

I retired seven years ago so to stay healthy I decided to go for walks in Springbank Park. It didn't take long to notice how poorly the wildlife are treated by many people who visit the Park, including yhe Park staff. I made a decision to help out the animals. For example- squirrels seem to be culled on a semi-annual basis; ground hogs are eliminated using poison; skunks and racoons face the same fate and the geese are kicked; spit upon; deliberately run over by bicycles and grown men in cars. Animal cruelty charges should be assessed in many instances but I can't find any agency that cares. The park managers arranged to have the police sit in unmarked vehicles to watch and see if I was feeding the geese so I could be fined but they won't do anything about the cruelty that goes on in the park. I walk around carrying a bread bag full of peanuts so I can throw five or six peanuts to each squirrel I encounter and for that I get harassed by other park users and some of the staff. With an ongoing list of by-laws; the city by-law people have taken the enjoyment out of a visit to the park, not just for me but for scores of other people who come to the park to engage with nature. At the same time I understand that there needs to be rules but it has reached the point of being ridiculous in my humble opinion. Who does it harm if I feed a squirrel? Are they considered to be a threat to children; who by the way are only seen in the park during the nice weather. The blue-jays, cardinals and chickadees also seek me out for a peanut. Should I and everyone else who enjoys this activity; be subjected to on-going threats of fines? The city has managed to take the enjoyment out of the park for many park users. Why don't you focus your attention on larger issues? Perhaps the park workers could spend more time cleaning the park instead of following people like me around and acting like Gestapo agents.

My name is Ron Killby and it would be OK with me if this e-mail was read at the Council Meeting. Thanks for your attention.