

Beasts Begone!

Handling Wildlife Problems in Buildings

by Lynn Braband, New York State
Integrated Pest Management Program



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Credits

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About the New York State Integrated Pest Management Program

We encourage people to adopt a sustainable approach to managing pests, using methods that minimize environmental, health, and economic risks. For more information: New York State Integrated Pest Management Program, 607 W. North St., Cornell AgriTech, Geneva, NY 14456; nysipm.cornell.edu.

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Handling Wildlife Problems in Buildings

Introduction

Raccoons, squirrels, woodchucks, mice, bats, and snakes can be nuisances to homeowners and building managers. These animals cause damage and/or pose health risks when they enter buildings. This manual provides an overview of the different ways to solve animal problems in and around buildings. It is intended for use by homeowners, property managers and pest control operators who are unfamiliar with nuisance wildlife control. The species and techniques are applicable to New York State and may be relevant in other states throughout the Northeast.



Peromyscus mouse with brood. Photo: NYSIPM.

Reasons for Entry

Animals enter homes because they are seeking shelter, food, and places to cache food. Sometimes they are just exploring. Animals behave this way to meet their needs. Although these behaviors may have negative results for us, animals rarely intend to be malicious. The attitude of the inspector should be one of caution and respect; the goal is to enable the humans and other animals to co-exist with better boundaries!

Damage and Risk

When animals enter human structures, the results range from simple nuisance (such as disturbing noises) to health risks and significant destruction. Animals can damage woodwork, plastic, and other materials in a variety of ways. They can chew electrical wires, causing system failures and fires, and can soil insulation. Birds release fecal droppings that mar building exteriors. Some animals carry diseases and parasites that are zoonotic, that is, they can be transmitted from animals to humans.

Dealing with Animals

The three major steps for solving and preventing animal problems are inspection, removal (if necessary), and exclusion. Inspections provide important information about current problems as well as on conditions that may create future problems. Any animals present in the building will need to be removed. Effective exclusion is the best approach for the prevention of structural animal problems.

Inspections

Before you can determine if there is a problem or contemplate solutions, you must conduct a thorough inspection. With information from an inspection, an experienced observer can provide management options for problems associated with uninvited animal guests.

Steps to an Inspection

The major steps in the process are preparation, contact interview, inspection, and recommendations. The specifics depend on the type of building and the animals involved. Brief descriptions of signs and problems associated with the animals that commonly enter structures are included in Appendix A.

Preparation

Use a site map and an inspection form. A site map is usually a floor plan of the building. A generic inspection form, such as that found in Appendix B, is applicable to most structures and animals. Inspection forms could also be developed that are specific to a particular location, such as a certain school building, or to a particular animal (Appendix C).

Contact Interview

If someone who is not on site daily is inspecting the building, that person should interview an appropriate contact, such as a homeowner, facility manager, custodian, or kitchen staff member.

In the interview, ask either general or probing questions. A general question might be, "Please describe what you know about the problem," or "Have you noticed any problems?" This type of question provides an opportunity for the contacts to give their perspective, can lead to probing questions, and may guide where to start the inspection.

Probing questions focus on specific information. They may address any of the following: noises; sightings of animals or signs; odors; time of day of animal activity; frequency of activity; and health concerns, such as contacts between wild animals and humans or pets. Occasionally respondents misinterpret mechanical sounds (smoke alarm with low battery, swaying utility line, etc.) as animal noises. Probing questions can help to determine the likelihood of this error.

Inspection Process

Follow appropriate safety precautions throughout the inspection by paying attention to equipment and being aware of potentially harmful situations. Keep ladders in good repair and choose ones of appropriate construction and height for the work that needs to be done. Secure

Equipment

The most important piece of inspection equipment is a good flashlight. Other helpful equipment:

- extendible mirror for viewing less accessible locations
- stepladder for interior inspections
- larger ladders for exterior inspections
- binoculars for tall structures
- ultraviolet light source for detecting rodent urine stains
- animal identification books, including those that show mammal tracks and droppings

Safety equipment includes respirators [preferably with a HEPA filter]; goggles and kneepads for when you inspect crawl spaces; disposable gloves; safety helmets; bungee cords or other means of securing ladders for use; and safety ropes/harnesses.

them so that they will not accidentally fall over, and use safety helmets to prevent head injuries and possible death. When climbing steep roofs, you may need safety ropes and harnesses.

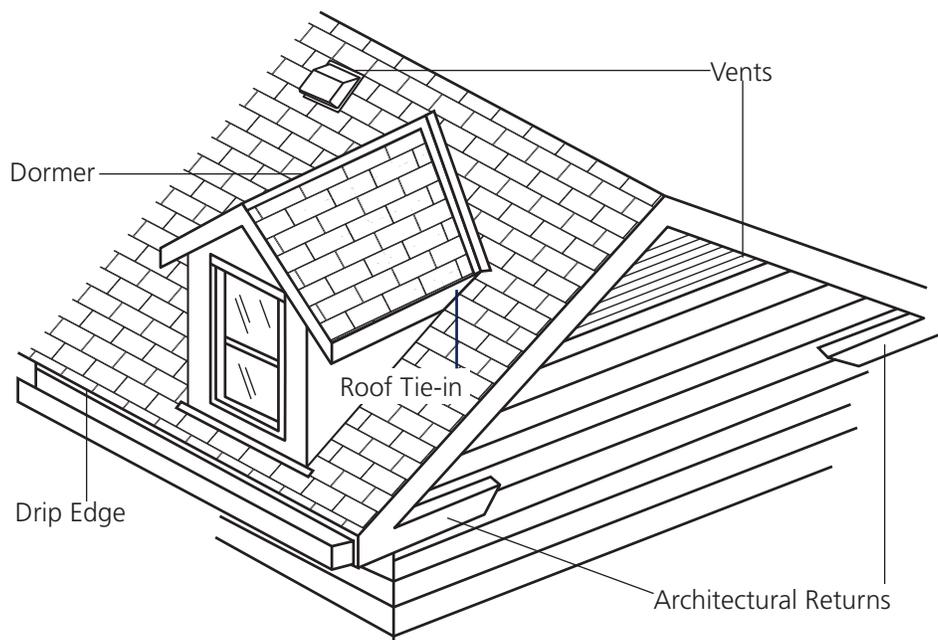
Respirators are necessary for the safe inspection of most crawl spaces. HEPA filters, which filter out small particles such as hantavirus, are recommended. Goggles, disposable gloves, and coveralls provide additional personal protection. Consult the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines for safety practices on ladders, the use of respirators and other equipment, and any other health or safety concerns.

Whether you should focus on the interior or exterior for your inspection will depend on what you are looking for. For example, the presence of raccoons or squirrels can often be determined by an outside inspection, and an inside inspection may not be needed. On the other hand, interior inspections for bats, mice, or rats can help focus the exterior inspection for entry holes. What you may be looking for (such as entry hole sizes and probable locations) will vary according to species.

Whether inspecting interiors or exteriors, look for and record current, past, and potential problems on the inspection form and site map. Note entry holes, fecal droppings, runways (such as in insulation), tracks, rub marks, urine stains, gnaw marks, food caches, nests, odors, noise (vocalizations, movements), evidence of past control efforts (such as empty pesticide containers or old repairs), burrows, access routes, carcasses, and live animals. Note any structural sites that currently do not have problems but are vulnerable to future access or damage by animals. Photos or videos, especially of hard to see spots, are valuable for documentation and education of building owners and occupants.

Interiors. Inspect the building systematically. Work your way from the top of the building to the bottom. Within each room, move either clockwise or counterclockwise. Pay particular attention to room corners and underneath and behind furniture. If suspended ceilings are present, push up the panels in several locations to check above the ceiling. Inspect attics, basements, closets, built-in drawers, areas underneath sinks, plumbing/utility accesses, and miscellaneous crawl spaces.

Exteriors. Outside, thoroughly inspect the foundation, then repeat the inspection on the upper portions of the structure. Be sure to check areas beneath decks, crawl spaces, dumpsters, garbage storage areas, piles of firewood, lumber, or debris. Inspect garages, eaves, dormers, windows, architectural returns, vents, drip edges, soffits, chimneys, roof corners, and roof tie-ins.



Recommending Management Options

Using the findings of the inspection, recommend management options, in writing, to the contact person. Four possibilities are animal removal, exclusion/repair, prevention of future problems, and monitoring (see Appendix B). Techniques for animal removal include capture, one-way doors, repellents, and pesticides. Exclusion generally refers to the closure of entry sites to prevent reentry by animals. If monitoring for vertebrate problems is feasible, describe where the monitoring should be done and the techniques to be used. Possible techniques include regular inspections, tracking stations, non-toxic bait stations, and traps. Explain when to conduct the monitoring.

Discuss the inspection results and management recommendations with the contact person. Show photographs of on-site situations that are difficult to see. A photo album of structural problems, typical animal damage, management options, and prevention techniques can also be an important resource.

