



## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@sPCA.bc.ca  
BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# BATS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

16 species of bats in BC  
(family *Vespertilionidae*)

### Legal Designation

Schedule A, *BC Wildlife Act*, some  
species also protected by federal  
*Species at Risk Act*

### Disease Risks

Rabies: Rare, occurs in only ~0.5% of  
BC bat population

### Seasonal Considerations

Illegal to disturb during breeding season  
(May through August)



#### Did you know?

BC bats eat large numbers of insects - sometimes  
more than their own body weight in one night, and  
their guano makes excellent fertilizer!

Hoary bat

## White-Nose Syndrome

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a fungal disease spread bat-to-bat, that was introduced by people entering caves where bats live. WNS is named for the white fungus that grows on the nose and bodies of infected bats. Bats die of starvation after waking prematurely from hibernation to fight the fungus. WNS has not been observed in BC yet, but the fungus that causes WNS was detected in the Grand Forks area in 2023. If you suspect WNS, find a dead bat, or notice unusual winter bat activity (November through May), contact the BC Community Bat Project. The fungus does not affect humans or pets. Contaminated clothing, shoes, or other gear can spread the fungus. Always decontaminate shoes and gear before and after touring caves.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited  
wildlife control company if you  
need help managing bats

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more  
information



## Common Conflicts

Bats sometimes enter human structures, either accidentally or to roost, and may become tangled in objects like insect traps, netting, or fencing. When bats roost in houses, accumulated guano and urine may stain walls or ceilings. Sometimes bats are attacked by pets. Although rabies is rare in the BC bat population, if a bat has had direct contact with people or pets, immediately contact your physician, veterinarian, and/or local public health authority.

## Conflict Prevention

Killing bats for nuisance reasons is illegal. Bats do not need to be evicted if there is little chance for human contact, but this may be desirable if guano cannot be regularly cleaned, or if bats continually enter human living spaces. Bats generally do not occupy buildings during winter months, and choose to hibernate in mines or caves from October to March.

[spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](http://spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)





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## BATS

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



California Myotis bat



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Maintain residential structures to prevent bats from entering and roosting. Find entry points by looking for discoloured rub marks or guano around openings; in summer, look for bats exiting before dusk to ~30 minutes after dusk.

If desired, string tarps below roost sites to catch guano for use as fertilizer. Do not transfer or transport guano to different areas to prevent the potential spread of WNS. Provide an alternate exterior bat house to discourage bats from returning to the building. Consult a community bat expert for advice on placement and design.

Do not exclude bats or install one-way doors during breeding season (May through August). If eviction is necessary, the best time is October to March, possibly extending from September to April depending on the colony. One-way doors (including bat cones or PVC tubes) should be left in place for at least 5-7 nights. Before sealing an opening, use a flashlight to thoroughly check any cracks, crevices or corners for bats. Block gaps around chimneys, window air conditioners, and openings in interior walls that lead to cellars or attics. Clean out guano and remove soiled insulation, use a 10% bleach solution to disinfect items contacted by bats – wear a mask and gloves while cleaning guano. Seal all access points larger than 12 mm.

### IF BAT TRAPPED IN BUILDING:

Bats that are accidentally trapped in homes will need to be captured and released as quickly as possible in a safe place, on a tree or other vertical surface so they can fly away. Always wear thick leather gloves before attempting to capture a bat. Bats can be gently captured using a glass or plastic container, and sliding something underneath the opening to contain them, or using a tool like a spatula or folded cardboard to scoop them into the container. If you suspect the bat has been trapped in the house longer than 24 hours, contact a wildlife rehabilitator for advice before releasing the bat.



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

Killing bats for nuisance reasons is illegal. Injured bats can be taken to a veterinarian or wildlife rehabilitator for assessment and/or euthanasia. Blunt force trauma may be used for emergency euthanasia to relieve suffering when bats are critically injured. However, it is illegal to control bats using:

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Carbon dioxide – all bats in BC are CO<sub>2</sub> tolerant
- Carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Glue traps
- Nitrogen or argon gas
- Captive bolt
- Vehicle exhaust





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# BEAVERS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

*Castor canadensis*

### Legal Designation

Furbearer, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Seasonal Considerations

3-4 kits in early spring to early summer

#### Did you know?

Beaver dams create valuable wetland habitat that benefits many other species. Beavers improve water quality, and create food and habitat for salmon and other fish and wildlife.

Beaver

## Common Conflicts

Beavers are attracted to sources of fresh water and young trees (5-13 cm in diameter). They can damage trees, and their dam building can flood land and cause blockages to engineered structures such as culverts.



## Conflict Prevention

It is illegal to disturb or destroy beaver dams except with a permit - consult the provincial government for permit information. Killing and/or relocating is rarely necessary, and will not prevent beavers from returning or other beavers from moving into the site. Simple structures like pond levellers and culvert fences can prevent or control flooding caused by beaver dams. These structures can be made of wood or metal, and last 10 or more years if well-built. These structures are cheaper to build and maintain than the cost of dam destruction and beaver removal.

Consult **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control standards if you need help managing beavers

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



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Photo Credit (left): Pond leveller, courtesy of the Fur-Bearers

[spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](http://spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)







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## BEAVERS

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



Beaver, Photo Credit: Tina Hurd



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Prevent beaver problems or discourage beavers by removing or protecting potential food sources, and maintaining culverts and waterways. Trees can be protected by wrapping them with galvanized welded wire 80 cm high and placed at a distance from the trunk. Alternatively, painting tree trunks with a mixture of 600 mL coarse mason sand to 4 L exterior latex paint discourages chewing. Properly constructed exclusion fences can be set up around culverts and other infrastructure to keep beavers out and deter damming activities. A pipe system ("pond leveler") can be placed through an existing dam to manage water levels as desired.

If the beaver is at risk (e.g. construction site, highway), use cage traps and relocate them within appropriate habitat in their home range. Injured or orphaned beavers should be taken to a wildlife rehabilitator for treatment. Beavers in critical distress can be euthanized by a veterinarian or wildlife rehabilitator using barbiturates.

### Don't Trap and Relocate

Trapping and relocating wildlife away from their home is generally not a permanent or humane solution. Animals often injure themselves and may die trying to escape a trap. Relocated animals have to set up a new home, may starve trying to find food or get into fights with other animals over territory, and may spend vital energy trying to return home.

When you trap animals, you also risk separating a mother from her babies. Even if you move an entire family, a mother may abandon her young due to the pressure of caring for the babies while trying to find food in a new area.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing beavers. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control beavers, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Trapping and relocating (in accordance with **BC Wildlife Act**)
- Blunt force trauma
- Crossbow
- Killing neck snare, land or submerged
- Leghold snare, submerged
- Captive bolt
- Shot to brain
- Spring trap (e.g. Conibear style), land or submerged



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Drowning (excluding legal traps outlined in **BC Hunting & Trapping Regulations**)
- Suffocation
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Leghold or foot snare, on land
- Vehicle exhaust





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# BIRDS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

More than 300 species in BC

### Legal Designation

There are many different legal designations for birds. Before controlling birds, identify their legal designation. Refer to the provincial *BC Wildlife Act* and the federal *Migratory Birds Convention Act*

### Disease Risks

Avoid direct contact with bird droppings, dead bodies, or water contaminated by birds



#### Did you know?

Varying by species, birds eat nuts, seeds, grains, fruits, berries, and are important sources of insect control and seed dispersal.

