

Top ten tips to protect yourself against swooping birds

Swooping birds may be a frightening or even a dangerous experience. Native birds can swoop in urban and rural areas, in parks and gardens, along bike tracks and in school yards, or anywhere that birds are nesting.

1. Know your local swooping hotspots

Keep informed about parks, schoolyards and bike trails in your local area by reading your local newspapers, viewing Victoria's 'Magpie Map' on www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/managing-wildlife/swooping-birds or contacting your local council.

2. Avoid the area

The best way to protect yourself from a swooping bird is to avoid venturing into their territory.

3. Move quickly

If you must pass through the area – move calmly and quickly – do not run.

4. Cover your head

Wear a hat or carry a stick or umbrella above your head. Cyclists should wear a helmet, dismount and walk through the area.

5. Eyes at the back of your head

Birds may be less likely to swoop if they think you are watching them. Draw a pair of 'eyes' and attach to the back of hats and helmets.

6. Do not harass wildlife

Don't interfere with or throw stones at birds. This gives them added reason to see humans as a threat and may increase swooping behaviour.

7. Do not destroy nests

This may prompt birds to rebuild their nests, prolonging the swooping behaviour.

8. Don't feed swooping birds.

This may encourage swooping behaviour.

9. Travel in a group

If possible, try to travel in a group in areas where there are swooping birds.

10. Notify others

Put up warning signs for others who may not be aware that there are swooping birds in the area, or ask your council to do so.

You can also mark a bird-swooping area on Victoria's Swooping Bird Map at www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/managing-wildlife/swooping-birds.

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Swoop Fact Sheet



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