Removing Animals

Getting Started

When you've got bats in the belfry, mice in the basement, or snakes in the bathroom, you need to know your options for liberating the building from uninvited animal guests. Homes, schools, and other municipal buildings are vulnerable to invasion by raccoons, woodchucks, mice, bats, birds, and snakes. This section provides you, as a building manager or caretaker, with some options for removing unwanted animals.

Before choosing a technique for removing an animal from a building, you should consider the following.

Know the law.

Generally, the state has jurisdictional responsibility for wild animals. The main regulatory agency in New York State is the Department of Environmental Conservation (in other states, check with appropriate wildlife agencies). In the case of migratory birds or federally endangered species, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also has jurisdiction. There may also be local ordinances to consider.

Assess health and safety factors.

Evaluate risks to the operator associated with a particular animal as well as with removal techniques. Be familiar with the safety measures necessary to reduce the risk of contracting zoonotic diseases and use proper precautions on ladders and with other equipment. Pest Control Technician Safety Manual by Pinto and Associates is a good resource. Also, consider risks to the users of the building. Expedient removal of animals that pose a serious threat to the public is important; however, be sure to use removal techniques that pose the least risk to the operator and the public.

Consider the humaneness.

Generally, humaneness refers to minimizing the pain felt by an animal. A quick lethal technique is often considered more humane than a non-lethal technique that has a high probability of causing prolonged suffering.

Evaluate effectiveness.

While other factors are important, if the animal is not removed, the problem is not solved.

Be sure it's practical.

Methods that are humane, effective, and safe will not be implemented if they are too expensive or otherwise cumbersome for the owner of the building.

Be aware of the social context.

Human responses to animals are diverse and often intense. It is important to consider the visibility of the animal removal and choose techniques that will help maintain positive relationships with the building's occupants and the broader community.

Legal Considerations

The following is a summation of the legal framework for wild animal control in New York State. The major regulatory agencies for wild animals in New York are the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (all species) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (migratory birds and federally endangered species). Contact your local office of the Department of Environmental Conservation (or the appropriate agency in other states) with any specific questions or concerns that you may have. This information was accurate as of October 24, 2014.

Every species of wild animal in New York State has a legal classification. The classification categories of most relevance to pest management are "unprotected" and "protected."

An "unprotected" species can legally be taken by the property owner at any time of the year and by any means **as long as** other laws (i.e., pesticide regulations, firearm discharge ordinances, trespassing laws, etc.) are not violated. However, without a permit, the property owner cannot release the animal off his/her property. The animal must be destroyed and buried or cremated. An "unprotected" animal could also be released on the same property where it was captured. "Unprotected" mammals include shrews, moles, bats (except Indiana bat, which is federally protected), chipmunk, woodchuck, red squirrel, flying squirrels, voles, mice, and Norway rat. The rock pigeon (feral pigeon), house sparrow, and European starling are "unprotected" bird species.

There are two subcategories of "protected" species. For some "protected" mammal species, **if an individual animal is causing damage** (not merely being a nuisance), it can be captured and/or destroyed by the property owner. Mammalian species, which are classified under this category, include opossum, raccoon, weasels, skunk, and gray squirrel. However, the animal (dead or alive) cannot be transported off the landowner's property without a nuisance wildlife control permit. Exceptions would be animals that are taken during a legal hunting or fur trapping season established for that species if the appropriate hunting or trapping license has been obtained. Another exception is that skunks may legally be taken if only a nuisance (not causing damage).

Nuisance wildlife control permits are issued to individuals who have gone through the prescribed application process. These permits allow the removal of the aforementioned "protected" animals in any number, at any time, and from any location (with permission of the landowner) within the state. Individuals who have obtained a permit, which must be renewed annually, include private nuisance wildlife control operators, many pest control operators, municipal animal control officers, and some wildlife rehabilitators.

A few mammals (including bear, beaver, deer, mink, and muskrat), most birds, and (currently) all reptiles and amphibians are not only “protected” but cannot be captured and/or removed from property without special case-by-case permits.

There are various complications associated with these regulations. For example, local municipalities may require a permit for pigeon control. State and county health departments have authority over species that may carry rabies. As stated previously, contact the Department of Environmental Conservation if you have questions about the law and wild animal problems.

Animal Removal Techniques

Below are descriptions of some of the legal methods commonly used to remove animals that enter buildings in New York State. Often, a combination of methods will give better results than any one approach by itself. A list of suppliers and manufacturers is provided in Appendix D.

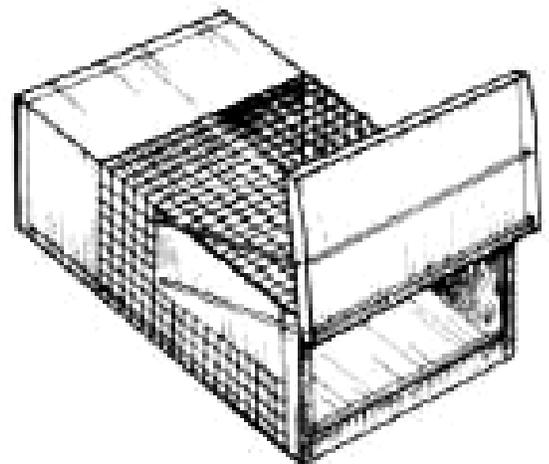
Traps

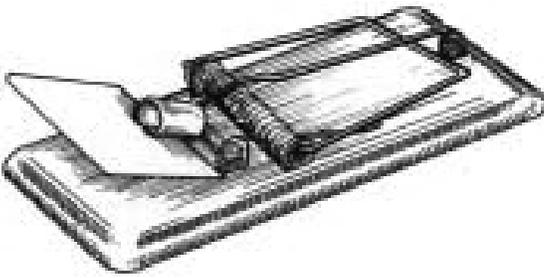
Live traps capture animals without killing them. Some types of live traps are box traps, multiple capture traps, and a variety of bird traps. By definition, foothold traps (commonly used in fur trapping) are live traps. However, foothold traps generally are not practical for removing animals from buildings.

BOX TRAPS capture animals that step upon a treadle inside the trap. The tripped treadle results in the closing of a door(s) at the end(s) of the trap. Many designs and sizes of box traps are available, especially for the capture of mammals. Usually the animal is enticed into the trap by a bait or lure. Some models with doors on opposite ends of the trap can capture animals that are simply passing through.

MULTIPLE CAPTURE TRAPS are able to catch more than one animal without having to be reset. Most multiple capture traps are designed for mice. Some brands (such as Ketch-All®) will catch animals up to the size of chipmunks. However, larger animals are more likely to suffer harm. A few traps (such as the multi-catch rat/chipmunk cage trap, distributed by Wildlife Control Supplies™) are designed to capture rats, squirrels, and similar-sized animals. Some designs (such as Ketch-All® and Kwick Katch®) have a wind-up spring that powers a rotating mechanism. When triggered, the mechanism entraps mice in a holding compartment. Other traps (notably the Victor Tin Cat®) have one-way doors that allow mice to enter but not exit.

BIRD LIVE TRAPS are available in many varieties. Most are designed to capture particular types of birds, such as pigeons or sparrows. Some will capture one bird at a time, while others are multiple capture traps.





Lethal traps kill an animal upon capture, usually by means of a mechanical blow. The best known examples are mouse-and rat snap-back traps. Other designs and sizes exist for capturing a wide range of animals, especially mammals. One example is the Conibear™, body gripping trap. Exercise extra caution when determining when and where lethal traps are set.

Glue boards or traps consist of a layer of long-lasting adhesive spread over a surface (usually plastic or cardboard). They effectively capture small animals by entrapping them in adhesive. If the animal is removed soon after capture, a glue board functions as a live trap. The animal can be removed by loosening the adhesive with vegetable oil. However, there may be residual negative effects, especially with snakes. In practice, however, animals are frequently left to die on the glue boards. Thus, many people consider glueboards to be inhumane.

Passive nets are set in a location and left for a period of time. Animals are captured when they encounter the net and become entangled. Fine-threaded pocketed nets, known as mist nets, are often used to capture birds inside buildings.

Direct Capture

There are several types of equipment used to facilitate the capture of animals without the use of traps.

Animal handling gloves. Various specialized gloves exist to protect operators while they are capturing an animal. The best designs cover not only the hand but also a portion of the arm. They are usually made of thick leather and may contain other materials, such as Kevlar™ (from which bulletproof vests are made).

Hand-operated devices. Among the most versatile of hand-operated devices are catchpoles (control loops) that tighten a looped cable around the body of an animal. Other devices utilize vise-grip mechanisms to capture and restrain animals.

Nets also can be used for direct capture. Two designs are the throw net and “hoop” net. Throw nets are tossed over the target animal. “Hoop” nets (such as fish landing nets) are attached to the end of a long handle.

