



DUCKS & GEESE

DUCKS IN POOL

Cover the pool to prevent the problem. If pool cannot be covered, float an inflatable swan (a natural enemy of ducks) in the pool. String reflective mylar strips above the pool so the ducks won't be able to land. Pool covers will save energy/electricity and water. Do not put food out for them; that will make them stay. Look for a nest in nearby bushes, ivy or other groundcover. Remove the eggs and nest material so you won't end up with ducklings in pool.

DUCKLINGS IN POOL

Provide a ramp for them to leave the water. Keeping the mother and babies together, encourage them to leave by shooing them out. Leave a gate open. Do not attempt to pick up the ducklings for relocation; mom will fly away, often abandoning her young. Do not put food out for them; that will make them stay.

DUCK FAMILY IN BAD LOCATION

Duck families in parking lots or in the street should be left alone; at most, provide crossing guard service, stopping traffic so they can cross the street. The mother had her babies away from water and is attempting to lead them to water. Do not attempt to pick up the ducklings for relocation; mom will fly away, often abandoning her young. If the duck family is on the freeway, call California Highway Patrol. If the ducklings are in an enclosed backyard, escort the family out of the yard. If you must pick up the ducklings, put them in an open box and take them to the front yard. Don't go through the house; make sure the mother can see her babies the entire time. Don't attempt to capture the mother.

DUCKLINGS IN STORM DRAIN

The following is a quote from another wildlife center, and it is unknown if applicable or feasible in this area, but might be worth a try if this situation is encountered: "Contact the city, county or appropriate water company. They have access to the tools needed to remove the grate. Fashion a pole with a net to scoop out the babies. When the rescue is complete, release the babies away from the storm drain." Of course, you should never do anything that would put you in danger.

HYBRID MALLARDS

Mallards often mate with domestic ducks. Hybrid mallards are larger and more aggressive than pure mallards. Larger male hybrids may drown smaller mallard females during mating, or seriously injure them. Breeding trauma is a common reason mallards are brought to the wildlife center. Hybrids compete for limited natural food supplies and can cause genetic dilution of the native population. Almost all ducks nesting in really inappropriate places are hybrids.

DUCKS AND GEESE: DO NOT FEED

Domestic ducks, mostly descendants of pet ducks, are found at many local ponds and marinas. Normally ducks migrate or move to new homes when their food supply declines. However, partly because people feed the ducks, these animals may stay in the same area year round. Overpopulation in local ponds by domestic ducks (and hybrids) is common. The water is frequently polluted from their feces and from food thrown into the water by humans. Many ducks and other birds die from avian botulism and other diseases in crowded ponds every summer. Native wild ducks and other birds are also killed by the spread of these diseases. You can help by not feeding the ducks. Ducks normally eat insects, mollusks and aquatic vegetation. Feeding ducks bread and other food contributes to their overpopulation and increases the spread of diseases to native wild ducks.

An excellent handout published by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and available for downloading from their website entitled, "Caution: Feeding Waterfowl May Be Harmful," explains in detail the reasons for not feeding waterfowl.

DUCK OR GOOSE WINGS STICKING OUT TO SIDE

Ducks or geese (usually domestic) have a metabolic bone disease caused by improper diet while young. There is no cure.

GEESE ON LAWN

Replace the grass with other varieties of grass (the geese's favorite is Kentucky bluegrass) or with ground covers (pachysandra, periwinkle, English ivy) so the geese have less to eat.

GEESE IN POND

Plant trees and hedges near pond to act as a natural fence.

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