Magpie, Photo Credit: Laurie Schretlen

## Common Conflicts

Birds can come into conflict with people when they nest in structures, cause damage to agricultural crops, gardens or greenways, or gather in large noisy groups. Their acidic droppings can damage building exteriors. They are most abundant where they are intentionally or accidentally fed (food scraps, crumbs, garbage, agricultural areas). Birds can sometimes get stuck inside buildings and cannot, or will not, leave.

## Conflict Prevention

Discourage intentional feeding – giving birds bread, grain, or other food can be harmful and attracts more birds and other animals. Secure garbage bins and compost to prevent accidental feeding, and only fill bird feeders in winter (if at all).

Maintain urban and residential structures: block access to ledges, vents, soffits, window sills and rafters; use door curtains to prevent birds flying into buildings; use strong, well-maintained netting to prevent access to specific areas.

## Protected vs. Non-Protected Birds

Most bird species are federally or provincially protected and require permits to interfere with their nests, eggs, or babies. Empty or inactive nests may or may not require a permit to remove - refer to the federal *Migratory Birds Convention Act*.

Some domestic species living in the wild (e.g. domestic doves, peacocks) are not considered wildlife.

In BC, Schedule C (non-protected) birds include house sparrows, European starlings, and rock pigeons. Empty nests and nests with eggs of Schedule C birds can be legally destroyed. Nests with babies may be moved short distances (where parents can still see them), or a false replacement nest provided.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing birds

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## BIRDS

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



House sparrow, Photo Credit: Shayne Kay



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Where birds have already become an issue, use mild humane harassment techniques like bird wires, bird spikes, predator decoys (e.g. owls, hawks), reflective strings, sound deterrents, or wires that deliver a small electric shock. Hazing by a professional with a specially-trained raptor may also be used - a permit may be required for some species of birds. Humane harassment should be postponed if birds are nesting or have babies in the nest.

If birds enter a home or building, use one-way doors or funnel cones so birds can leave but not re-enter. Do not install these devices when birds are nesting, or parents will not be able to feed their babies. Permanently seal openings once the babies have left the nest and the structure is undisturbed for several nights to prevent the issue from recurring.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing birds. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control birds, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Alpha-chloralose
- Avicides – permit required
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide
  - using pure gas in sealed chamber with regulator
- Cervical dislocation
- Live traps with food, water, and bedding – checked at least every 24-48 hours
- Captive bolt
- Repellent gels or sticky substances
- Shot to brain



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Glue traps
- Maceration
- Thoracic compression
- Vehicle exhaust



Bird lovers often use bird feeders to attract birds to their yard, however, bird feeders are also a source of human-wildlife conflict. Seed feeders often attract rodents and other wildlife, can attract large volumes of birds, and may disrupt migration patterns. Only use bird feeders in harsh winter conditions, choose feeders with a wildlife-proof design, and clean up spilled bird seed immediately. Liquid hummingbird feeders don't attract rodents and other wildlife, but may attract ants and other insects. Bird feeders can facilitate the spread of disease, and must be carefully monitored and maintained.

Photo Credit: Martin Smart





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# CROWS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

### Legal Designation

Schedule B, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Avoid direct contact with crow droppings or dead bodies

### Seasonal Considerations

In summer, parent crows protect fledgling baby crows on ground

#### Did you know?

Crows are extremely intelligent birds. They can use tools to access food, and can recognize individual people by their facial features.

Photo Credit: Sabrina Desjardins

## Common Conflicts

Crows are most abundant where they are intentionally or accidentally fed (e.g. food scraps, crumbs, garbage, or agricultural areas). Crows also come into conflict with people when they damage agricultural crops, gardens or lawns. They are attracted to grain crops like corn and grass seed.

## Conflict Prevention

Discourage intentional feeding – giving crows bread, grain, or other food can be harmful and attracts more birds and other animals. Secure garbage bins and compost to prevent accidental feeding.

European chafer beetles are an invasive species and an attractive food source for crows - birds may damage lawns trying to access them. Maintain healthy turf to avoid beetles and treat infestations using methods permitted by your municipality.

## Dive-Bombing

When young crows are starting to fledge and learn how to fly, they may spend up to a week on the ground building up their flight muscles. The parents will watch from close by and try to protect their young – sometimes dive-bombing people who get too close. Unless the young crow is hurt or in a dangerous place, you can leave the crow alone.

Avoid walking near the fledgling crow and keep pets on a leash. If you have to pass through, carry an open umbrella as an extra barrier. The parents will stop dive-bombing as soon as the young crow can fly away with them.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing birds

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



Legal designation and control varies widely by species. For more information on other types of birds, please consult our best practices sheet for other birds.

[spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](http://spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)



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## CROWS

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Shuen



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Where crows have already become an issue, use mild humane harassment techniques like bird spikes, predator decoys (e.g. owls, hawks), reflective strings, or sound deterrents. Hazing by a professional with a specially-trained raptor may also be used. Humane harassment should be postponed if birds are nesting or have babies in the nest.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing crows. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control crows, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Alpha-chloralose
- Avicides – permit required
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide
  - using pure gas in sealed chamber with regulator
- Cervical dislocation
- Live traps with food, water, and bedding – checked at least every 24-48 hours
- Captive bolt
- Repellent gels or sticky substances
- Shot to brain



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Glue traps
- Maceration
- Thoracic compression
- Vehicle exhaust



Photo Credit: Lindsay Eagleson





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# BULLFROGS & GREEN FROGS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) and  
Green frogs (*Lithobates clamitans*)

### Legal Designation

Schedule C, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

While there are a number of infectious diseases threatening native amphibians, these diseases do not pose a risk to people



Bullfrog

## Native Frogs vs. Introduced Invasive Frogs

BC has 11 native species of frogs and toads that are protected under the *BC Wildlife Act* and/or the *Species at Risk Act*. It is illegal to kill, collect, or harass them in any way without a permit. Bullfrogs and green frogs are exotic species that were introduced to BC and have become invasive.

### Common Conflicts

Invasive frogs place enormous pressure on native frog and toad populations – they can spread infectious diseases to native amphibians, bullfrogs prey on native amphibians and other wildlife, and green frogs compete with native species for habitat. Green frogs and bullfrogs may take up residence in backyard pond habitats. Bullfrogs are known for their loud calling in summer months.

### Conflict Prevention

Frogs and tadpoles should not be relocated. Humane killing of bullfrogs and green frogs may be necessary to limit their spread and damage to ecosystems – these frogs are not candidates for wildlife rehabilitation or release.