Repellents

Visual. There are many types of visual repellents for birds. They range in price and sophistication from simple inflatable plastic balls with large eyespots to mechanical human effigies. The repellent effect is generally immediate but short term. Movement of the devices increases effectiveness, especially if the movement is unpredictable or irregular.

Auditory. There are many types of auditory repellents for birds. The most effective are devices that play distress calls of the target species. Other types of auditory repellents utilize loud noises to startle the



Shiny metal owls to frighten other birds. Photo: NYSIPM.

target. One example is a “shell cracker,” a projectile (fired from a shotgun) that explodes in the air. Devices that claim to repel animals by use of ultrasonic waves not audible to humans have consistently proven to be ineffective.

Taste. Most bad-tasting repellents have been developed to deter deer or geese from damaging garden plants or lawns. Few taste repellents have been specifically designed for use on buildings. Bitrex™, one such substance, may help prevent chewing damage on the sides of buildings.

Olfactory. Products containing substances such as naphthalene or dried blood are known to have a repellent effect, particularly on mammals. These products are generally labeled for outdoor use and may be useful in helping to drive animals out from under decks or other structural additions.

Contact (Touch). Several repellents, containing polybutenes or other ingredients, form a sticky surface that is uncomfortable for pigeons and other birds. Polybutene products may get stuck in the bird’s feathers.

Firearms

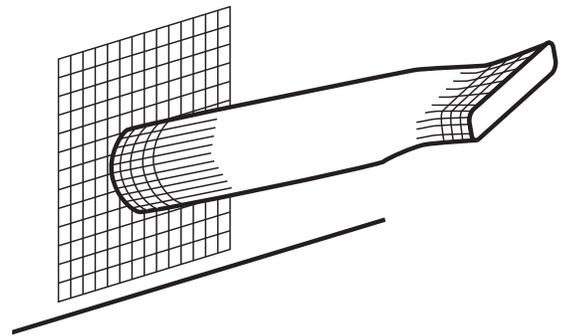
Shotguns and .22 caliber rifles/pistols can sometimes be used to remove animals from the outside of structures. Inside large buildings, such as warehouses, pellet guns have been successfully used to remove pest birds. Firearms should be used only by individuals who have been trained in firearm safety. Legal restrictions, such as local firearm discharge ordinances, also restrict their use.

One-Way Doors

These devices, either commercially available or homemade, allow an animal to exit but not reenter a building. Effective bat-proofing often involves the use of such doors, also known as checkvalves. Manufacturers, as Tomahawk™, make one-way doors for squirrels and other animals.

William Bridgeland, retired US Fish and Wildlife Service biologist, developed a one-way door technique for snakes. Aluminum insect screening is rolled into a tube and attached over the entry hole, which is usually around the foundation. The tube is angled slightly up and somewhat flattened at its outer end. The snake should be able to crawl out of the tube but not reenter. Insect screening is used because snakes may utilize olfactory clues to find entry holes. Insect screening would diffuse odors and be less likely to direct the animal to the open end of the tube when seeking reentry. When snakes are active (during the summer), the tube should remain in place at least two weeks.

One-way doors are only effective if the animal can find and use the exit and cannot force its way through the door or find another entry point.



Diameter of tube should be larger than the hole to be covered. Length should be longer than 8 inches.

Dogs

Some specialists use certain breeds of dogs (such as the Jack Russell terrier) to help capture an individual animal within structures. This approach can be very effective, but the dogs must be well trained and under careful supervision.

Pesticides

In New York State, the application of a pesticide (and legally registered chemical repellents) outside your own home and yard requires the appropriate pesticide applicator's permit. There are relatively few pesticides available for the control of animals.

Rodenticides. The largest variety of available rodenticides is for commensal rodent control (house mouse, Norway rat). Some rodenticides are also labeled for use on native mouse species, as white-footed and deer mice. There are two categories of rodenticides: anticoagulants and acute toxicants.

Anticoagulants are slow to take effect and usually require more doses than acute toxicants. With a slower reaction time and vitamin K as an antidote, the risk of accidental poisoning of non-target animals and humans is considered lower than for acute toxicants. However, some of the anticoagulants (such as brodifacoum) have a higher risk of secondary poisoning due to their toxicity at low levels. Secondary poisoning, the poisoning of a predator or scavenger that eats a poisoned rodent, is an important consideration. Also, some populations of commensal rodents have developed resistance to certain anticoagulants.

Acute toxicants are effective with as few as one feeding. Physiological resistance has not been demonstrated, but individual animals may become "bait shy" if they survive the initial exposure. While the risk of secondary poisoning is usually considered to be lower than with anticoagulants, the danger of accidental direct poisoning may be higher.

Fumigants. Fumigants such as aluminum phosphide and gas cartridges are registered in New York State for use on burrowing rodents such as Norway rats, woodchucks, and chipmunks. **Aluminum phosphide is very toxic, must be administered by a certified pesticide applicator, and cannot legally be used near most buildings.** Gas cartridges can be a potential fire hazard. Recently (August 2017), rodent fumigation via labeled products with dry ice as the active ingredient has been allowed. Fumigant applications are highly regulated. Check with the Department of Environmental Conservation (or the appropriate agency in your state) for details.

Avitrol® baits are poisons with flock-alarming properties. The baits are registered as chemical frightening agents (repellents) for use on pigeons, house sparrows, starlings, and other species. Birds that have fed upon the bait exhibit distress behavior that frightens the rest of the flock away. Although true secondary poisoning does not occur, the product remains toxic to any bird that eats it even once it is in a bird's digestive tract. The possibility of a negative public reaction to dying birds should be considered when planning a bird control program using Avitrol®. In New York State, Avitrol® may not be used in cities with a population of a million or more people.

Immobilizing Agents

Immobilizing agents (such as Ketamine HCl and xylazine HCl) are heavily regulated by federal and state agencies and, therefore, are not readily available to most pest control operators or the general public. Although they are occasionally helpful for removing an individual animal, they are generally not practical for most animal problems.

Disposing of Captured Animals

There are several options for disposing of an animal once it has been captured directly or with the use of live traps.

Releasing the captured animal just outside the building results in the least stress on the animal. This is most practical when an animal has incidentally entered the structure and there is little risk to humans in having the animal in the general vicinity of the building. A squirrel or bird that has fallen down a chimney is a good example. Releasing on-site is not a good idea if the presence of the animal (e.g., a Norway rat) involves significant health or safety risks. Combine on-site release with effective exclusion techniques to prevent the animal from reentering the building.

Relocation of a captured animal is a common but controversial technique. While solving some of the problems associated with releasing the animal on-site, there are legal and biological concerns with this practice. In New York State, moving a “protected” animal off property requires a nuisance wildlife control permit. You must also adhere to any trespass laws at the release site. Many specialists question the wisdom of relocating animals. There is evidence that stress and mortality rates increase when animals are released in unfamiliar territory. Relocated animals may harm resident animals (e.g., by fighting, disease transmission, gene pool disruptions, etc.) or cause problems for humans in the vicinity of the release site.

Euthanasia is a third option. By definition, euthanasia (or “good death”) is more than simply killing the animal. The American Veterinary Medical Association’s Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals (2013 edition), while dealing primarily with domestic animals, offers the most widely accepted guidelines for euthanasia practices.

Excluding Animals

Before Excluding an Animal

The best way to avoid problems with animals in your home, school or office is to prevent them from entering in the first place. Raccoons, woodchucks, bats, mice, and snakes can do considerable damage once they find a way into your building. This section offers some options for animal-proofing or excluding animals from buildings. (Products mentioned throughout this section are provided as examples and do not constitute an endorsement on the part of the New York State IPM Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension, or Cornell University.)

Is it in or out?

Before closing animal entry sites in a building, be certain that animals will not be trapped inside. If you are uncertain whether an entry site is active, monitor it for at least two days. Placing newspaper in the hole, stapling cardboard over the hole, or placing duct tape over the hole works well. Animals that currently inhabit the building usually will need to be removed before proceeding with exclusion.

Time of year.

In winter, many animals (e.g., woodchucks, raccoons, chipmunks) are inactive for long periods. You may think that an entry hole is inactive only to be unpleasantly surprised in the spring or during a warm spell. Snow and ice also make it difficult to safely work on the outside of a building.

Tools

General carpentry tools are sufficient for most exclusion projects. These include hammers, staple guns, screwdrivers, caulking guns, pliers, tin snips, safety goggles, etc. Some special tools are also helpful.

Power drills. Keep two drills available in case the battery runs low in one. Two drills can also speed up work if you keep different bits in each drill. For example, if you are drilling holes through sheet metal and then attaching the metal to the building with screws, one drill can be used to drill the holes while the second can be used to drive the screws.

Foam gun. Particularly useful in bat exclusion, a foam gun [such as the Todol® system] cleanly and quickly sprays expanding foam insulation into structural cavities and cracks.

