for ducks and geese. It lacks minerals needed to make strong, healthy waterfowl. Overfed, undernourished waterfowl suffer from more illness and disease.



## 2. PARASITES IN WATERFOWL CAUSE SWIMMERS ITCH



Tiny parasites which live inside waterfowl release their eggs into the water. The larvae then burrow into water snails and grow into a larger form which can then dig into a swimmer. When the parasites die under the skin, swimmers may get an itchy allergic rash. Too many waterfowl often mean swimmers itch.

## 3. FEEDING WATERFOWL CAN INTERFERE WITH NATURE

Feeding waterfowl can artificially increase their population. Feeding also encourages waterfowl to "over-winter" in lakes and ponds; interrupting their natural migration patterns. When they stay through the winter the result can be an unhealthy build-up of duck and goose poop.



## 4. INCREASED NUTRIENTS CAUSE ALGAE AND WEED GROWTH

Waterfowl waste pollutes both water and surrounding beaches. Too many nutrients from these droppings fertilize murky green algae blooms and aquatic weeds; which crowd out other plants and animals. Lakes and ponds choked with aquatic weeds make it difficult or impossible for swimming and fishing.



## OTHER WAYS TO ENJOY WILDLIFE

If you enjoy feeding wild geese, ducks, birds, and other animals, there are several petting zoos and parks throughout Pierce County. The Audubon Society offers many programs for bird enthusiasts.