**INVASIVE SPECIES**  
**AVERAGE LENGTH**  
Bullfrog 100-175 mm



**NATIVE SPECIES**  
**AVERAGE LENGTH**  
Red-legged frog 70-100 mm







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## BULLFROGS & GREEN FROGS

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



Green frog, Photo Credit: Philip Warburton



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

To prevent accidentally creating bullfrog habitat, avoid converting temporary wetlands into permanent ponds – this allows bullfrogs to complete their life cycle. Temporary or semi-permanent wetlands should retain water for approximately three months for the benefit of native species. Bullfrogs and green frogs lay eggs later than native species. Bullfrogs lay eggs on the surface of water in July, the eggs hatch in a few days and tadpoles remain in ponds through the summer and winter. Where bullfrogs are a problem, drain ponds at the end of summer to prevent bullfrogs from completing their life cycle.

Bullfrogs and green frogs can be captured using gloved hands, nets, buckets, or using funnel or pitfall traps. To kill them humanely, apply topical 10-20% benzocaine (e.g. Orajel™) to the frogs' backs, or immerse them in benzocaine hydrochloride (min. 250 mg/L), buffered tricaine mesylate (MS-222, TMS) solution (pH 7-7.5), or aqueous clove oil (~20 drops/1 L water). Deep anesthesia (no reflex from toe pinching or flipping on back) should occur in 15-30 minutes, and be followed by a second killing method to ensure death.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommended these methods for killing bullfrogs. Although these methods are legal, they are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Blunt force trauma
- Gunshot



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Decapitation (without anesthesia followed by pithing)
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Immersion in alcohol
- Immersion in alka-seltzer solution
- Inhalant anesthetics
- Pithing (without anesthesia)
- Poison

## Know your species

Native species of frogs and toads are protected under the **BC Wildlife Act** and/or the **Species at Risk Act**. It is illegal to kill, collect, or harass them in any way without a permit. Bullfrogs and green frogs are generally much larger than BC's native frogs, and toads can be distinguished by their dry, warty skin.

Western toad, Photo Credit: Inge Riis







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# GEESE & SWANS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), Snow goose (*Chen caerulescens*), Trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*), Mute swan (*Cygnus olor*)

### Legal Designation

Protected, *Migratory Birds Convention Act*

### Disease Risks

Contamination of water sources with parasites and *coliform* bacteria

### Seasonal Considerations

Babies take several weeks to learn to fly and adults go through a summer moult that leaves them flightless

#### Did you know?

Geese and swans are attentive, devoted parents. Healthy orphaned babies can often be introduced to a new family, in consultation with a wildlife rehabilitator.

Canada goose, Photo Credit: Patricia Goldberg

## Common Conflicts

Geese and swans can come into conflict with people because of their droppings, by nesting in urban structures, gathering in golf courses, parks and other green spaces, flying close to airports and/or flight routes, crossing busy roads with babies, acting defensively while protecting a nest, and gathering in large groups.

Sometimes Canada geese will nest on balconies or rooftops and their babies may need help to come down safely. If the flightless babies end up in a backyard pool, they will need to be rescued immediately with a ramp or a net.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited company if you need help managing geese or swans

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



## Conflict Prevention

The nests and eggs of these birds, including the introduced mute swan, are protected. Empty nests must be registered as “abandoned” with the federal government and empty for a designated wait period before they can be removed. Discourage intentional feeding of geese and swans – feeding may be illegal in some municipalities.

Habitat modification can help prevent gathering or nesting, examples include:

Plant barriers: use dense, tall plant cover (minimum 75 cm high, 6 m wide)

Plant attractants: attract birds to winter cover crops, like cereal grasses, to help reduce conflicts elsewhere

Barriers: erect grids of overhead rope, cable, wire, flagging or Mylar® tape, or a perimeter fence around ponds or swimming pools

Landscaping: increase slope of banks to 64° or more within 2 m of water, mow grass less frequently, or change to a coarse grass species

[spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](http://spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)





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## GEESE & SWANS

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



Snow geese, Photo Credit: Debbie Thiessen



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Geese and swans can be hazed using devices like flags, balloons, reflective tape, purpose-designed lasers, motion-activated sprinklers, noise canons or pyrotechnics, or goose repellent sprayed on lawns. A permit is not required to haze birds with specially-trained dogs as long as there is no contact with the birds or their eggs (***Migratory Bird Regulations 24 (1), 24 (3)***). A federal permit is required to haze migratory birds with a raptor. To be most effective, hazing should begin as soon as birds appear, before they establish territories or begin nesting. Most pairs have an established breeding territory by mid to late March.

Egg addling and other fertility control can prevent egg development and limit reproduction. A permit is required for egg addling and should be conducted with minimal disturbance to nesting bird(s). Damage permits are always required to kill migratory birds.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

It is illegal to kill geese and swans without a permit. If a permit is granted, a legal control method must be used. The following are legal methods, but they are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Alpha-chloralose
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation (< 3 kg)
- Captive bolt or shot to brain
- Round-up during flightless moult period
- Pinioning or permanent “de-fighting”



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Blunt force trauma
- Crossbow
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Vehicle exhaust
- Cervical dislocation (> 3 kg)



Photo Credit: David Bartlett





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# GULLS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Family *Laridae*

### Legal Designation

Protected, *Migratory Birds  
Convention Act*

### Disease Risks

Gull droppings may contain  
*Salmonella* bacteria, and gulls that  
feed at places like landfills could carry  
*E. Coli*

### Seasonal Considerations

Lay 1-4 eggs that hatch in early summer.  
Baby gulls can leave the nest and follow  
their parents shortly after hatching, but  
can't fly until about 40 days



#### Did you know?

Gulls pair for life - male and female gulls take turns incubating eggs, and feeding and protecting their babies.

Glaucous-winged gull, Photo Credit: Colin Franks

## Common Conflicts

Gulls can come into conflict with people because of their droppings, by nesting on urban structures, gathering on buildings, in marinas, flying close to airports and/or flight routes, acting aggressively if food conditioned, and gathering in large noisy groups.

Sometimes gulls nest on balconies or rooftops, their babies will remain there until they can fly, but may need help if they accidentally fall, jump, or have an unsuccessful first flight and need to get back to the colony.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited  
wildlife control company if you  
need help managing gulls

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for  
more information



## Conflict Prevention

The nests and eggs of these birds are protected and require a federal permit to be interfered with or destroyed. Empty nests must be registered with the federal government as "abandoned" and empty for a designated wait period before they can be removed. Discourage intentional feeding of gulls – feeding may be illegal in some municipalities.

To help prevent nesting, install gull-detering grid wire systems over structures. Habitat modification can help prevent gathering, examples include:

Plant barriers: use dense, tall plant cover (minimum 75 cm high, 6 m wide)

Barriers: erect grids of overhead rope, cable, wire, flagging or Mylar® tape





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## GULLS

WILDLIFE  
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Baby glaucous-winged gull



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Gulls can be hazed using devices like flags, balloons, reflective tape, purpose-designed lasers, motion-activated sprinklers, and noise canons or pyrotechnics. A permit is not required to haze birds with specially-trained dogs as long as there is no contact with the birds or their eggs (*Migratory Bird Regulations 24 (1), 24 (3)*). A federal permit is required to haze migratory birds with a raptor. To be most effective, hazing should begin as soon as gulls appear in an area, before they become established or begin nesting.