Metal brakes. Often used by aluminum siding contractors, brakes are increasingly being used by professional wildlife control operators to custom fit metal for animal exclusion purposes.

Some vents can be modified with home-made screens. Examples include quarter-inch hardware cloth around kitchen hood vents and hardware cloth aprons inside the covers of attic fans venting through the roof.

Watch for little ones!

During the spring and summer, the presence of young animals can complicate exclusion. Listen for sounds (such as high-pitched squealing or chirping) of the young in walls, fireplaces, etc. Another sign, if you can get close enough, are the teats of female mammals: they will usually appear enlarged and bare of hair when nursing. Although it is generally not illegal in New York State to remove young animals from buildings, special consideration should be given as to when and how it is done.

Keep it legal.

Building codes, fire codes, and other ordinances are important to keep in mind when deciding how to exclude animals. For example, many homemade chimney covers do not meet legal safety requirements.

Does it work?

The durability and effectiveness of a technique varies by species and situation. To illustrate, bats are generally not able to chew or claw their way through most exclusion materials. However, they are often persistent in finding small, over-looked holes. Raccoons and rodents, on the other hand, are capable of removing insufficient exclusion or opening new holes into a structure. Be sure your methods are appropriate to your situation.

How does it look?

Keeping aesthetics in mind, choose options that do not detract from the looks of the building. Efficacy, however, should not be sacrificed for attractiveness. Replacing damaged woodwork in a vulnerable location may look better without a metal covering but animals may quickly damage the wood again. Painting the metal can improve its appearance and keep the animals out.

Exclusion Materials and Procedures

Start Simple!

Reducing an animal's access to the structure can diminish future problems significantly. Trim trees back from the roof. Remove thick vegetation, debris, and firewood piles from near the foundation. Install barriers on transmission lines (check with your local utility company first!) to reduce squirrels' access to the building. Eliminate nearby food supplies: pet food, garbage, compost, and bird seed, should be kept in locations or containers that are not accessible to problem animals.

Seal Structural Openings

You can use a variety of materials to close structural openings used by animals.

Galvanized sheet metal is durable and, when attached with screws, resistant to removal by raccoons and other animals. It can, however, be difficult to bend and fit unobtrusively around corners.

Galvanized metal mesh (known as hardware cloth) shapes more easily than sheet metal and is reasonably durable. Hardware cloth is generally available in quarter-inch and half-inch mesh sizes. Half-inch hardware cloth is stronger but less flexible than quarter-inch. Quarter-inch is also more appropriate for smaller vertebrates, such as mice and bats. Hardware cloth is frequently used to prevent animals from going underneath the parts of buildings that lack foundations. The hardware cloth, or other appropriate fencing material, is attached to the bottom of the structure and buried into the ground. In general, the barrier fence (often referred to as a “rat wall”) should be buried one foot deep with a six-inch horizontal shelf at the bottom. The shelf will help prevent animals from digging underneath the barrier.

Stainless steel mesh and hardware cloth is stronger than galvanized and will never rust. X-cluder™ manufactures stainless steel mesh products for rodent exclusion. The disadvantages of stainless steel are that it is significantly more expensive and it is more difficult to cut and shape.

Aluminum flashing is malleable and relatively easy to shape around corners. It is most appropriate for bird and bat exclusion since raccoons and rodents can usually chew or claw through it.

Caulk, sealant (for movable joints), copper gauze (such as Stuff- It®), and foam insulation can be used to seal cracks and other small openings.

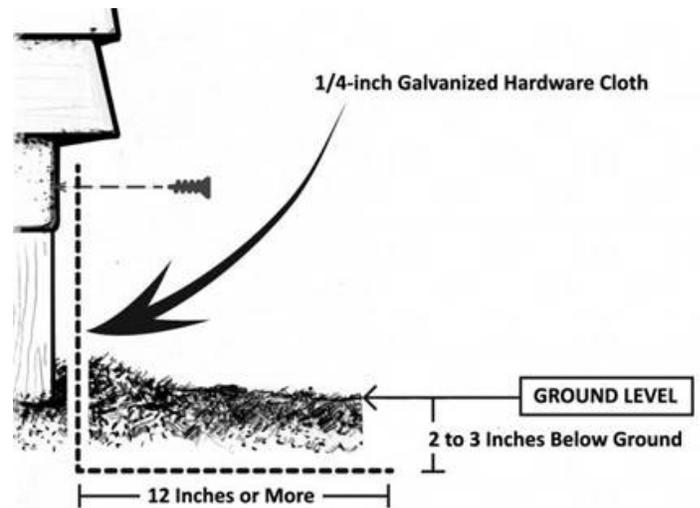
Protect Vents

Animals frequently enter structures through vents. Replace damaged and vulnerable vents with designs that are more resistant to animal entry.

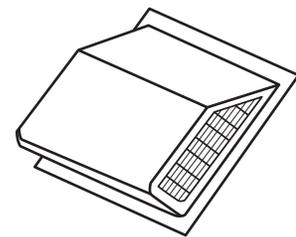
Roof vents (or louvers) should be either metal or heavy-duty plastic. The best models are totally enclosed to prevent birds and rodents from nesting inside the vent.

Ridge line vents come with end caps that frequently work loose. This allows small animals such as sparrows, mice, and bats to easily access attics. Replacement caps (either purchased or homemade) will secure these vents.

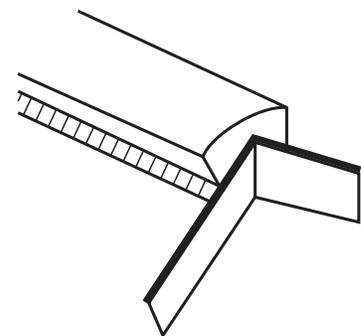
Ventilation openings in soffits (under eaves) are frequently used as entry sites by a wide range of animals from house sparrows to



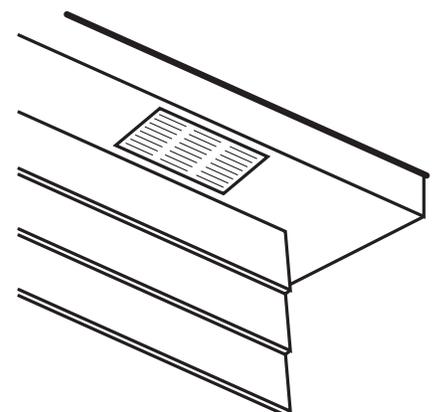
Rat wall against a building.



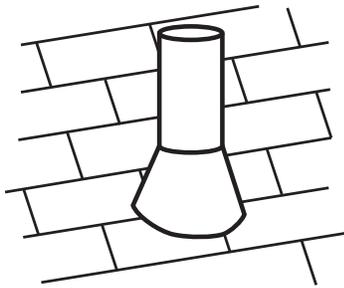
Lomanco® 750



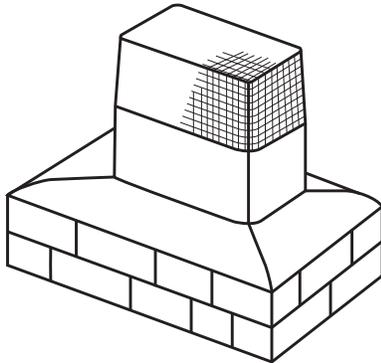
Ridge line vent



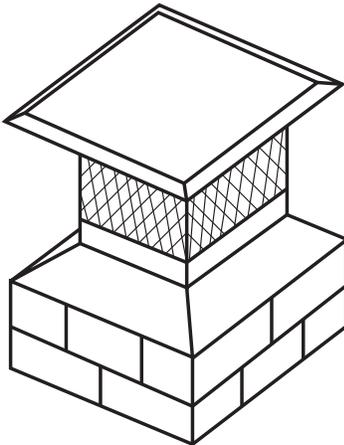
Vent in soffit



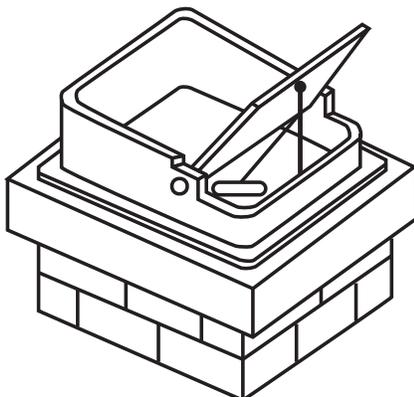
Vent pipe shield



Cover that slips inside the liner



Cover that attaches outside the liner



Chimney cover with damper

raccoons. These openings are best protected by metal louvers securely attached to the soffit.

Plastic gable louvers on the sides of buildings should be replaced with metal gable louvers. The gaps between individual louver slats should be narrow enough that birds cannot nest in them. Screening on the back of the vent also needs to be intact to keep bats and insects out of the attic.

