

Migratory Birds

Preventing Rookeries in Residential Areas



Bird Life Cycle

Birds Arrive in Spring

- February: “sentry birds”
- Yellow-crowned Night Heron

- March: egrets and others
- Cattle Egret
- Snowy Egret
- Great Blue Heron
- Little Blue Heron



Bird Life Cycle

Spring and Summer

- “Roost” while looking for a place to nest
- Fly away at dawn, return at dusk
- Carry sticks in beaks
- Build nests quickly (2-3 days)
- Establish rookery
- “Nest,” lay eggs
- Raise young
- Migrate
- Return - for 3 years



The Problem



Limitations



- No natural predators
- Protected status under Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918
- No nest destruction or bird harassment when eggs of any species (egrets, herons, etc.) are present

Limitations

- City must abide by Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- No City tax funds may be spent on private property.
- City has helped with:
 - Dead/injured bird pickup
 - Propane cannon, if necessary
 - Education, education, education



Prevention

- **Carrollton 2011**
 - 1200 nests
- **Tanglewood 2012**
 - 1000 nests
- **Sylvania Park 2013**
 - 1300 nests



The Plan

- Education
- Communication
- Action Steps



Education is Key

- **Learn the signs**
 - Recognize birds
 - Previous nesting activity
 - Dense tree canopy
 - Scout or sentry birds
- **Know what you can legally do**
 - Harassment methods
 - Old nest removal
- **Spread the word**
 - Reach as many neighbors as possible
 - Use several methods of communication



Action Steps

October - January

- Remove old nests
- Trim your trees (group rate?)
- Get organized:
 - ✓ Communication plan
 - ✓ Divide tasks, ask for help
 - ✓ Work with nearby neighborhoods



February

- Educate, distribute materials
- Watch for and report sentry birds
- Hang visual deterrents in trees



Action Steps

February and March

- Check trees daily at dawn and dusk.
- Remove the start of any nest.
 - ✓ Tennis balls & racquet
 - ✓ Modified pool poles
- Harass, but don't harm
 - ✓ Make noise
 - ✓ Water spray
 - ✓ Bright lights



Effective Tools

- Tree trimming is #1
- Scare-eye balloons
- Streamers
- Noisemakers
- Air horns
- Tennis balls
- Nest removal hook
- Water guns (toys)
- Lights
- Radios



Celebrate Success!



*What's the difference between roosting
and nesting?*

**“Birds don't typically sit on a nest
when roosting outside the nesting
season. Anything can be done to
drive them away when they are
only roosting.”**

USFW Wildlife Biologist

“Active or Partially Active Colonies. Once egg laying has commenced by any of those birds, all nest destruction must cease. Destruction of empty nests in an active or partially active colony will likely threaten surrounding nests that contain eggs or nestlings; therefore it will not be allowed except on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Migratory Bird Permits Office.”

Interim Empty Nest Policy of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2

City of Fort Worth

[FortWorthTexas.gov/migratory birds](http://FortWorthTexas.gov/migratory_birds)

Neighborhood Education Office

817-392-6201