Egg addling and other fertility control can prevent egg development and limit reproduction. A permit is required for egg addling and should be conducted with minimal disturbance to nesting bird(s). Damage permits are always required to kill migratory birds.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

It is illegal to kill gulls without a permit. If a permit is granted, a legal control method must be used. The following are legal methods, but they are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Alpha-chloralose
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Captive bolt
- Shot to brain



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Blunt force trauma
- Crossbow
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Thoracic compression
- Vehicle exhaust



Glaucous-winged gull, Photo Credit: Colin Franks





## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@sPCA.bc.ca  
BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# MARMOTS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Yellow-bellied marmot (*Marmota flaviventris*), Vancouver Island marmot (*Marmota vancouverensis*), Hoary marmot (*Marmota caligata*), Woodchuck (*Marmota monax*)

### Legal Designation

Yellow-bellied marmot, woodchuck, Schedule B; Vancouver Island marmot, red-listed *Species at Risk*; Hoary marmot, Schedule A.

### Seasonal considerations

One litter of 3-5 babies in early summer, hibernate through winter in burrows.



#### Did you know?

Whistler is said to be named for the distinctive whistle of hoary marmots in their mountains!

Yellow-bellied marmot, Photo Credit: Trent Black

## Common Conflicts

Marmots sometimes come into conflict with people when they dig burrows under or around structures, in agricultural areas, or in lawns and gardens. Yellow-bellied marmots are most likely to come into conflict because they are well adapted to living in urban areas. Some people fear that their burrows may create a tripping hazard, but severe outcomes like this are rare.

## Conflict Prevention

Marmots like good sight-lines around burrow entrances. Discourage marmots from digging more burrows by placing high fences around an area to make the habitat less appealing to a colony. Fences should be buried at least 30 cm into the ground. To check that burrows are empty, stuff a crumpled piece(s) of newspaper in burrow openings and monitor for 48 hours. If the burrow is active, the newspaper will be pushed out by the marmot's comings and goings. If the newspaper stays in place undisturbed, the burrow is empty and can be deactivated. Deactivate old burrows by sealing openings with 1/2" galvanised wire mesh (hardware cloth) buried at least 30 cm deep. Do not undertake this work in winter during hibernation season.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing marmots

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information





## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@spca.bc.ca

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**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## MARMOTS

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



Woodchuck, Photo Credit: Susan Jones



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Secure garbage bins and compost. Ensure bird feeders are not overflowing and no pet food is left outside. Repair or block holes around building exteriors and porches, and keep areas tidy. Deactivate old and empty burrows by sealing openings. Discourage colonization by making habitat less suitable.

### Don't Trap and Relocate

It is illegal to trap or relocate Vancouver Island and Hoary marmots without a permit. Although it is legal to trap yellow-bellied marmots and woodchucks if they are causing damage to property, trapping and relocating is not an effective solution. Relocated marmots may not survive without an existing burrow system, or they may just return to the original site. Marmots will continue to occupy sites if they remain accessible.

Trapping and relocating wildlife away from their home is generally not a permanent or humane solution. Animals often injure themselves and may die trying to escape a trap. Relocated animals have to set up a new home, may starve trying to find food or get into fights with other animals over territory, and may spend vital energy trying to return home.

When you trap animals, you also risk separating a mother from her babies. Even if you move an entire family, a mother may abandon her young due to the pressure of caring for the babies while trying to find food in a new area.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing marmots. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally for control of Schedule B marmots, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Trapping and relocating (in accordance with the **BC Wildlife Act** - can only relocate within 1 km on Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands, within 10 km in the rest of the province)
- Shot to brain
- Crossbow
- Captive bolt
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Spring trap (e.g. Conibear-style)



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait or fumigant poisons
- Blunt force trauma
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Chloroform
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Killing neck snare
- Leghold or foot snare
- Vehicle exhaust





## For More Information Contact

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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# MICE & RATS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Commensal rodents – House mouse (*Mus musculus*), Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), Roof rat (*Rattus rattus*)

### Legal Designation

Not considered wildlife

### Disease Risks

Can carry and transmit diseases. Native deer mice are most common carriers of *hantavirus*



#### Did you know?

Rodents are social, curious and shy. They make a wide variety of noises to communicate, and rats will take care of sick or injured rats in their group.

House mouse

## Common Conflicts

Commensal rodents come into conflict with people when they contaminate stored food with droppings, nest in structures, gnaw on wires, insulation, or wood, and burrow in yards. Commensal rodents are named for their close association to people, and reliance on them for food and shelter. Because they can carry and transmit diseases, rodents are a health and safety concern where people live, work or visit.

Mice are particularly attracted to seeds, grains and nuts. Rats are omnivorous, and eat a wide variety of plant and animal matter.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited rodent control company if you need help managing mice or rats

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



## Conflict Prevention

Rodents are drawn to areas with abundant food and shelter, and will continue to return to these areas as long as food and shelter are available. Remove potential food sources by: securing garbage bins and composts; quickly cleaning up spilled food, waste, crumbs, etc.; storing food in rodent-proof containers; and not leaving pet food outside or allowing bird feeders to overflow.

Seal gaps larger than a dime (mice) or a quarter (rats) with heavy gauge screening or 0.5 cm hardware cloth or metal mesh. Remove wood and brush piles, and trim plants back from foundations. To check if a rat burrow is in use, loosely cover the hole with leaves, newspaper or straw – if present, a rat can easily push the material away and re-open the hole. The material should remain undisturbed for two to three nights before closing the hole.





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**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## MICE & RATS

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



Norway rat



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

For incidents with few animals, one-way doors, cage traps or other live traps can be used to remove animals and release them immediately outside. Note that if food and building management problems are not addressed, the rodents will simply return.

Due to human health and safety risks, lethal control is sometimes necessary. **Traps should always be in locked and secured bait boxes that are inaccessible to pets, wildlife and children.** Snap traps should be appropriately sized and strong enough to kill quickly; generally these will need to be purchased from a pest control distributor. Captive bolt traps can also be used. Consult the AnimalKind standards online at [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for recommended rodent control methods.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The methods below are legal, regulated methods for controlling rodents or for euthanasia when animals are trapped or injured, but they are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Glue traps
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Decapitation
- Electrocution traps
- Non-lethal multi-catch (e.g. Ketch-all) and disposable killing traps that can't be opened to confirm animal death
- Gunshot

### Glue traps



Glue traps are legal and widely used, but they are inhumane, can accidentally catch many other types of animals, and should not be used. Additionally, homeowners will not have an acceptable method to kill animals found alive on the traps, resulting in prolonged suffering until death, often hours, or even days, later.

