

From: [Chelsea Thomas](#)
To: [District Information](#)
Subject: Backyard Ducks
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District of Mackenzie,

I am writing to ask you to update your bylaws regarding keeping backyard chickens to include ducks as well. They have the same basic requirements for keeping them in your backyard but they come with even more benefits than chickens.

Below I have a list of reasons why ducks are a good idea to keep as backyard companions and below that I have a list of other BC cities that have already included ducks in their bylaws with chickens.

My family has been dreaming of getting a duck for some time and now that we own a home in your beautiful community we are so excited to take that step. We have a 3-year-old son and the benefits to him getting to raise a duck are invaluable. We would like to get 1 or 2 Pekin ducks for our backyard.

Here are 10 reasons to choose ducks over chickens for your backyard:

1. Ducks are generally healthier. Because they spend so much time in the water, ducks tend to be far less susceptible to mites and other external parasites than chickens. Any parasites that might be tempted to latch on will drown. Ducks also have harder immune systems, tend to stay in better general health and are less likely to contract disease than chickens.

2. Ducks are more cold-hardy. Ducks have an added layer of fat that chickens don't have. Ducks also have waterproofing on their feathers to protect against the elements, as well as a thick down undercoat designed to keep them warm and dry in the water. This makes ducks far more cold-hardy than chickens. In fact, ours actually prefer to sleep outside, even in the snow and rain.

3. Ducks are more heat-tolerant. During the hot summer months chickens stand around panting, meanwhile, the ducks paddle about quite contentedly in their pool. Ducks handle the heat quite easily by merely taking a dip to cool off.

4. Ducks are quieter. Maybe hard to believe, but chickens actually make more noise than ducks. Chickens cackle and carry on after they lay an egg, before they lay an egg, and for no apparent reason at all. Female ducks on the other hand, although

they will quack loudly when agitated or excited, normally just quietly chitter-chatter.

5. Duck eggs are superior to chicken eggs. Ducks lay eggs that are larger, richer in flavour and excellent for baking due to their higher fat and lower water content. Duck eggs are also slightly more nutritious than chicken eggs. Pastry chefs prize duck eggs because the large amount of protein in their whites adds heft and loft to baked goods. Due to their thicker shells and membranes, they also have a longer shelf life and are less likely to break. Chicken eggs also contain an enzyme that can cause some people stomach upset.

6. Ducks lay more regularly. Ducks consistently outperform chickens even through the winter without any supplemental light in their house. On average you can get 3-4 duck eggs from four female ducks daily (an admirable 75-100% rate) year-round, contrasted with only 8-10 chicken eggs from 20 laying hens (a mere 40-50% rate) in the winter. Many breeds of ducks are also very unlikely to go broody (broodies don't lay eggs, so they are detrimental to your egg production).

7. Ducks adhere to a far less aggressive pecking order. Ducks welcome newcomers far more quickly than chickens do. Whether the newcomers are chickens or ducks, ducks seem unperturbed and seldom bother new additions to the flock. Chickens, however, take any new additions to the flock as an affront to their rigid pecking order. The result is squabbling and confrontations that can get quite serious until the new order is established and tranquility again returns.

8. Ducks are easier on your lawn. While it's true that ducks can, and will, eat anything green within their reach, as long as you plant bushes and trees that are tall enough so that the ducks can't reach the tops, you can successfully landscape your run or backyard, even with ducks inhabiting it. Chickens, on the other hand, within days of being introduced to a new lawn will have it scratched down to bare dirt. Chickens will continue to not only eat every bit of green that tries to grow, but also dig deep depressions in the earth in which to take their dust baths or cool off in the summer. Ducks may trample your lawn a bit, but they won't create a barren wasteland of your backyard like chickens will.

9. Ducks are wonderful for pest control. Given the opportunity, ducks will eat every slug, worm, spider, grasshopper, cricket, fly and grub they can find. They are wonderful for natural pest control. I have found chickens are more selective about the kinds of bugs they will eat. Some of our hens won't even look twice at a worm – but the ducks will chase a bug down until they catch it. Given the opportunity, they will also dine on small snakes, toads and even mice.

10. Ducklings are adorable! Okay, I admit this comes down to personal preference.

As cute as baby chicks are, baby ducklings are irresistible. Those webbed feet that look too big for their bodies, earnest dark eyes and almost flesh-coloured rounded bills steal your heart.

Final thoughts: chickens do have wonderful personalities, but they tend to be a bit nervous, flighty and skittish, possibly a result of being at the bottom of Mother Nature's food chain. Ducks, however, are less likely to get their feathers ruffled and are generally calm, alert and downright funny.

<https://www.hgtv.com/outdoors/gardens/animals-and-wildlife/raising-ducks-or-chickens>

Here are more articles sharing details about the care of ducks being comparable and oftentimes easier than chickens.

<https://www.knowyourchickens.com/ducks-vs-chickens/>

<https://grubblyfarms.com/blogs/the-flyer/backyard-chickens-vs-ducks>

<https://www.tyrantfarms.com/a-fowl-battle-ducks-vs-chickens/>

BC Cities that allow ducks in the Backyard:

Esquimalt, BC allows ducks. (2014)

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/backyard-ducks-the-latest-urban-farming-trend-1.2640189>

Oliver, BC has updated its Bylaws to include ducks (2020)

<https://www.castanet.net/news/Penticton/311281/Domestic-ducks-will-become-a-part-of-Oliver-by-law-next-month>

Vernon, BC Raise your own ducks in BC Canada to support local Tourism (2023)

<https://www.ehcanadatravel.com/british-columbia/blog/raise-your-own-ducklings.html>

Victoria, BC Ducks are allowed

<https://www.vacs.ca/bylaw-regulations/backyard-chickens/register-your-chickens>

Nanaimo, BC Ducks are allowed

<https://www.nacsanimalcontrol.ca/poultry>

Pemberton, BC Ducks are allowed

<https://pembertonholmes.com/duck-eggs/>

Qualicum Beach, BC Almost approved

<https://www.timescolonist.com/local-news/qualicum-beach-council-warming-up-to->

[backyard-chickens-if-they-are-licensed-5023201](#)

Williams Lake BC, Ducks are allowed

<https://williamslake.civicweb.net/document/39375/>

Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter, I look forward to hearing from you.

Chelsea, Adam & Charlie Thomas