Clothes dryer vents often offer an entry way to small animals. Be careful when screening these vents because a buildup of clothes lint will damage the dryer. Screens need to be cleaned frequently or the vents can be replaced with models that are designed to exclude animals without lint clogging.

Sewer vent pipes should be covered with commercial shields to prevent rodents and birds from entering the pipes.

Cover the Chimney

Raccoons, squirrels, bats, many birds, or any animal that dens or nests in cavities, will sometimes descend chimney flues. Entry can be prevented by the use of chimney covers. Commercially produced covers will meet the ventilation safety requirements of fire codes.

Many chimney cover designs attach to a single tile flue liner. These generally bolt to the outside of the tile liner or have legs that slip inside the flue.

Covers, that slip inside the tile liner prevent squirrel and bird access. Raccoons can usually remove these covers, and designs that bolt to the side of the flue are better if raccoons are a problem. Models with the smallest openings that meet fire codes are best for bat exclusion.

Other chimney covers attach to or around the crown (top) of the chimney. These covers are particularly helpful if there are several flues per chimney or there are no tile liners extending through the crown.

There are commercial covers designed to fit metal chimneys and these will keep out animals. If installed carefully, many metal chimney tops can also be enclosed with half-inch hardware cloth. Make sure any covering meets fire code requirements.

Several chimney cover manufacturers are able to custom fit covers for unusual chimneys. Call the manufacturer to find out what chimney measurements are needed. Custom-made covers are usually more expensive than mass-produced, standard covers.

Most chimney covers are made of stainless steel or galvanized steel. Others are made of copper or aluminum. Some designs function both as a cover and a damper.

For the Birds

A wide range of specialized products for bird exclusion have been developed, and new products and accessories come on the market frequently. Most products fall under the following categories.

Netting is often used to deny birds access to alcoves and other spaces. Bird netting is made from a variety of materials (including polyethylene twine and extruded polypropylene) and in a range of grid sizes and strand width. Specialized hardware is also available for attaching netting to different substrates.

Metal or plastic spikes, such as Catclaw®, Bird-B-Gone®, ECOPIC®, and Nixalite®, help prevent birds from roosting at specific locations. Metal coils (e.g., Bird Barrier®) function similarly.

“Post-and-wire” technology uses stainless steel wires or thin cables arranged in parallel lines or grids. This method is especially effective for pigeon exclusion. Parallel 80+ pound test monofilament lines also work well although are not as durable.

Electrified systems (as Avian Flyaway®, Flex-trak®, Bird Jolt™) are designed to shock birds without killing them and thus exclude them from specific locations. The cost of installing these systems is often high, but the systems generally have a long working life.

Heavy plastic or rubber strips suspended in large open doorways can help prevent bird access. People and machinery are still able to move through the strips.



Pigeons on windowsill. Photo: Anders Sandberg, live.staticflickr.com/3015/2713629674_542a7312ab_o.jpg, CC BY 2.0.

Appendix A: Animal Identification



Raccoon tracks
Front: 3 inches
Back: 3 1/2 inches

Raccoon

Relatively large (10 to 30 lb.) with distinctive black “mask” and ringed tail. Mostly, but not exclusively, nocturnal. Frequent invader of attics, chimneys, and under decks. Occasionally found in wall voids and crawl spaces.

Access Routes

Trees adjacent to or overhanging roofs; downspouts; fire escapes; corners of structures (if siding allows climbing); brick chimneys.

Entry Sites

Vents (such as roof, soffit, gable, fan); uncovered chimneys; deteriorated roofs or eaves; open decks and underneath structural additions.

Sounds

Adults: growls, soft grunts; juveniles: loud, bird-like chattering. Heavy walking in attics.

Fecal Droppings

Variable in appearance and size. Often dog-like. Seeds and fruit parts may be obvious. Often accumulate in regularly used “toilet” sites on roofs and in attics.

Odor

Distinctive and recognizable with experience.

Hair

Back and sides of animal, 1 to 2 inches long; each hair partitioned into dark/light/dark sections.

Belly: light colored.

Tail: light (may have reddish cast) or dark.

Other Signs

Claw marks especially at climbing locations and around entry holes.

“Grubbing” (digging up turf for grubs and other food).



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt

Gray Squirrel

Slender, weighing 1 to 2 lb., with a long bushy tail. Typically grayish with a reddish cast, white belly, and white-tipped hairs on border of tail. Black and lighter-than-typical coats can occur. Diurnal (active during day). Frequent invader of attics, wall voids, and miscellaneous crawl spaces. Often becomes trapped in chimneys and enters human living spaces, especially basements, via chimneys.

Access Routes

Trees and branches within ten feet of the roof; electrical utility lines; fire escapes; certain types of siding; brick chimneys; downspouts (occasionally).

Entry Sites

Usually high on the building; holes in fascia boards of eaves, dormer tie-ins, architectural returns, and similar sites along the roof line; vents (roof, soffit, gable, fan); uncovered chimneys; deteriorated roofs, eaves, and walls.

Sounds

Chattering; short “barks.” Scampering; gnawing.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on wood, plastic, etc. Chewed-open nut shells.

Fecal Droppings

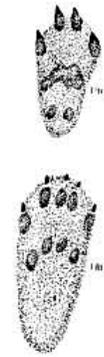
Usually 1/4 to 1/2 inch long, granular, and oval. Vantassel describes as “black piece of rice” or “enlarged brown BB pellet.” Generally scattered rather than accumulated in “toilets.”

Hair

Except tail, 1/2 to 1 inch long. Back and sides of animal: gray may be tipped with reddish-brown. Belly: white. Tail: 2 to 3 inches; each hair partitioned into reddish-brown, black, white (tip) segments.

Other Signs

Body rub marks at entry sites. Runways in attic insulation. Aluminum surfaces (e.g., gutters) may have claw marks.



Grey Squirrel tracks

Front: 1 inch

Back: 2 1/4 inches



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt

Red Squirrel

Small (less than 1 lb.), reddish brown above and white below. Often a black stripe separates the two colors. Diurnal (active during day). Frequent invader of attics, wall voids, and miscellaneous crawl spaces. Also can become trapped in chimneys.



Red Squirrel tracks

Front: 3/4 inch

Hind: 1 1/2 inches

Access Routes

Trees and branches within 10 feet of the roof; electrical utility lines; fire escapes; certain types of siding; brick chimneys; downspouts (occasionally).

Entry Sites

Usually high on the building; holes in fascia boards of eaves, dormer tie-ins, architectural returns, and similar sites along the roof line; vents (roof, soffit, gable, fan); uncovered chimneys; deteriorated roofs, eaves, and walls. Will also enter holes near the foundation and crawl spaces and wall voids via attached garages. Entry holes can be smaller and more difficult to find than those of the gray squirrel.

Sounds

Very vocal; distinctive calls; diverse repertoire includes chatters and clucking sounds and pitch is higher than that of gray squirrel. Scampering; gnawing.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on wood, plastic, etc. Chewed-open nut shells. Food caches (cones, seeds, nuts).

Fecal Droppings

Usually 1/4 to 3/4 inch long and elongated. Tend to be smaller in diameter, but often longer, than gray squirrel's. Generally scattered rather than accumulated in "toilets."

Hair

Except tail, approximately 1/2 inch long. Back and sides of animal: tipped with reddish-yellow. Belly: white. Tail: approximately 3/4 inch long; each hair partitioned into red, black, yellow (tip) segments.

Other Signs

Body rub marks at entry sites. Runways in attic insulation.



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt

Flying Squirrel

Small (less than 7 oz.) tree squirrel. Olive-brown above, white below. Distinctive gliding skin flap stretching from front leg to rear leg. Flattened tail. Nocturnal. Invader of attics, wall voids, and crawl spaces. Frequency varies regionally. Also can become trapped in chimneys.

Access Routes

Tall trees within gliding distance of roof.

Entry Sites

Usually high on the building; holes in fascia boards of the eaves, dormer tie-ins, architectural returns, and similar sites along the roof line; vents (roof, soffit, gable, fan); uncovered chimneys; deteriorated roofs, eaves, and walls. Holes are often smaller than those of the gray squirrel.

Sounds

High pitched twitters. "Landing" noises at night. Scampering; gnawing.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on wood, plastic, nutshells, etc. Caches some food (such as seeds and nuts) in nests and tree crotches.

Fecal Droppings



Variable, but tend to be elongated and 1/4 to 1/2 inch long. Similar to red squirrel except smaller. Brownish stains often associated with feces and urine accumulations.

Hair

Except tail, 1/4 to 1/2 inch long. Back and sides of animal: black-tipped with light brown. Belly: white or black with white tip; may have reddish cast. Tail: 1/2 to 3/4 inch long. Back of tail: light brown. Bottom of tail: light reddish.

Other Signs

Body rub marks around entry holes.
Runways in attic insulation.

Tracks

Landing marks.



