

Wildlife & Waste: How you can help

Your donation will help wildlife in immediate danger, but we all need to do more to reduce our waste and keep wildlife safe from harm.

Here are a few simple things you can do in your own life to help:



All rubbish dropped in the street will eventually wash down a stormwater drain and end up in our oceans or waterways. **Reuse, refill or recycle as much waste as possible and always dispose of the rest responsibly.**



50% of the plastic in our bins is used only once but each piece of plastic takes so long to decompose it's likely be swallowed over and over again. **Stop buying overpackaged items and seek out natural, biodegradable alternatives to plastic.**



Cut open any closed loops or rings before disposing of them - especially plastic drink rings, can holders and elastic bands that easily get caught around beaks, necks and legs.



Carelessly discarded fishing line and hooks are some of the worst offenders for entangling wildlife. If you come across discarded fishing line, even if it's not yours, please pick it up and put it in the bin.



Wash your cans and containers to ensure there are no food remnants to attract hungry creatures and **crush or pinch cans shut** before disposal so that animals can't get trapped inside or injured on sharp edges.



Releasing a helium balloon into the sky is not really any different to just throwing it into the ocean – that's where it's going to end up, where it can easily be swallowed by marine life. We recommend giving up balloons altogether, or at least make sure you cut them up before disposing of them responsibly in the bin.



Animals can easily ingest or suffocate inside **plastic bags**. Tie bags closed with a great big knot before recycling them at your local major supermarket or, even better, invest in some reusable cloth bags.



Avoid microplastics that make their way into the food chain –this includes **glitter** (including the stuff in many cosmetics) and **microbeads** in some cleansers and toothpastes. There are a growing number of safe, biodegradable alternatives.

Ask yourself do you *really* need that plastic cup, lid, straw or fork?

Invest in a reusable mug, drink bottle and spork!

For printable copies of this fact sheet visit www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au

