



# Problems caused by the Australian White Ibis

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## Problems

Harassing picnickers, scavenging at rubbish tips and from rubbish bins and scattering rubbish. Competing with captive animals at wildlife parks for food. Nesting in inappropriate places.

## Background

The Australian White Ibis is a widespread native species that has demonstrated considerable behavioural flexibility in exploiting new sources of food such as rubbish tips. It is adept at snatching sandwiches from people at some picnic areas, while still feeding at more traditional sites such as tidal flats and on grasslands where it is no doubt of great benefit to landholders. Like all native wildlife, the Australian White Ibis is protected in Victoria under the **Wildlife Act 1975**.

Relocation of surplus ibis from Healesville Sanctuary to Sale demonstrated the homing ability of this species as some of the relocated birds had returned to Healesville Sanctuary within a very few days of being released. Movements of Victorian-banded ibis have been recorded as far as New Guinea, so relocation is likely to be of little benefit.

## Solutions

- Prevent access to food in rubbish bins by modifying their design or by ensuring that a lid is attached and used.
- Change tipping practices so that access to food at rubbish tips is denied.
- Modify food containers at wildlife parks so that ibis do not have access, or change feeding times so that ibis cannot compete for food with the animals on exhibit.
- Do not feed ibis at picnic areas, or elsewhere. Place your food scraps in rubbish bins or take them home with you.

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