Illustrations: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt



Eastern Chipmunk tracks

Front: less than 1 inch

Hind: 1 7/8 inch

Eastern Chipmunk

Small (about 3 oz.) predominantly ground-dwelling squirrel. Brownish with several longitudinal black and tan stripes and a reddish rump. Tail is furred but not bushy. Diurnal (active during day). Frequent invader of basements, wall voids, attics, and crawl spaces. Also can become trapped in chimneys.

Access Routes

Trees and bushes close to structure; certain types of siding; brick chimneys.

Entry Sites

Similar to red squirrel except that it more frequently enters near the foundation than higher on the structure. Commonly enters basements through dryer vents and accesses crawl spaces and wall voids via attached garages. Check holes in fascia boards of eaves, dormer tie-ins, architectural returns, and similar sites along the roof line; vents (roof, soffit, gable, fan); uncovered chimneys; deteriorated roofs, eaves, and walls. Entry holes can be small and difficult to find.

Sounds

Clucking; high pitched alarm chatters. Scampering; gnawing.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on wood, plastic, nut shells, etc. Food caches (such as seeds and nuts) in burrows/dens.

Fecal Droppings

Similar to mice but often larger (about 1/4 inch long or more): dark, elongated, hard.

Hair

Except for tail, approximately 1/4 inch long. Back and sides of animal: varies in color; gray, black, reddish, whitish.

Belly: white.

Tail: each hair partitioned into reddish, black, white (tip) segments; approximately 1/2 inch long.

Other Signs

Body rub marks at entry holes. Runways in insulation.



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt

House Mouse

Small (less than 1 oz.) slender grayish brown rodent with a largely hairless tail. Largely (but not exclusively) nocturnal. Frequent invader of basements, wall voids, attics, crawl spaces, and human living spaces of buildings. Particularly common in urban areas.

Access Routes

Physical cover near the foundation can facilitate access; check firewood stacks, debris piles, and crawl spaces under decks or additions.

Entry Sites

Holes larger than 1/4 inch, usually in vicinity of foundation.

Sounds

Squeaking. Scampering; gnawing.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on wood, plastic, etc.

Fecal Droppings

Dark, elongated, hard; about 1/8 to 1/4 inch long. Most frequent in areas of most mouse activity.

Odor

Musky.

Hair

White to gray; 1/8 to 1/4 inch long.

Other Signs

Urinary “pillars” (small mounds of grease, urine, and dirt). Body rub marks around entry sites and along runways. Runways in insulation. Nests (generally loosely woven balls of shredded fibrous material). Urine stains (under UV light).



House mouse tracks

Front: 1/4 inch

Hind: 3/8 inch

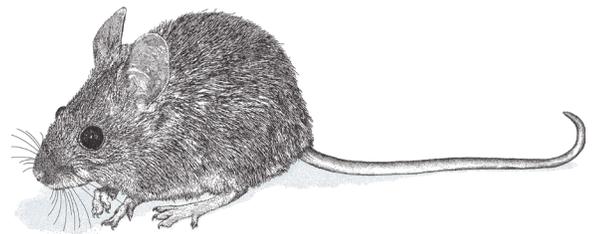
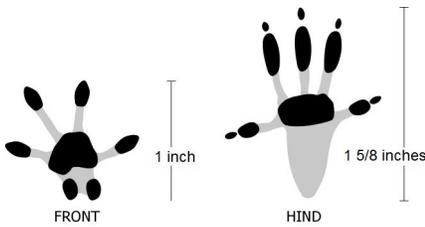


Image: iStockPhoto.

Norway Rat

Stocky (approximately 1 lb.), grayish brown, with a long, rather hairless tail. Largely (but not exclusively) nocturnal. Frequent invader of basements, wall voids, attics, crawl spaces, and human living spaces of buildings.



Norway Rat tracks

Front: 1 inch

Hind: 1 5/8 inch

Access Routes

Physical cover near the foundation can facilitate access; check firewood stacks, debris piles, and crawl spaces under decks or additions.

Entry Sites

Holes larger than 1/2 inch, usually in vicinity of foundation. Also accesses crawl spaces and wall voids via attached garages.

Sounds

Squeaking. Scampering; gnawing.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on wood, plastic, etc.

Odor

Not as musky as house mouse.

Hair

Back and sides of animal: each hair partitioned into black, gray, black segments; 1/2 to 3/4 inch long.

Belly: white to gray, approximately 1/8 inch long.

Fecal Droppings



Dark, elongated; 1/2 to 3/4 inch long.

Other Signs

Body rub marks around entry sites and along runways. Runways in attic insulation. Burrows in ground near foundation and dirt floors of basements.

Nests (may be lined with shredded fibrous material).

Urine stains (under UV light)



Image: iStockPhoto.

White-footed Mouse and Deer Mouse

Small (approximately 1 oz.), with relatively large ears and eyes. Bicolored, including tail: upper parts are brownish, lower parts are white. Tail long and furred. Largely nocturnal. Frequent invaders of basements, attics, wall voids, and miscellaneous crawl spaces. Particularly common in rural and suburban situations.

Access Routes

Trees and bushes adjacent to the structure; certain types of siding; brick chimneys. Physical cover near the foundation can facilitate access; check firewood stacks, debris piles, and crawl spaces under decks or additions.

Entry Sites

Holes larger than 1/4 inch in locations similar to red squirrel and Eastern chipmunk. Check holes in fascia boards of eaves, dormer tie-ins, architectural returns, and similar sites along the roof line; vents (roof, soffit, gable, fan); uncovered chimneys; deteriorated roofs, eaves, and walls. Often gains access to crawl spaces and wall voids via attached garages. The white-footed mouse, particularly, is a good climber and often enters high on a building.

Sounds

Squeaking. Scampering; gnawing.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on wood, plastic, nut shells, etc. Food caches (the white-footed mouse in particular will rob traps set for larger animals and cache the food).

Fecal Droppings

Dark, elongated, hard; about 1/8 to 1/4 inch long. Similar to house mouse droppings.

Odor

Lacks musky odor of house mouse.

Hair

Back and sides of animal: brown to reddish brown, black tipped, 1/4 to 1/2 inch long.

Belly: each hair partitioned into black and white segments, 1/8 to 1/4 inch long.

Other Signs

Body rub marks around entry sites. Runways in attic insulation. Nests made up of fibrous materials and lined with fine materials such as fur, feathers, or shredded cloth.



White-footed or Deer Mouse tracks

Front: 1/4 inch

Hind: 5/8 inch



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt



Woodchuck tracks

Front: 2 1/8 inches

Hind: 2 1/2 inches



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt

Woodchuck

Relatively large (5 to 10 lb.), chunky. Color variable but generally grizzled brownish gray. Diurnal (active during day). Largely ground dwelling but capable of climbing. Frequent burrower near foundations and under decks and additions. Occasional invader of basements if foundation has deteriorated. Rarely enters crawl spaces or other wall voids in structures.

Access Routes

Open crawl spaces/voids under decks and additions can facilitate access.

Entry Sites

When enters a structure, usually via a deteriorated foundation.

Sounds

Whistles and clucking when alarmed.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Gnaw marks on decks, trees, and other wood.

Fecal Droppings

Variable; tend to be bulky and “dog-like.”

Hair

Back and sides of animal: each hair partitioned into dark, light, dark, light (tip) segments; may have reddish cast; 1 to 2 inches long.

Belly: each hair partitioned into dark, light (with reddish cast) segments; approximately 1 inch long.

Tail: dark, may have reddish cast; 2 to 2 1/2 inches long.

Other Signs

Burrows often have a large mound of excavated dirt at the entrance.

Striped Skunk

Cat-sized (approximately 8 lb.), with distinctive black fur and prominent longitudinal white stripes. Variability in the size of the stripes; some individuals appear almost white from above. Largely nocturnal. Frequent invader under decks and beneath additions. Occasionally enters basements through open windows or deteriorated foundations.

Access Routes

Open crawl spaces and voids underneath decks and additions can facilitate access.

Entry Sites

Usually enters a structure via deteriorated foundations, open windows, or foundation vents.

Sounds

Thumping made by stamping of feet when agitated. Chattering when frightened.

Fecal Droppings

“Cat-like;” usually 2 to 4 inches long and less than an inch in diameter.

Odor

Distinctive, penetrating, and long lasting.

Hair

Black or white; 1 to 2 1/2 inches long.

Other Signs

Burrowing; “grubbing” (digging up turf for grubs and other food).



Striped Skunk tracks

Front: 1 - 1 3/4 inches

Hind: 1 1/2 - 2 inches



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt



Weasel tracks

Front: 1/2 as long as hind

Hind: 1 inch

Weasels

Predatory mammals with long slender bodies, short legs, and rounded ears. Depending on species, weight ranges from 2 1/2 oz. to 12 oz. In summer, fur is brown above and white below. In winter, the fur is all white. In two larger species, the tail is black tipped year round. Occasional invaders of basements, wall voids, and human living spaces. May be hunting rodents.

