



Winter Weather Warnings

For us, winter means bundling up in coats, mittens, scarves and toques, and spending lots of time indoors near a fireplace or under a thick blanket. But what about our pets? To make sure they stay as safe and warm as you this winter, here are a few things to watch out for:

Frozen water

If any of your animals are kept outside during the winter, be sure their water supply is checked at least twice a day to keep it ice-free. They still get thirsty, even though it's cold out!



Watch out — ice balls can form on your pet's feet!



Salt

Lots of people use salt to melt the ice on their sidewalks and driveways so they don't slip and fall. But salt can irritate the pads of animals' feet, and can make them sick if they eat it. When you come in from outside, wipe or wash your pets' feet before they get a chance to lick their paws.

When it's icy out, choose a pet-safe ice melter or a product that helps your feet get a good grip. You can find them at many hardware and pet supply stores.

Think and thump!

A warm car engine is a "hot spot" for small animals like cats and squirrels looking for relief from the cold. So, before starting your car, bang the hood to wake and scare off animals snuggled up in engine compartments.

And remember, even though animals have fur coats, they can still get cold. The best place for your pets during the winter is where you are – safe and warm indoors!

Beware of frostbitten ears, paws and tails!



Kind Acts for Wildlife



Be a friend to bees

Bees are responsible for pollinating a third of all the foods we eat. Talk about hard work!

Gathering all that pollen makes bees thirsty. Like us, they need fresh water to drink. But they can drown in deep, open water sources like bird baths. So, be kind to bees: make a special bee bath just for them!



- Step 1:** Line a shallow bowl or plate with rocks.
Step 2: Add water, but leave the rocks as dry "islands" to serve as landing pads.
Step 3: Place the bath at ground level in your garden.
Step 4: Refresh the water daily, adding just enough to evaporate by the end of the day.

Deadly drifters

How can balloons be deadly when they look so peaceful floating slowly up into the sky? The trouble starts when they come back down. They usually end up in the water, where they become harmful litter.

Wildlife can mistake balloons for food and choke on them. Sometimes, the balloons cause painful blockages inside animals and they slowly starve. Balloon strings and ribbons pose a danger too. Animals can get tangled up in them – and even strangled by them. Yikes!

Your kind act? Just say "No!" to balloon releases! And when you do use balloons, choose air-filled instead of helium-filled ones.

Calling all nature lovers!

Do you love to explore the outdoors? Become a Young Naturalist! Young Naturalists get together throughout the year to learn all about native wildlife and plants and discover ways to protect them.

Visit ync.ca to learn more – and to find a Young Naturalists' Club near you!



Kind Act #7 ↗

Kieran, 12, has made it his mission to keep his family from wasting water. Any family member who leaves the tap running when they brush their teeth or wash the dishes has to pay up by putting a quarter in the "Save Water" jar!



Battery round-up

Take a moment to think about how many devices you have at home that use batteries. Television remotes. Alarm clocks. Smoke detectors. Flashlights. Each year, Canadians use more than 700 million batteries – about 20 per person!

Batteries are actually hazardous waste. They contain chemicals called heavy metals. Heavy metals can be toxic to plants, animals and people, even in small amounts. When they end up in landfills, batteries can pollute the soil, air and water.

Kindness to wildlife means helping to keep our environment healthy!

- ✗ **DON'T** throw dead batteries in the garbage.
- ✓ **DO** recycle your old batteries. Visit call2recycle.org/locator to find a battery recycling location near you.
- ✓ **DO** start a used battery round-up at your school. You can order a special collection box from call2recycle.org/collection-kit.



Wildlife Gardening by Martyn Cox

Create a habitat for bugs, birds, bees, butterflies and even bats, right in your own backyard.



Ban the bread!

Tossing bread to ducks and geese at the park sounds like fun. But feeding bread to birds is like giving them junk food!

Natural foods for ducks and geese include leaves, roots, seeds, berries, insects and fish. Bread just fills them up without providing any real nutrition. Birds who eat a lot of bread can become overweight and sick. Even worse, birds who depend on being fed by humans can pass the habit on to their babies! Young birds need to learn to find their own food in order to survive.

So, spread the word: feeding bread to birds is **NOT** a kind act!

Kind Act #29

Nine-year-old Tyler asked his teacher to hold a Tote-Your-Own-Trash Day. Students in his class carried around their trash for a day to get an idea of how much garbage they throw out. At the end of the day, they brainstormed ways they could produce less waste – such as bringing reusable containers for lunch and composting food like apple cores and banana peels.



ecokids.ca

Play games, enter contests, get homework help and read about what other kids your age have done to make a difference for the environment.