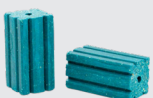


### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Rodenticides
- Chloroform
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Freezing
- Vehicle exhaust
- Electrocution (with the exception of legally distributed traps)

### Rodenticides



As of January 2023, second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) are banned for sale and use in B.C. for residential and non-essential commercial settings. SGARs can only be used by designated essential services like agricultural operators, in accordance with the regulation, and following legally required Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and record keeping requirements. Visit [gov.bc.ca/rodentIPM](http://gov.bc.ca/rodentIPM) for more information.





## For More Information Contact

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**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# MOLES & VOLES

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

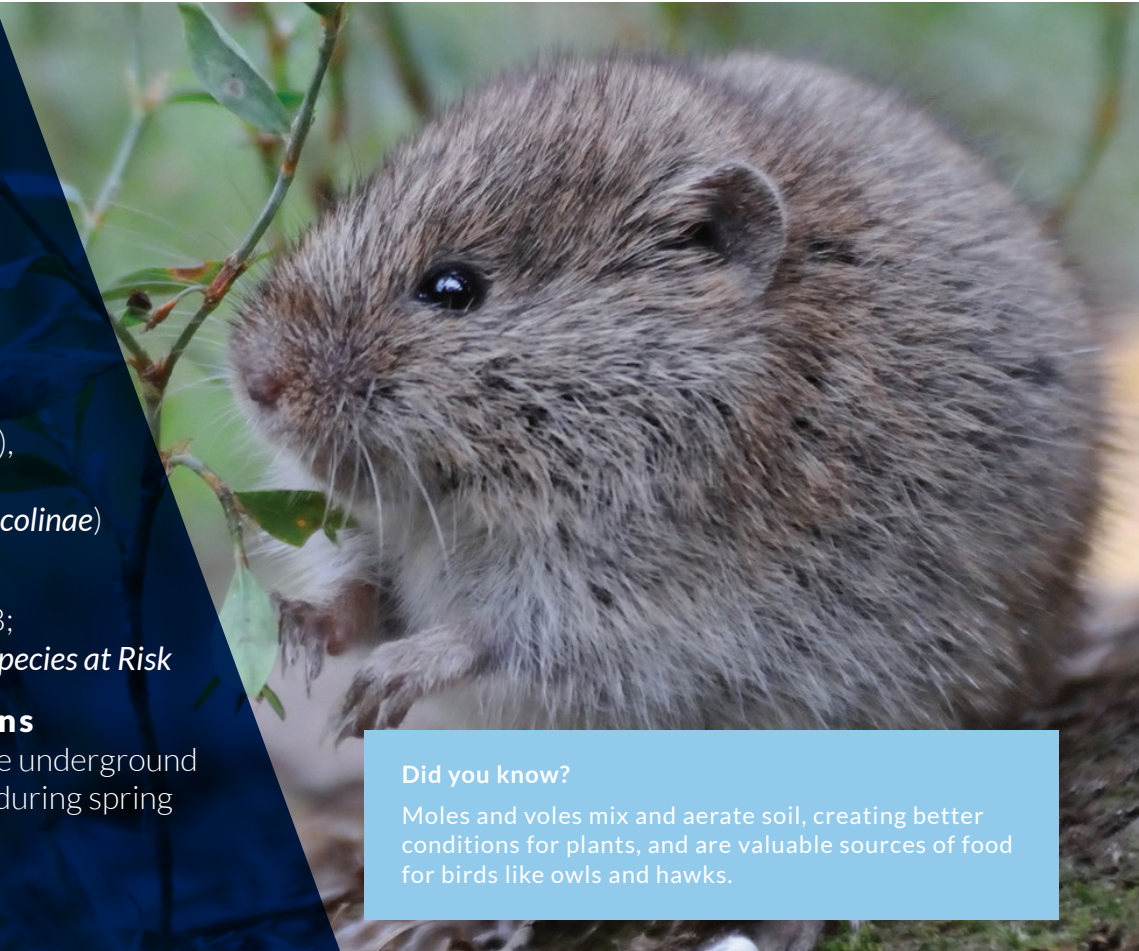
Coast mole (*Scapanus orarius*),  
Townsend's mole (*Scapanus townsendii*), voles (family *Arvicolinae*)

### Legal Designation

Coast mole, voles, Schedule B;  
Townsend's mole red-listed *Species at Risk*

### Seasonal Considerations

Moles and voles remain active underground in the winter, main activity is during spring and fall



#### Did you know?

Moles and voles mix and aerate soil, creating better conditions for plants, and are valuable sources of food for birds like owls and hawks.

## Common Conflicts

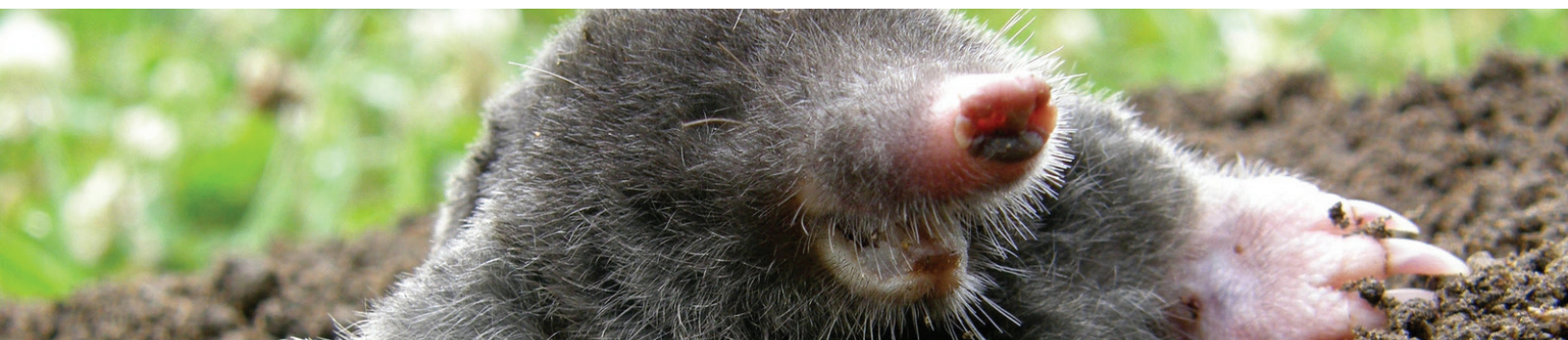
Moles and voles are attracted to moist, nutrient-rich garden soil and can create conflict with people with their shallow tunneling and molehills that build up at tunnel entrances. Vole populations fluctuate substantially, so conflicts often resolve themselves without intervention. Voles are often confused for mice, but voles have very small eyes and ears and a relatively short tail. Moles and voles will not damage fruit - voles can damage plants by tunnelling and chewing on roots, and moles eat primarily earthworms and insects.

