



# Birds, birds, birds!

Here are common bird-related calls that come through to our Emergency Response Service:

- Concerns about swooping birds
- Birds trapped within buildings
- Black Swans with plastic collars around their neck

## Swooping birds

- When birds swoop, they are trying to protect their territory, nests, eggs and young. These birds are trying to scare you not harm you. Most "swoopers" are male birds, defending their young.
- Magpies and masked lapwings (plovers) are our most notable "swoopers".
- Swooping usually occurs for just a few weeks during spring. This is normal behaviour but only a small number of birds actually swoop.
- These birds, like all wildlife, are legally protected in Victoria.

## How to avoid being swooped

- Don't feed any wildlife; it's not healthy for them and could be dangerous for you.
- Don't harass or harm the bird or go near the nest as this will only make it more determined.
- Identify your local swooping zones (they usually use the same nesting sites each year) and place signs up to let people know that there is a bird nesting in the area. See our website for warning signs you can print at home.
- If you can, use an alternative route during this time.
- If you can't avoid the area, carrying an umbrella or wearing a helmet or hat and sunglasses to protect yourself may deter the animal.
- Hop off your bike and walk away quickly, don't run, and keep an eye on where he is as he is less likely to swoop while you are watching.
- Check your council's website as some publish known "swooping birds" hotspots.



Swooping by magpies (top) and masked lapwings (below).

We hope that by increasing your understanding and awareness of our beautiful wildlife, you feel empowered to deal with wildlife situations confidently in an informed, safe and appropriate manner. For support at any time, please call our emergency response service for advice on **03 8400 7300** or report the details on our website: [www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au](http://www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au).



## Birds, birds, birds!

### Birds in buildings

Birds are frequently found within buildings, so here are some helpful tips to set them free:

- Make sure there is a window or door open, and a direct route to this exit is available with other windows covered.
- Food can be a good lure to entice a feathered friend to move toward the exit.
- Calmly encourage the bird to move towards the exit. You can use large blankets or a sheet to guide it.

If you are able to safely contain the bird using a towel and box, it may be best to take the animal to your local vet for assessment. Birds are easily stressed and suffer injuries when in buildings.



### Collared swans

Black swans with white or black collars are a common sight all over Melbourne. These individuals form part of a study being undertaken by The University of Melbourne. The University has tagged many birds from Albert Park Lake with numbered neck collars, which allows them to recognise individuals and track their movements and fate over time.

The collars are specifically designed not to interfere with the swan's behaviour and they do not hurt them. The safety and type of swan collars used was carefully evaluated before the commencement of the project.

Check out the University of Melbourne research group website, download the app and get to know your neighbourhood swans.

<http://www.myswan.org.au/>



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