

Wildlife Depredation

(small animals, birds, bats)

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Wild turkey control

If there is an abundance of turkeys, and it is still early winter, **call Fish and Game** and the officer of the area may come out and trap and relocate them to another area.

Do not feed the birds as this encourages them. Feed pets out of reach of turkeys, and store pet food in airtight containers. Also good advice if you are bothered by raccoons, skunks, rodents, etc.

Harvesting- Turkey populations increase very rapidly. During hunting season invite hunters to your property if possible (check with your local municipality for the rules). Members of the Wild Turkey Federation know how to hunt turkeys and turkey hunters have been known to pay for the privilege.

Habitat modification- It would be good to trim off the horizontal branches of trees the turkeys have been roosting in.

Exclusion- Fencing. A fence constructed from 4" hog wire can be effective. Even though turkeys can fly, in most cases they won't go over the fence unless you have a rail on the top. (If you have a top rail, they like to jump up to the rail and perch before going over).

Placing a **black garden hose** on the ground across entry areas may deter turkeys. They believe it to be a predator, most likely a snake.

Harassment- Running toward them, waving your arms and yelling will frighten them away. In South Dakota the Fish and Park Dept. uses scare kites to repel turkeys and say it works well. If you live out of town, Fish and Wildlife has noise shells to use. Motion detecting sprinkler are also effective. Be consistent with harassment, and they will relocate to another area.

Some commercial products available:

Scare windmill- blades painted with special UV light reflecting paint. (Recently researchers discovered 50 % of the bird's vision is in the ultra-violet range.) To the birds the uniquely painted spinning blades look like the flapping of wings of a flock of birds taking off in fright. The 36" blades repel birds in up to a 2 acre area. Found effective on most birds, Canada geese, and birds as large as wild turkeys.

Screamer Launcher – Important to harass them every time you see them, day or night (with screamer launcher), "bangers" or shell crackers. These devices explode near the turkeys which is much more effective than shotguns.

Bobbex-G – An all organic spray concentrate that turkeys can't tolerate. This is ideal at transplant time for vegetables susceptible to turkey damage. So safe it can be sprayed on transplants still in flats.

Canada geese control

Many of the management practices recommended for wild turkey control will work for Canada geese control. In addition:

Eliminate any feeding of geese by neighbors or the public. This only encourages them.

- If possible, leave the lawn un-mowed.
- Plant tall fescue instead of tender Kentucky blue grass.
- Plant unpalatable ground covers such as pachysandra, English Ivy, myrtle, and hosta.
- Place large stones, tall grass, or a short fence around the edge of a pond to keep the geese from stepping up.
- Provide more bushes and hedges to reduce the goose's ability to detect predators. Hedges will also discourage geese from walking between the pond and feeding areas.

A product called Rejex-It is touted to safely repel geese and other water fowl. Apply it to turfgrass, or wherever it is needed. Use product according to the label). Bobbex-G, recommended above for wild turkeys, is also recommended for geese control.

Woodpecker and sapsucker damage on wooden siding and trees

Complaints usually start in February regarding the rapid, rhythmic drumming of woodpeckers emanating from the rooftop. This **drumming** on metal or wood is predominantly a springtime activity and is associated with the staking out of territory and the mating ritual.

Sapsucker damage is evident by straight, horizontal rows of small holes on the trunks of trees. Some are pecked off in checker board block.

Frightening devices- Scare eye balloons in conjunction with mylar tape has been used by orchardists with great success. You can make your own scare eye by painting a big (evil looking) eye on a plastic milk jug. The birds believe it is a predator and are frightened away. Other frightening devices are available commercially.

Barriers on buildings- Metal or plastic sheathing placed over the pecked areas on building siding will offer permanent protection from continued damage. This is best done as soon as damage begins. Occasionally the birds will move over to an unprotected spot and the protected area must be expanded. Aluminum flashing can be used, but woodpeckers can sometimes peck through it if they can secure a foothold from which to work. (Metal sheathing can be disguised with paint or simulated wood grain to match the siding).

Quarter-inch (0.6 cm) hardware cloth can also be used to cover pecked areas, and prevent further damage, and can be spray painted to match the color of the building. The wire can either be attached directly to the surface, or raised outward from the wood siding with 1-inch (2.5 cm) spacers. Once woodpeckers have been discouraged, repair damaged spots on buildings by filling with wood patch or covering them to prevent woodpeckers from returning at some future time.