## Conflict Prevention

Block underground access to flower beds by burying hardware cloth (0.5 cm mesh) or installing a concrete edge 20-30 cm underground. To prevent further damage, flatten tunnels by hand or by using a lawn roller prior to mowing. To check if a tunnel is in use, loosely cover holes with leaves, newspaper or straw; if a mole is present, it can easily push away the material and re-open the tunnel.

Townsend's vole

Townsend's mole





## For More Information Contact

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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## MOLES & VOLES

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



Townsend's mole



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Secure garbage bins and compost, and collect fallen fruit from the ground. Ensure bird feeders are not overflowing and no pet food is left outside. Using non-toxic diatomaceous earth can help prevent soil insects that attract moles and voles. Use mild humane harassment techniques like: castor bean or castor-oil plants, or other plant extract repellents; soaking flower bulbs in capsaicin repellent to deter voles; and providing barn owl boxes to encourage natural predation.

### Don't Trap and Relocate

Trapping and relocating wildlife away from their home is generally not a permanent or humane solution. Animals often injure themselves and may die trying to escape a trap. Relocated animals have to set up a new home, may starve trying to find food or get into fights with other animals over territory, and may spend vital energy trying to return home.

When you trap animals, you also risk separating a mother from her babies. Even if you move an entire family, a mother may abandon her young due to the pressure of caring for the babies while trying to find food in a new area.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing moles and voles. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally for control, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Trapping and relocating (in accordance with the **BC Wildlife Act** – can only relocate within 1 km on Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands, within 10 km in the rest of the province)
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Glue traps
- Penetrating captive bolt
- Rodenticides (outdoor use only)
- Shot to brain
- Snap trap
- Spring trap (e.g. Scissor or claw-style)



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait or fumigant poisons (except registered rodenticide products for voles)
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Chloroform
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Killing neck snare
- Leghold or foot snare
- Vehicle exhaust





## For More Information Contact

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**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# RIVER OTTERS & MINK

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

River otter (*Lontra canadensis*),  
Mink (*Mustela vison*)

### Legal Designation

Furbearers, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Seasonal Considerations

One litter of babies in early spring, river  
otters have 3-4 pups, mink 4-8 kits



#### Did you know?

Mink and river otters are adept at hunting in water. They can eat fish, invertebrates, rodents, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects, birds and their eggs. Their habitat is at risk from climate change.

Mink, Photo Credit: Martin Smart

## Common Conflicts

River otters and mink are carnivorous mammals from the family Mustelidae. They may dig in yards, crop fields, or road embankments to den or in pursuit of prey. Mink and otters sometimes prey on domestic animals like rabbits, chickens, turkeys, or ducks, by digging under fences or floors to enter their enclosures. River otters can prey on fish in backyard ponds and den in sheds and boathouses.



River otter, Photo Credit: Marnee Pearce

## Conflict Prevention

To prevent attracting otters and mink, remove potential food sources (especially meat and fish) and maintain farm animal housing structures. Secure garbage bins, compost, and animal/fish waste containers. Ensure pet food is not left outside. Block access to spaces larger than 2.5 cm using wood or metal, and use mesh poultry netting around house structures and ventilation or drainage openings. To be effective, mesh poultry netting should be installed by digging a trench around the perimeter and installing the mesh in a L-shape. The trench should be approximately 30 cm deep and 60 cm wide, and then back-filled once fencing is installed.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited company if you need help managing mink or river otters

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



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[spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](http://spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)





## For More Information Contact

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**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## RIVER OTTERS & MINK

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



River otter, Photo Credit: Colin Klassen



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Use mild humane harassment techniques to encourage animals to leave. Place apple cider vinegar-soaked rags in plastic containers with holes in the lid, and place the containers near den entry points (without blocking access). If babies are present, it is best to wait until they are old enough to leave the den. Injured or orphaned mink and otters should be taken to a wildlife rehabilitator for treatment.

To evict an animal from a house or structure, use a one-way door to allow the animal to leave the den, but not re-enter. Leave the door in place for two to three nights and permanently seal the openings after the den is undisturbed for several nights. If a one-way door can't be used, or has been ineffective, animals should be live-trapped and then release immediately outside the home. If necessary, use reuniting techniques for any babies present.

### Don't Trap and Relocate

Trapping and relocating wildlife away from their home is generally not a permanent or humane solution. Animals often injure themselves and may die trying to escape a trap. Relocated animals have to set up a new home, may starve trying to find food or get into fights with other animals over territory, and may spend vital energy trying to return home.

When you trap animals, you also risk separating a mother from her babies. Even if you move an entire family, a mother may abandon her young due to the pressure of caring for the babies while trying to find food in a new area.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing river otters and mink. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally for control, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Trapping and relocating (in accordance with the **BC Wildlife Act**)
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Crossbow
- Killing neck snare
- Leghold or foot snare, submerged
- Penetrating captive bolt
- Shot to brain
- Spring trap (e.g. Conibear-style)



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons
- Drowning (excluding legal traps outlined in **BC Hunting & Trapping Regulations**)
- Suffocation
- Chloroform
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Leghold or foot snare, land
- Vehicle exhaust





## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# PIGEONS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Rock dove, *Columba livia*

### Legal Designation

Schedule C, *BC Wildlife Act*

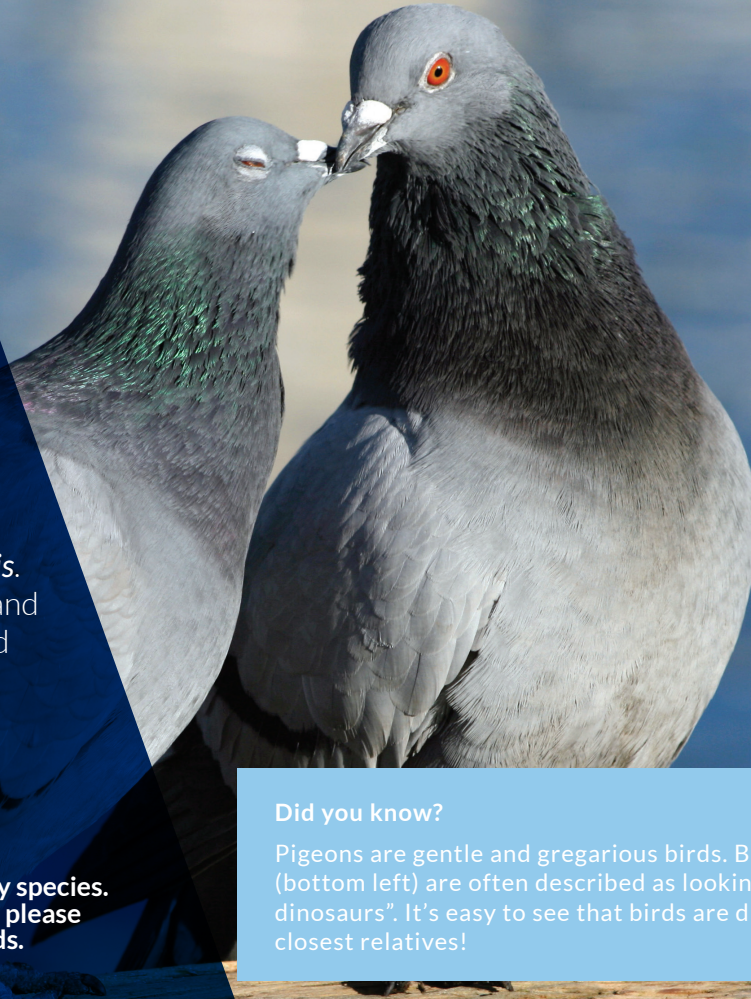
### Disease Risks

Droppings may pose a risk of *Histoplasmosis*, and rarely *Cryptococcosis*. Droppings should be cleaned carefully and regularly. Avoid direct contact with dead bodies

