

Isn't it wonderful to wake up to the sound of chirping birds a little chirp in the background of your mind as you slowly wake up. And then you are jolted out of your slumber by the obnoxious "CAW CAW" of the Sand Hill Cranes who also make our conclave their home. They are making that noise because generally food is left out for them as well as some of their feathered friends. But this particular morning their benefactors are away and no food has been left. The problem is they start to depend on the handouts and hesitate to look for their own food source. And keep in mind that Alligators or snakes can come up on our properties to retrieve food and that dangerous situation would certainly put us all at risk.

- **PLEASE REMEMBER...**Florida law strictly prohibits intentionally feeding certain wildlife, including Bears, Alligators, and Crocodiles, intentionally feeding these animals is illegal under Florida rules and statutes. It is also illegal to leave out food or garbage in a way that attracts them. Feeding protected Birds and Marine Life including pelicans, sandhill cranes, bald eagles, and protected manatees is prohibited by state and federal laws. The [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission \(FWC\)](#) restricts feeding other animals like raccoons, because it creates dangerous dependency and unnatural behavior. The penalties for violations start with a \$100 civil fine for animals like bears or alligators. Which can escalate quickly into misdemeanors, bringing higher fines or jail time.