



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Bird Depredations in Ponds¹

Common Name:	various, depending on species
Appearance:	various, depending on species
Range:	statewide
Habitat:	birds that eat fish in ponds can be attracted to ponds in any habitat
Diet:	fish, frogs, snails
Reproduction:	many species lay eggs in nests in woody vegetation near wetlands others nest on the ground or in cavities
Behavior:	most wading birds stalk prey in shallow water kingfishers, terns, gulls, pelicans, and raptors dive from the air anhingas, cormorants, and diving ducks dive from the water surface and swim underwater nearly all birds use vision to spot their prey
Problems:	may consume and injure many fish from ornamental or commercial fish ponds may disturb fish reproduction due to stress may spread disease, parasites and plant pest problems
Solutions:	cover water surface with screen or netting pond margins should have steeply sloping sides to minimize shallow water areas used by wading birds reduce visibility of fish by using floating aquatic plants or dyes to color water automatic noise-making devices may be helpful
Legal Aspects:	lethal control of birds is illegal without federal permit it is illegal to harass nesting birds
Fact Sheet Available:	yes, not available on CD-ROM at this time

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