

Do You Know.....about "nuisance" animals?

At Second Chance Wildlife Center, we receive many calls each week from citizens who would like humane solutions to wildlife conflicts. This is a Problem and Solution listing of the most commonly "problematic" species.

Eastern Chipmunks

PROBLEM:

Chipmunks frequently unearth newly planted bulbs.

SOLUTION:

Protect your bulbs by following this simple five-step process:

- (1) Instead of digging a separate hole for each bulb, dig up the entire plot to the required depth.
- (2) Place your bulbs in the plot with the required spacing between each.
- (3) Cover the bulbs with a few inches of soil.
- (4) Lay down a piece of hardware cloth over the plot. Make sure you choose a piece that has holes large enough for shoots to emerge, but small enough to prevent the bulbs from being pulled through. Quarter-inch cloth can accommodate most small bulbs while half-inch cloth is suitable for larger bulbs.
- (5) Cover the hardware cloth with the remaining soil and any top soil or mulch of your choice.

Eastern Cottontails

PROBLEM:

Rabbits will browse flower and vegetable plants in the spring and summer and fruit trees and ornamentals in the fall and winter. *If rabbits are the culprit, bitten ends will appear neatly clipped.*

SOLUTION:

- (1) Protect your garden by installing rabbit-proof fencing, available at your local home and garden center. Make sure the fencing is at least 6 inches in the ground to prevent digging.
- (2) Place a plastic Great Horned owl in one conspicuous corner of your garden, preferably one with a bobbing head as these will move a bit in the breeze, providing a more life-like "predator". Available at your local home and garden stores.
- (3) Protect your trees by purchasing tree trunk protective products at your local garden center or nursery.
- (4) Shred Irish Spring soap (with a cheese grater) around your plants.

PROBLEM:

Rabbits will commonly nest in yards and gardens.

SOLUTION:

Female rabbits visit their nest to nurse their young two to three times a day (at dawn, dusk and occasionally midnight) for the three to four weeks the young are in the nest. If you cannot wait for the young to be weaned (such as pending renovations), call SCWC for advice. If you move the nest, the female will abandon the young.

Eastern Grey Squirrels

PROBLEM:

Squirrels will readily nest in an attic that will provide easy shelter and warmth for their young.

SOLUTION:

- (1) Perform roof and eave repairs during the winter to prevent squirrels from invading your attic in the spring.
- (2) Place a small radio in your attic and leave it on 24 hours a day to evict any squirrels already inhabiting your attic. The constant noise will cause them to move their young to a quieter spot. Once the family is gone, you can repair the entrance hole(s).

Eastern Grey Squirrels con't

PROBLEM:

Squirrels will raid bird feeders for an easy meal.

SOLUTION:

- (1) Protect your bird feeders by hanging them from a branch on a wire that is at least ten feet long and at least eight feet from the nearest branch. Despite being avid tree-dwellers, squirrels do not have the best depth perception and are uncomfortable making large jumps.
- (2) If your bird feeders hang from a pole in the ground, coat the pole with Pam™ cooking spray to keep the squirrels from catching a grip.
- (3) Squirrel guards for bird feeders are available at most garden and wild bird stores, but most squirrels can easily get around these products.

Groundhogs

PROBLEM:

Groundhogs are common vegetable garden raiders.

SOLUTION:

- (1) Because of their cautious nature, groundhogs will eschew areas of high human activity. Increase your daily activity in problem areas.
- (2) If you have a dog, supervised time in the yard will also deter groundhogs, as they will view any dog larger than them as a threat.

PROBLEM:

Groundhogs will occasionally burrow under and around homes and outbuildings.

SOLUTION:

Removal of Groundhogs from their burrow should take place in the late summer to early fall, when the young of the year have moved on. Place a rag dampened with undiluted, original scent Pine Sol in each opening of the burrow, save one. The smell will drive the Groundhog out towards the "open" hole. Once you are *absolutely certain* the burrow is empty, it can be filled in with dirt and the holes covered with sod to prevent anyone else from moving in.

RACCOONS

PROBLEM:

Raccoons will make nursing-nests in attics and chimneys because they provide easy shelter and warmth for their young.

SOLUTION:

- (1) Perform roof and eave repairs during the winter to prevent raccoons from invading your attic in the spring.
- (2) Place a small radio in your attic and leave it on 24 hours a day to evict any raccoons already inhabiting your attic. The constant noise will cause them to move their young to a quieter spot. Once the family is gone, you can repair the entrance hole(s).

PROBLEM:

Being opportunistic omnivores, these extremely intelligent, semi-social animals will frequently raid porches, decks and garbage cans.

SOLUTION:

- (1) Before going to bed each night, make sure there is no food or water left around your home. Empty all outdoor pet dishes and clean under bird feeders.
- (2) Purchase garbage cans with locking lids.
- (3) Purchase bungee cords to tie down lids of pre-existing garbage cans.

Waterfowl:
Canada Geese and Mallard Ducks

PROBLEM:

Geese and Mallards make nests and lay their eggs in areas protected from predators. Sometimes these spots are on balconies or in school or office courtyards where their un-flighted young cannot escape.

SOLUTION:

- (1) It is illegal for anyone to remove a nest that has eggs in it, as they, and the parents, are federally protected. If the nest has eggs, please call SCWC for further advice.
- (2) If the nest has no eggs, you can simply remove it. If the parents have to rebuild their nest more than twice, they will usually give up and move on.

White-tailed Deer

PROBLEM:

Deer can eat a large variety of plants throughout the seasons and are capable of rapid and widespread garden damage, even eating the bark of young trees in the winter. *If deer are the culprit, bitten ends will appear ragged.*

SOLUTION:

- (1) Protect your pre-existing garden by installing deer-proof fencing, available at your local home and garden center.
- (2) Plant a new garden full of plants unappetizing to deer:
 - Bayberry ◦ Calamint ◦ Foxglove ◦ Monkshood ◦ Peony
 - Blue Flax ◦ Catnip ◦ Geranium ◦ Mt. laurel ◦ Poppy
 - Boxwood ◦ Daffodil ◦ Globe thistle ◦ Mint ◦ Spruce
 - Butterfly bush ◦ Lavender ◦ Oregano ◦ Yarrow
- (3) Protect your trees by purchasing tree trunk protective products at your local garden center or nursery.

PROBLEM:

White-tailed does commonly leave their young fawns in suburban yards. It is normal for a doe to leave her fawn for up to ten hours at a time. The fawn is not abandoned; the doe is always within earshot. Most fawns will not move even if you approach them.

SOLUTION:

If you do not want your lawn used as a fawn day-care center, simply leave an unwashed article of clothing close to the fawn. The doe should not leave her baby there again.

Woodpeckers

PROBLEM:

In the early spring, woodpeckers start looking for new insect larvae and may use wooden portions of your house in their investigations. Some may bang on metal flashing to attract a mate.

SOLUTION:

- (1) If woodpecker activity is frequent on your home, you may have an insect infestation. Contact your local pest control agency for a consultation.
- (2) If the woodpecker activity is not frequent enough to signal an infestation, cover the problem spots with screen material to prevent further damage.
- (3) Hang old CDs in the problem areas. The constant flashing in the sun will deter most birds from landing.
- (4) Placing a plastic Great Horned owl over the most troublesome area will deter most woodpeckers though some Downy woodpeckers cannot be fooled. Available at your local home and garden stores.