

Please *Don't* Feed Wildlife



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American widgeons (above) whistle and bob their heads to meet and greet one another.



Mallard ducks (above right) mostly feed on seeds taken from plants in the water or come out of the water to find seeds, plants, and insects on the ground. You may see the ducks turned bottom-up to grab plants from the bottom of the pond.



A great blue heron (left) stands in the cattails waiting for the right moment to ambush a fish or frog in the shallow water.



PIMA COUNTY
NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS AND RECREATION
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PIMA COUNTY
NATURAL RESOURCES,
PARKS AND RECREATION

Protect nature's balance

KEEP YOUR PARKS

Wild!



Instead of Feeding Wildlife – What Can You Do?

- **Stop and look** for several minutes and use all of your senses to observe.
- **Wait** in one place and try to blend in with the landscape. Watch for movements and colors that look out of place.
- **Be quiet.** Talk sparingly in a soft voice.
- **Listen.** Be alert for changes in sounds. Silence can be a clue that a predator is near.
- **Use binoculars** for a closer look at wildlife.
- **Share** what you see.
- **Participate** in guided wildlife viewing opportunities in Pima County parks.

Welcome to Agua Caliente Park, an oasis in the desert. The spring-fed ponds and lush plant life provide a rich habitat for wildlife. On most days you will see ducks, herons, turtles, fish, and other aquatic animals that only live in and around water. This permanent source of water also attracts desert-adapted wildlife such as mule deer, coyotes, and many types of birds.

The cumulative effects of feeding ducks or any wild animals create a situation that is bad for wildlife and dangerous for people.

- Ducks, turtles, fish, and other wildlife do not need handouts from people. Everything they need to survive is available in nature.
- Drawing wildlife near by offering food is dangerous. Hand-fed wildlife lose their fear of people and can become aggressive.
- Ducks and other wildlife that pose a threat to people have to be removed from the park. This has happened here at Agua Caliente Park.
- Processed foods such as bread, cereal, and popcorn are not healthy for ducks and other wildlife.
- Tossing food scraps into the pond can overload the natural system. This serious problem can result in major die-offs of fish and other aquatic animals that depend on a proper balance of oxygen and nutrients in the water.
- Feeding wildlife disrupts the natural activity of the pond. The ducks form an angry mob and squabble over scraps of food. The turtles and fish join in and you miss the chance to observe normal interactions and interesting natural feeding behaviors.
- State Statute: 13-2927 Unlawful feeding of wildlife:
 - A. A person commits unlawful feeding of wildlife by intentionally, knowingly or recklessly feeding, attracting or otherwise enticing wildlife into an area, except for:
 1. Persons lawfully taking or holding wildlife pursuant to title 17 or pursuant to rules or orders of the Arizona game and fish commission.
 2. Public employees or authorized agents acting within the scope of their authority or for wildlife management purposes.
 3. Normal agricultural or livestock operational practices.
 4. Tree squirrels or birds.
 - B. This section applies in a county with a population of more than two hundred eighty thousand persons.
 - C. Unlawful feeding of wildlife is a petty offense.