### Seasonal Considerations

Pigeons breed all year round, but most commonly in spring and summer in BC

**Legal designation and control varies widely by species. For more information on other types of birds, please consult our best practices sheet for other birds.**



#### Did you know?

Pigeons are gentle and gregarious birds. Baby pigeons (bottom left) are often described as looking like “baby dinosaurs”. It’s easy to see that birds are dinosaurs’ closest relatives!

Pigeons, Photo Credit: Anna Chow

## Common Conflicts

Rock doves, or “pigeons” are generally found in urban areas. Pigeons come into conflict with people when their droppings soil and damage structures, and they sometimes nest in homes or other structures. Pigeons are abundant in places where they are fed intentionally or accidentally (food scraps, crumbs, garbage, etc.) and large groups can be noisy.



Baby pigeon

## Conflict Prevention

Discourage intentional and accidental feeding to avoid problems with pigeons. Secure garbage bins and compost, and remove potential water sources (including leaky faucets). Keep balconies and other areas as clean as possible, and clear away any nesting material as soon as it is deposited to discourage pigeons from nesting. Empty nests or nests with eggs can legally be destroyed. If there are babies in the nest, the nest may be moved short distances (where the parents can still see them).

Fertility control (e.g. Ovocontrol P) is humane and may be a viable option to manage large urban populations.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing pigeons

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



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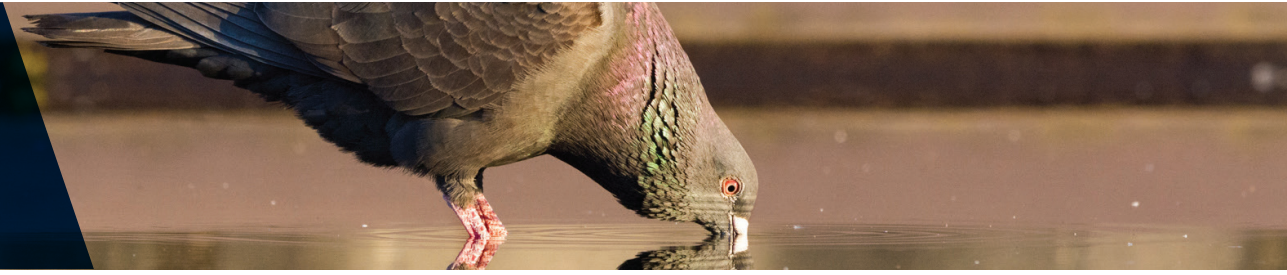
## For More Information Contact

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**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## PIGEONS

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



Pigeon, Photo Credit: Christina Stobbs



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Bird-proof urban and residential structures by: using bird-netting, bird wires and/or bird spikes to prevent access to specific areas; blocking access to ledges, window sills and rafters; and using door curtains to prevent birds from flying into buildings. Birds can also be scared away using devices like predator decoys (e.g. owls, hawks), reflective string, sound deterrents, or wires that deliver a small electric shock. Pigeons can also be hazed using specially-trained raptors.

To evict birds from enclosed spaces, use one-way doors or funnel cones so that they can leave the structure or net barrier, but not re-enter. If the birds are nesting, it is best to wait until the babies have all hatched and can fly away. Seal any openings once the nest or structure is undisturbed for several days.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing pigeons. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control pigeons, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Alpha-chloralose
- Avicides – permit required
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide
  - using pure gas in sealed chamber with regulator
- Cervical dislocation
- Live traps with food, water, and bedding – checked at least every 24-48 hours
- Captive bolt
- Repellent gels or sticky substances
- Shot to brain



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Glue traps
- Maceration
- Thoracic compression
- Vehicle exhaust



Bird spikes must be properly placed to be effective





## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# RABBITS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Eastern cottontail, *Sylvilagus floridanus*  
European rabbit, *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

### Legal Designation

Schedule C, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease in domestic, feral and wild rabbits

### Seasonal Considerations

Multiple litters in spring and summer



#### Did you know?

When it feels safe to let their guard down, their playful nature makes them a joyful neighbour. Rabbits are also a valuable prey species.

Eastern cottontail, Photo Credit: Arsalan Butt

## Common Conflicts

In urban areas, free-living populations of domestic European rabbits exist from being abandoned pets or their offspring. These rabbits are commonly called “feral rabbits” and can be a variety of colours like black, tan, grey, white or spotted. Eastern cottontails are a wild species, they have brown bodies and short, fluffy white tails.

Rabbits are attracted to sheltered, landscaped yards with dense shrubs or undergrowth. Rabbits can damage smaller trees, like fruit trees, by bark stripping or girdling in extreme winters. Eastern cottontails do not dig burrows, but European rabbit burrows can damage lawns. Babies found alone do not always need help - it's normal for a mother rabbit to leave babies hidden in the nest for long periods of time.

## Conflict Prevention

Discourage people from abandoning pet rabbits. This is illegal, and domestic rabbits suffer when outside human care because they are not a wild species. Feral rabbits should not be relocated, but rabbits that are considered adoptable should be re-homed.

## Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD) is an extremely contagious, lethal disease that causes organ damage and internal bleeding in rabbits. An outbreak of RHD in European (feral and pet) rabbits occurred for the first time in BC in February 2018. Most affected rabbits die suddenly, and there is often visible bleeding from the nose. In 2020, a strain of RHD that can also infect wild rabbits spread across the USA and Mexico. A similar strain was identified in Alberta (2021) and Ontario (2022), but has not yet been detected in BC. Report suspected cases of RHD to the BC Ministry of Agriculture.



European (domestic) rabbit

[spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](https://spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)





## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@spca.bc.ca

BC SPCA Animal Helpline

1.855.622.7722

**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## RABBITS

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



European (domestic) rabbit, Photo Credit: Christine Hubbard



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Remove thick brush, blackberry patches, and other plant cover with dense undergrowth. Plant edible wildflowers away from landscaped areas. Protect landscaping by fencing gardens and/or individual trees. Use chicken wire secured with stakes, or moveable fence panels at least 0.5 m high with a secure bottom edge to prevent rabbits from pushing or digging underneath – for European rabbits, the bottom edge of the barrier should be buried underground to discourage burrowing. Injured or orphaned rabbits should be taken to a veterinarian or wildlife rehabilitator for treatment.