Access Routes

Physical cover (vegetation, piles of firewood or debris, openings underneath decks and additions) can facilitate access.

Entry Sites

Usually openings around foundation.

Sounds

High-pitched shrieks.

Gnaw Marks and Food Remains

Food caches (mouse carcasses)

Fecal Droppings

Dark, long, and slender; containing fur/bones/feathers.

Odor

Pungent

Hair

Length: 1/4 to 1/2 inch

Summer

Back and sides of animal: light brown.

Belly: white with yellowish cast.

Tail: varies brown to black.

Winter

Back and sides, belly: white; may have yellowish cast.

Tail: some hairs may be dark.



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt

Bats

Small (usually less than 1 oz.), dark, flying mammals. Nocturnal. Frequent invader of attics and wall voids. Occasionally enter basements and human living spaces.

Access Routes

Since bats are flying animals, no specific access routes (besides a relatively clear flight lane) are needed.

Entry Sites

Usually on the upper portion of the structure. Any opening larger than a 1/4 inch has potential as an entry site. Common locations include roof drip edges, dormer tie-ins, roof corners, chimneys, vents, deteriorated roofs, walls, and eaves.

Sounds

High-pitched, rapid clicking. Scratching in walls, attics, etc.

Fecal Droppings

Dark, elongated, granular, 1/4 to 1/2 inches long, crumbles into dust (actually insect parts) when rubbed between two fingers. Often confused with mouse droppings, which are more tapered at the ends and hard (won't crumble).

Odor

Distinctive, acrid, musty odor (from large colonies in particular).

Hair

Dark, brown, or gray; 1/8 to 1/4 inch long.

Other Signs

Urine stains and crystallized urine accumulations; body rub marks (especially at heavily used entry sites).



Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt



Shrew tracks

Front: 1/4 inch

Hind: 1/4 inch

Short-tailed Shrew

Small (less than 1 oz.) mammal with an elongated snout, dense lead-colored fur, small eyes, and no external ears. Active day and night. Occasional invader of basements, wall voids, attics, and miscellaneous crawl spaces.

Access Routes

Physical cover near the foundation can facilitate access; check firewood stacks, debris piles, and crawl spaces under decks or additions. Trees and bushes adjacent to buildings might also be used.

Entry Sites

Usually small openings around the foundation. Possibly openings around roofline are also used.

Sounds

Squeaking.

Fecal Droppings

Dark, elongated, granular, up to 1 inch long, often in piles and corkscrew shaped.

Odor

Pungent.

Hair

Gray; 1/8 to 1/4 inch long.



Illustration: K. English, NYSIPM

House Sparrow

Small (less than 3 oz.) brown, chunky. Male has a black throat and white cheeks; the top of the head is gray flanked with chestnut. Female is dingy brown. Both sexes have a striped back. Diurnal (active during day). Frequent invader of attics, eaves, vents, and miscellaneous openings.

Access Routes

Any place with an open flight lane.

Entry Sites

Vents (roof, soffit, gable, bathroom, kitchen stove hood); any openings large enough on the outside of the structure; will also build nests on the exterior of structures.

Sounds

Monotonous musical chirping; chattering.

Fecal Droppings

“White wash.”

Other Signs

Nests (bulky, roofed accumulation of grass and similar fibrous materials) located in holes, cavities, and on sides of buildings.



Illustration: K. English, NYSIPM

Rock (feral) pigeon

Plump bird with small head and fan-like tail. Color very variable but typically gray. White rump usually distinctive. The average weight is 13 oz. When taking off, their wing tips touch, making a characteristic clicking sound. When gliding, their wings are raised at an angle. Diurnal (active during day). Frequent invader of upper portions of buildings and attics.

Access Routes

Any place with an open flight lane.

Entry Sites

Any structure on building that provides some protection from weather. Enters attics through deteriorated woodwork or broken windows/vents.

Sounds

Cooing.

Fecal Droppings

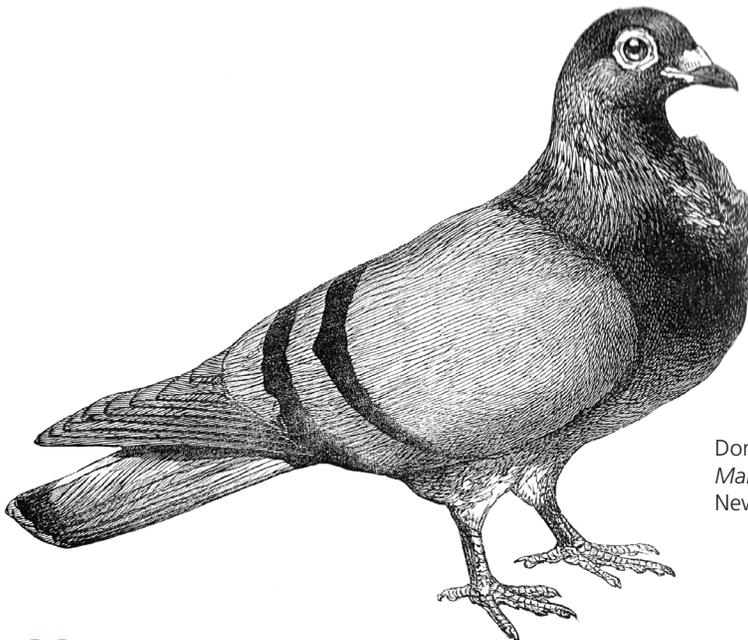
White/gray. Often accumulate.

Odor

Pungent; associated with fecal matter.

Other Signs

Feathers; nests (sticks and grasses arranged in a crude platform); broken egg shells.



Domestic pigeon, figure 675 from *Animals, 1419 Copyright-Free Illustrations of Mammals, Birds, Fish, Insects, etc.* Selected by Jim Harter. Dover Publications, Inc. New York.

Woodpeckers

Several species ranging in size from small (less than 7 inches long) to almost crow-sized (about 20 inches long). Most species are similar in size to robins (around 10 inches long). Most species are black and white with some red on the head. Woodpeckers are active during the day. They will perch on the sides of trees and wood buildings to drill holes and/or search for insects. They can do considerable damage to wood buildings. Birds will occasionally nest inside hollow walls after drilling an opening.

Access Routes

Any place where birds can easily fly to and from, especially in the vicinity of trees.

Entry sites

Wood siding.

Sounds

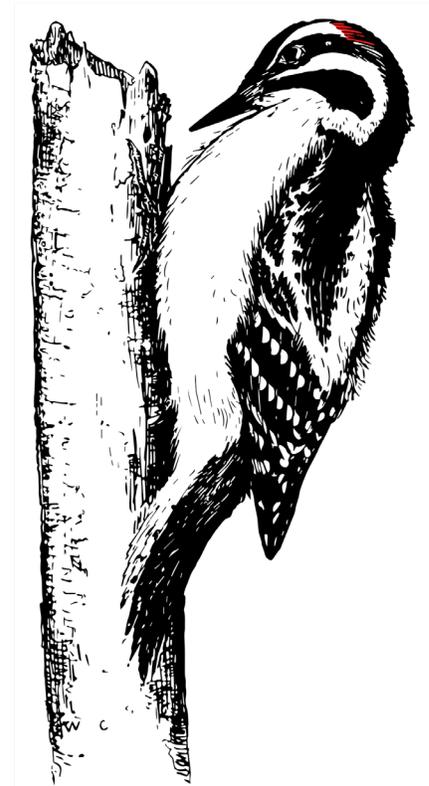
Loud calls which are distinct for each species. Territorial “drumming” caused by rhythmic pecking on dead wood, buildings, or metal.

Fecal Droppings

“White wash.”

Other signs

Holes in wood siding caused by drilling.



Downy woodpecker. Image: Shutterstock.

European Starling

Short-tailed, black, weighing about 3 oz. Plumage may be speckled with white or iridescent. Bill yellow during the spring and summer. Flies swiftly and in a straight line. Frequent invader of attics, eaves, vents, and miscellaneous openings.

Access Routes

Any place with an open flight lane.

Entry Sites

Vents (roof, soffit, gable, bathroom, kitchen stove hood); any openings large enough on the outside of the structure.

Sounds

Song is diverse and rather squeaky. Often mimics other bird species.

Fecal Droppings

“White wash.”

Other Signs

Nest (loose accumulation of grass, twigs, and similar materials) placed in a hole or other cavity in the house exterior.

Snakes

Well-known slender, legless body shape. Color and body markings vary by species. Most snakes in the Northeast are not venomous. Frequent invaders of basements. Occasionally found in wall voids and attics. May be attracted by rodents or insects.

Access Routes

Physical cover near the foundation can facilitate access (e.g., firewood or debris piles, vegetation).

Entry Sites

Openings usually in vicinity of foundation.

Fecal Droppings

Often elongated; partially white.

