To the Business Owner

Silver gull Management

Silver Gulls (Seagulls) are classified as “Protected Wildlife” under the Wildlife Act 1975. The legislation protects this native bird through making it an offence to harm, kill, destroy, take or injure seagulls without a permit. You can apply for a permit from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Gulls have been roosting on roofs of commercial premises in Clayton, since the 1990’s and have started to nest on these roofs in recent years. The Silver Gull has increased in numbers throughout Australia and this trend is evident as the population continues to grow in Kingston.

Food Source:

Silver gulls are highly opportunistic in their feeding habits. Food of human origin is particularly important to the species in an urban environment and so the nearby landfill sites which accept putrescible waste are an abundant food supply.

Roosting and Nesting Sites:

The increasing population of gulls has meant that there has been a shift from their ‘natural’ nesting sites to roof nesting. Flat roofs in the Clayton area provide a well-positioned open space for these birds to roost and nest close to a food source.

Silver gulls have a strong attachment to nesting sites and so traditional preventative measures such as scaring and roof modifications would not be effective.

Problems arising from gulls roosting and nesting on roofs include:

- Noise
- Smell,
- Droppings on walls, cars and open areas adjacent to occupied roofs,
- Damage to roof structures from droppings
- Flooding caused by blockage of gutters from nesting materials
- Animal Welfare

Due to the fact that the roofs in Clayton are being used for roosting and nesting as well as the huge population of silver gulls present in the area, a two tiered approach is required to control the birds effectively. Business owners/ residents will need to manage their own properties through:

1. Removing the gulls that nest on roofs
2. Installing overhead lines to prevent further nesting/roosting
3. Monitoring
1. **Removing the gulls that nest on roofs**

Apply for a permit from DELWP to destroy nesting adult gulls using a licensed pest control operator or for the removal of gull nests, eggs and chicks from roofs used for nesting.

The removal of gull nests, eggs and chicks from the roofs during the nesting season would ideally occur between July-September. Egg, nest and chick removal should be undertaken immediately after the destruction of the nesting adults.

2. **Installing overhead lines**

Once nesting gulls have been removed, overhead line systems need to be installed to prevent re-use of the roof for nesting or roosting by other gulls.

Strategically placed overhead bird-scare lines appear to be psychological, rather than being a real physical barrier when used against roosting gulls.

This method frequently prevents gulls (without injury) from roosting where they are not wanted, and can prevent gulls using open areas, but is less effective at deterring nesting activities, where the incentive to use the site is greater. In this case, much closer spacing of the lines is required.

3. **Monitoring**

In areas where remedial actions have been taken it important to monitor the roofs, to ensure that recommended strategies are taking effect.

This monitoring should then continue periodically to ensure that action can be taken should new birds attempt to nest on the roof.

**Reducing the food source:**

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) issue and enforce licenses to landfill operators. Council’s Senior Officers have been in regular discussions with the EPA and landfill operators to advocate for progress on works including ensuring the amount of exposed landfill waste is restricted as well as implementing a plan for the management of seagulls.

To obtain information on Pest Controllers that are able to undertake Bird Control, contact the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 136186


Council’s Environmental Health Department can provide you with further information on how to manage silver gulls roosting/nesting on your property: 9581 4573