

Game and Fish Department reminds public: Feeding wildlife creates problems

Throughout the year, animals such as coyotes and javelina are very active. Arizona Game and Fish Department officials remind everyone to avoid the temptation to feed wildlife. Feeding wildlife is a bad practice that can lead to nuisance problems or potentially dangerous encounters between animals and humans. “Many people mistakenly think that feeding wildlife is a nice thing to do, either out of a belief they are helping them, or because they like to see coyotes or javelina spend time around their homes,” says Darren Julian, Arizona Game and Fish Department. “But what really happens is that the animals can become habituated to people and conditioned to receiving food from them, increasing the chance for human-wildlife conflicts.”



Two types of feeding take place: intentional, where people put out food to attract wildlife, and unintentional, such as leaving trash accessible or feeding pets outside.

In 2006, the Arizona Legislature passed a law (13-2927. *Unlawful feeding of wildlife; classification*) making it illegal to feed wildlife in Maricopa and Pima counties.



To reduce the chance of unwanted wildlife encounters, people should avoid feeding wildlife, feed pets indoors (and not leave small pets unattended outside), and make sure all garbage is secured.

All wildlife, regardless of the “cuteness” factor, can be dangerous and are best enjoyed from a distance.

For additional information on the dangers of feeding wildlife and tips on living with urban wildlife, visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department Web site at www.azgfd.gov/urbanwildlife.