Other Signs

Shed skins.

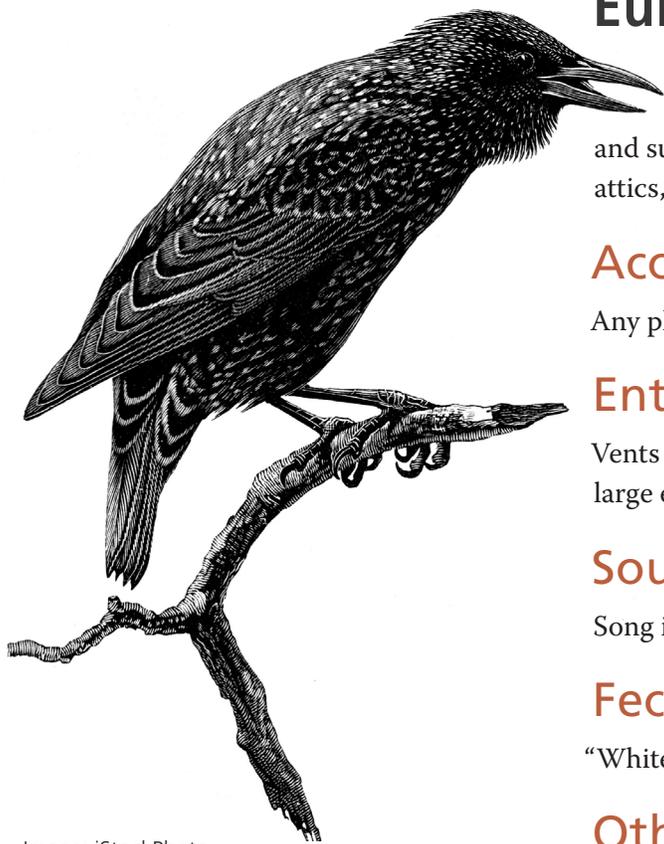
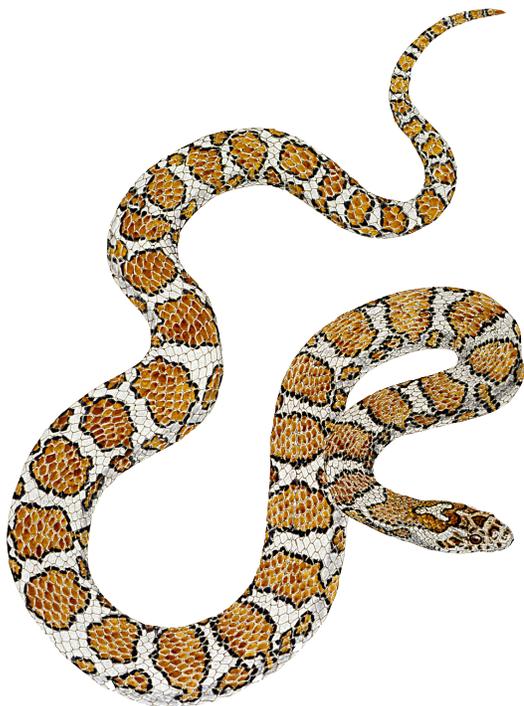


Image: iStockPhoto.



Eastern milk snake. Illustration: NYS Conservationist Magazine/Jean Gawalt

Appendix B: Inspection Form

Building		Date
Inspector		Time
Contact Person		
Exterior Location	Observations	
Foundations		
Soffits/Eaves		
Windows		
Dormers		
Vents		
Chimneys		
Attached Garages		
Other		
Interior Location	Observations	
Attic		
Second Floor		
First Floor		
Basement		
Other		

Appendix C: Animal-Specific Form

Structural Inspection for Bats

Signs of Bat Activity
Attic/Crawl Spaces
Basement
Other Locations
Openings into Living Space
Attic Door
Holes in Walls/Ceiling
Baseboards/Molding
Pocket Doors
Other
Outside Openings
Dormers
Eaves
Soffit Boards
Vents
Chimneys
Other

Appendix D: Helpful Resources

Suppliers and Manufacturers

NOTE: These suppliers are listed here for your convenience; this is not an exhaustive list nor does inclusion indicate an endorsement by the New York State IPM Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension or Cornell University.

For Inspections

Forestry Suppliers, Inc.
www.forestry-suppliers.com

Gempler's
www.gemplers.com

Grainger
www.grainger.com

Wildlife Control Supplies
www.wildlifecontrolsupplies.com

For Removal

Traps

Animal Care Eqpt. & Services, Inc.
www.animal-care.com

Bird Barrier America, Inc.
www.birdbarrier.com

Kness Mfg. Co., Inc.
www.kness.com

M & M Fur Co.
26445 435th Ave.
Bridgewater, SD 57319
605-729-2535

Oldham Chemicals Company
www.oldhamchem.com/equipment

Tomahawk Live Trap Co.
www.livetraps.com

Tru-Catch Traps
www.trucatchtraps.com

Univar Environmental Sciences
www.pestweb.com

Wilco Distributors, Inc.
wilcodistributors.com

Wildlife Control Supplies
(see above)

Woodsteam Corp.
www.woodstream.com

Direct Capture

Animal Care Eqpt. & Services, Inc.
(see above)

Ketch-All Co.
www.ketch-all.com

Univar Environmental Sciences
(see above)

Repellents

Bird-X, Inc.
bird-x.com

Bird Barrier America, Inc.
(see above)

J.T. Eaton & Co., Inc.
www.jteaton.com

Univar Environmental Sciences
(see above)

One-Way Doors

Tomahawk Live Trap Co.
(see above)

Pesticides

Avitrol Corp.
www.avitrol.com

J.T. Eaton & Co., Inc.
(see above)

Lipha Tech, Inc.
www.liphatech.com

Univar Environmental Sciences
(see above)

Wilco Distributors, Inc.
(see above)

For Exclusion

Todol Foam Gun
www.todol.com

Univar Environmental Sciences
(see above)

Wildlife Control Supplies, Inc.
(see above)

Xcluder
www.xcluder.com

Vents

LOUVERS

Lomanco
www.lomanco.com

RIDGE VENTS

Ridge-Guard
www.ridge-guard.com

DRYER VENTS & VENT PIPE SHIELDS

Univar Environmental Sciences
(see above)

ChimneyCovers

Copperfield Chimney Supply, Inc.
www.copperfield.com

HY-C Company, Inc.
www.hy-c.com

Bird Exclusion

Bird Barrier America, Inc.
(see above)

Bird-B-Gone, Inc.
www.birdbgone.com

Bird-X, Inc.
www.bird-x.com

Fly-Bye Bird Control Products
www.flybye.com

Publications

General Reference

Cornell Cooperative Extension Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheets for: Bats, Raccoons, Skunks, Snakes, Tree Squirrels, Woodchucks, and Woodpeckers are available at www.wildlifecontrol.info/publications/cornell-publications

Bennet, Gary W., John M. Owens, and Robert M. Corrigan. 2010. *Truman's Scientific Guide to Pest Control Operation, 7th edition*. 652 pp. Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, and Questar Media Group, Cleveland, Ohio.

Curtis, Paul D. and Jill Shultz. 2008. *Best Practices for Wildlife Control Operators*. 350 pp. Thomson Delmar Learning, Clifton Park, NY.

Curtis, Paul D., Scott E. Hygnstrom, Stephen M. Vantassel, and Raj Smith. 2017. *New York State Nuisance Wildlife Control Training Manual*. 418 pp. National Wildlife Control Training Program LLC, Ithaca, NY.

Smith, Raj, Paul Curtis, and Scott Hygnstrom. 2018. *Managing Wildlife Damage; Practical Methods for Resolving Human-Wildlife Conflicts*. 185 pp. National Wildlife Control Training Program LLC, Ithaca, NY.

Inspection

Reid, Fiona. 2006. *Petersen Field Guide to Mammals of North American, 4th edition*. 608 pp. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, MA.

Murie, Olaus, Mark Elbrock, and Roger Petersen. 2005. *Petersen Field Guide to Animal Tracks, 3rd edition*. 432 pp. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, MA.

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Vantassel, Stephen M. 2012. *Wildlife Damage Inspection Handbook, 3rd edition*. 180 pp. Wildlife Control Consultant, Lewistown, MT.

Removal

American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals, 2013 edition. AVMA, Schaumburg, IL. 102 pp.

Evict and Exile Mice from Your Home. 2000. New York State IPM Program publication number 603. hdl.handle.net/1813/43847.

Silvey, Nova J., editor. 2012. *The Wildlife Techniques Manual; Management, 7th edition, Vol. 2*. 414 pp. John Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore, MD.

Vantassel, Stephen. 2017. *Wildlife Removal Handbook: A Guide to the Capture and Control of Wild Urban Animals, 3rd edition*. Wildlife Control Consultant, LLC. Lewistown, MT.