Tactile- Sticky or tacky bird repellents such as Tanglefoot, 4-the-Birds, and Roost –No-More can be effective in discouraging birds if applied to wood siding and other areas of structural damage. Smear or place in wavy bands using a caulking gun. Caution: It is best to try material on a small out of sight area first to test for damage or discoloration to the siding. Some products may run in warm weather, leaving unsightly streaks. The tacky repellents can be applied to a thin piece of pressed board, ridged clear plastic sheets or other suitable material, which is then fastened to the area where damage is occurring. Products are safe to use on trees when used according to label.

Bats in buildings

When no bite or contact with people or pets has occurred, the simple solution is to try to confine the bat(s) to one room, then open the doors and windows leading outdoors and allow it to escape. If the bat is present at night, the lights should be dimmed to allow the animal to find open doors and windows; some light is necessary if an observer is to insure that the bat finds its way out. The bat will become confused by bright lights and seek refuge behind shelving, curtains, etc. If the bat has trouble escaping it can be captured in a hand net (fish or insect net) with a handle. Otherwise wait for it to come to rest and quickly cover it with a coffee can or similar container, and slide a piece of cardboard or magazine under the can to trap the bat inside. Take the bat outside and release it away from populated areas, preferably at night. Build bat houses.

Bats in attics- Wait until bats are out foraging and then block all entry ways into the attic. Timing is critical; intervention should be initiated before the young are born, or after they are weaned and able to fly. The annual opportunity extends from about mid-August to mid-May for much of North America.

Voles

Handout from UI: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/CIS/CIS1214.pdf>

Eliminate weeds, ground cover and litter in and around crops, lawns and cultivated areas to reduce habitat. Mulch should be at least 3' from the base of trees (this includes snow mulch if possible). Trapping is not practical and baits should be used with care. Usually after **spring** activity begin in the yard, the critters move to another location.

Pocket gophers and Columbian gophers (we do not have moles in our area)

Handout from UI: <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/CIS/CIS1213.pdf>

Baits and traps- Strychnine-treated grain bait is the most common type of bait used for pocket gopher control. Baits containing anticoagulants are also available. Read and follow the label for proper placement and safety. A relatively new product that is safe to use contains corn cobs coated with castor oil, a scent that gophers don't like. It doesn't kill them, but it successfully chases them from the area. Brand names include Chase, Mole-Out and Shake-Away. Try to source something that does not kill other animals if ingested. Many poisons are toxic to humans, follow the label instructions.

Space permitting, planting a 'green belt' of clover, alfalfa or other crop around the garden area or property provides an **alternative food source**, and prevents gophers from moving further into the landscape.

Some gardeners place a hose down a gopher tunnel and turn it on full blast in an effort to drown the pests. Gophers have an extensive network of tunnels, so this mostly causes them to take up residence elsewhere.

Other: Battery operated probes have reportedly worked very well to repel gophers.

Castor oil, sold as 'Thirum' is a granule you spread on the ground and water in. It doesn't kill gophers, but repels them.

Macabee traps-(not legal in Washington)

Domestic pets

Dogs and cats are excellent controllers of the winged and four-legged variety of pests, but can be a nuisance themselves (especially if they belong to a neighbor). There are various commercial products available, both granular and spray form, that are marketed to repel pets from certain areas of the yard. One product, 'Shake Away', is used to repel cats by giving the illusion that coyotes and foxes are present in your lawn or garden. Another called 'Get Away', contains Capsaicin Pepper and Oil of Mustard but must be applied daily. It's labeled as both a dog and cat repellent. There are a number of other products available with varying results.

Some homemade concoctions using garlic or mustard as a base has been used with some success. Growing mint in containers (otherwise it can be invasive), or spraying mint oil on the ground and plants seems to work as a cat repellent. Another plant developed in Europe, a scented hybrid coleus, has a scent not offensive to people, but reportedly repels dogs and cats (distributed by Millstadt Jung Plants, Millstadt, IL).

Dogs and cats can be kept from digging or lying in beds by placing 1- inch mesh chicken wire over the garden after planting. Pets are discouraged from digging and vegetables can grow up through the wire. Other strategies, such as spreading citrus peels around plants can help keep animals away from areas where they aren't wanted. Smearing Vicks VapoRub on a cloth or board or on the citrus peels also seems to deter pets from off limit areas. Motion activated water sprayers are another way to discourage unwanted visitors.

Suggestions from the National Gardening Association include spreading thorny branches across the beds, and hosing down any freshly laid mulch to make it less fluffy. Some gardeners recommend a two inch minimum of peat moss as a dry mulch to repel cats. They don't like the way it feels on their paws. Giving cats their own personal space away from other gardens is another idea that seems to work. Fill the area with sandy soil, add a tree for climbing, and plant catnip or other kitty favorites for nibbling. Pet supply stores often carry 'kitty greens'.