

Why not trap and relocate an unwanted animal?

Under the Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act wildlife must be released in close proximity to the original point of capture. Trapping is not an effective method of wildlife control. It does not address the primary reason why an unwanted animal is on the property, which is the availability of food and shelter. Unless the attractant is removed the animal will return or a new animal will move in.

As well, relocation of trapped animals creates a new set of potential problems that include:

- Animals may be released in areas where populations are already at maximum levels.
- Relocated animals may transmit diseases to other wildlife in the release area.
- During certain times of the year the young may be left behind that are unable to fend for themselves.
- Trapping and relocating late in the season prevents animals from accessing shelter and food sources, and may result in starvation or death from exposure.

More information is available from the following websites:

www.caht.ca

www.wildneighbors.org

www.cfhs.ca/Programs/HumaneEducation/GeneralPublic/UrbanWildlife

www.hww.ca

www.wildlifedamage.unl.edu/

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Courtesy of AAA Wildlife Control Ltd.



Wildlife Conflicts

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Wildlife Conflicts - an ounce of prevention...

Most people in Canada now live in an urban or suburban environment. The average person is more likely to encounter wildlife in their own neighbourhood than in areas where wildlife is often assumed to be found.

Wildlife in our communities can add to the enjoyment of everyday life and some individuals actively promote the presence of wildlife for personal or aesthetic purposes. By putting up bird feeders or wildlife feeding stations, installing ponds and shrubs, they hope to retain a sense of connection with the natural environment. However, providing feed for one type of wildlife may attract other animals that are not wanted. Unfortunately, some wild animals cause problems by damaging or destroying property, producing unsanitary waste, carrying disease and otherwise conflicting with human activities

Finding Solutions to Conflicts

We must enhance those parts of the urban and suburban environment that contribute to wildlife survival and diversity while minimizing or eliminating the negative aspects that can result from human/wildlife confrontation. In many cases that may mean that we need to change the way we do things. No matter what the human/wildlife conflict, the following will assist you in resolving it safely and humanely.

Is there a problem?

Individuals frequently believe that they have a conflict with a wild animal after observing it on their property. An understanding of wildlife and a little detective work will soon reveal whether an animal is actually causing a problem on the property or is merely passing through.

If there is a problem, how serious is it?

It is necessary to identify what kind of conflict exists. This requires answers to the following questions: What type of wildlife is involved? Is there a health or safety concern for people or pets?

Is there damage to property?

Have you collected all the facts before you decide on a course of action?

Do you understand why you have a conflict with wildlife? A number of wildlife species have demonstrated that they can adapt to living in close proximity to humans. Animals can make a home where they are able to find food, water, and shelter. Have you taken all steps to reduce the attractiveness of your property to wild animals?

What can you do to discourage wild animals from taking up residence on your property?

Conduct a critical inspection of your home and property to determine whether there are steps you can take to minimize the attraction for unwanted wild animals. The following steps will generally deter many of the smaller unwanted wild animals (raccoons, skunks, squirrels, etc.) from taking up residence on your property. Larger wildlife such as deer or bear may cause specific problems and may require very specific actions.

Garbage

Some animals view your garbage container as a ready food source. Garbage should always be kept indoors until the morning of pick-up, and should always be stored in animal-proof containers.

Trees, Bushes and TV Antennas

Some animals gain access to your roof and chimney by using available trees, bushes, TV antennas etc. Trimming trees and bushes back at least 5 meters from roof edges will make access more difficult. You can also install a 1 meter sheet metal collar loosely around trees about 2 meters off the ground to make it more difficult for many animals to climb the trees. A similar metal collar should be installed tightly around TV Antennas at ground level.

Roof, Eaves and Chimneys

Make sure that the roof is inspected frequently and all worn or missing shingles are promptly replaced, and all vents, gaps, etc. are covered with heavy screening (Do not use chicken wire, it is not strong enough) to prevent animals from gaining access to attics. Animal-proof screens should be installed on all chimneys.

Decks, porches, sheds and other out-buildings

Dig a 30cm deep trench around the perimeter of these structures and install a wire screen of 1" x1" 16 ga. wire mesh, shaped in an "L" placed flush around each structure so that the toe of the "L" points outward.

Neighbours

If your neighbours are feeding wildlife or are improperly storing garbage they may be unaware that they are contributing to the problem.

Other sources of food

Keep in mind that pet food and bird feeders can also attract unwanted wildlife.

Getting Help

If the problem persists, or if you are in need of further assistance, contact a local wildlife rehabilitator, animal control center, humane society or a humane wildlife control company to discuss humane solutions.

Since wildlife control companies are not government licensed what should I look for when hiring a wildlife control company?

- Make sure the company has been in business for a minimum of 5 years, since there is a high turnover of wildlife removal companies.
- Query whether the company is in compliance with the OMNR Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.
- Request an on-site free written estimate.
- Ask if they provide a full range of animal proofing.
- Confirm that the company carries business liability Insurance.
- Ask for a minimum one year guarantee against animal re-entry.
- Ask for referrals.
- Request a referral from your local animal welfare or animal care and control agency.