

Water for our Wildlife

Summer is nearly here, and with the declaration of the El Nino weather pattern the conditions are likely going to be hot and dry. Just like us, our local birds, insects and wildlife need extra water in hot and dry weather. To help our native animals consider leaving water out. Even if you only have a small backyard or a veranda, a small amount of water can make a big difference over the warmer months.

The best containers to use are shallow and wide. A proper birdbath isn't necessary – shallow bowls, bowls (such as from the opp shop) or plastic pot plant bases work well. If you place a rock in the middle of larger bowls (emerging from the water), this allows birds to perch while drinking. It can also help smaller critters like ants and skinks climb out if they fall in. \

Find a spot that isn't too exposed and offers some shade. Birds need to be safe from predators while drinking so place the bowl well above ground level, away from pets. An old stool, a platform in the branches of a tree or a stump can work well. In bushland areas, place another bowl at ground level for ground dwelling animals such as Echidnas and Blue-tongue Lizards.

Clean the water bowl often and make sure it's topped up with fresh water. While tempting, it is best not to put any food out for wild birds or animals as they all have special diets. Feeding them bread or other food can be quite harmful. Leaving food out also disrupts their natural foraging patterns and the important work of pollinating plants and cleaning up excessive bugs.

Finally, if you are trying to attract small birds to your garden, planting native shrubs is the best option. When watering in hot weather spray a little water into the foliage. This not only provides moisture for the birds but also helps to attract insects and the birds that eat them, such as Fairy-wrens, Thornbills and Silvereyes.

Hemingway: Grade 8



Interpreter service

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