### Wild vs. Feral

In BC, it is illegal to release European “feral” rabbits into the wild as this is considered abandonment. Further, trapping and moving either European rabbits or wild Eastern cottontail rabbits is not allowed under wildlife regulations to prevent their spread into new areas.

**Know who's who:** domestic rabbits that are considered adoptable should be rehomed. Eastern cottontail rabbits are a wild species that are not suitable as pets.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing rabbits. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control rabbits, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Blunt force trauma (baby rabbits only, pre-weaned < 150 g)
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Crossbow
- Cervical dislocation, only with a purpose-designed device for adults
- Falconry (with permit)
- Killing neck snare
- Captive bolt
- Shot to brain
- Spring trap (e.g. Conibear-style)



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Trapping and relocating
- Bait poisons
- Blunt force trauma (adult or juvenile rabbits > 150 g)
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Chloroform
- Electrocution
- Fumigant poisons
- Leghold or foot snare
- Vehicle exhaust





## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

**BCSPCA**  
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# RACCOONS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

*Procyon lotor*

### Legal Designation

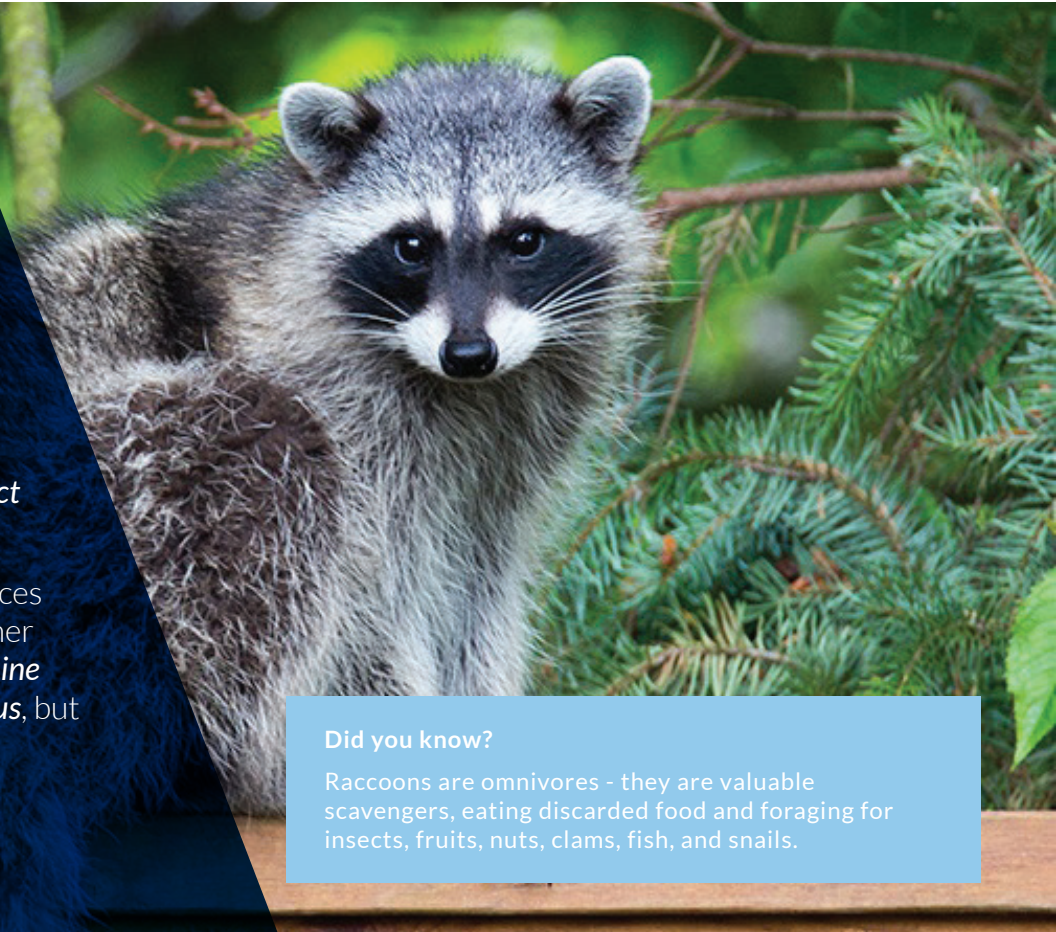
Schedule B, Furbearer, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Raccoon roundworm eggs shed in feces can be transmitted to people and other animals. Raccoons can also carry *canine distemper virus* and *raccoon parvovirus*, but are not a rabies vector in BC

### Seasonal Considerations

One litter of 3-4 babies in spring



#### Did you know?

Raccoons are omnivores - they are valuable scavengers, eating discarded food and foraging for insects, fruits, nuts, clams, fish, and snails.

Raccoon, Photo Credit: Colin Franks

## Common Conflicts

Raccoons are a common urban species, and can come into conflict with people when scavenging for food in dumpsters and other urban areas. Raccoons are also attracted to bird feeders, ponds, pets and farm animals. They can damage turf by rolling up the new sod while looking for insects. Raccoons sometimes den in structures like attics, chimneys and sheds, and may also establish latrine sites near homes or in yards.

Raccoons are typically reluctant to approach people, but access to garbage, pet food, or other human food decreases their fear of people. Habituated raccoons may become aggressive around food or pets or if they feel cornered. Raccoons in BC are not a rabies vector, so this is not a risk for people or pets.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing raccoons

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



## Conflict Prevention

Discourage people from feeding raccoons – make sure bird feeders are not overflowing and pet food is not left outside. Remove potential food sources by securing garbage bins and composts, and collecting fruit that has fallen on the ground. Secure fresh sod with stakes, or apply nematodes to soil to prevent the insects that attract raccoons.

Maintain roofs and chimneys to prevent raccoons from getting inside. Block access to vents and under porches, decks and crawlspaces. Use secure chimney caps, and remove rooftop access by trimming branches and other materials that raccoons can climb. To discourage property use, install motion-sensor lights or sprinklers.

To clean feces, avoid direct contact and wear gloves and a face mask for protection. Scoop feces using a plastic bag or shovel, close tightly and place in the garbage. Use boiling water to destroy roundworm eggs on every surface or item that touched the feces. If you can't use boiling water on the surface or item, using a 10% bleach solution will dislodge roundworm eggs so they can be rinsed away.





## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@spca.bc.ca  
BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## RACCOONS

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



Raccoon, Photo Credit: Raymond Bennett



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

If raccoons have moved in, try using mild humane harassment. Place lights at the den entrance or play a radio nearby. Soak rags in apple cider vinegar, place them in a plastic container with holes poked in the lid, and place the containers in or near den entry points (without blocking access). If babies are present, it is best to wait until they are old enough to leave the den. Injured or orphaned raccoons should be taken to a wildlife rehabilitator for treatment.

To evict the animal, install a one-way door for two to three nights so the raccoon(s) can leave, but not re-enter. If a one-way door can't be used, or has been ineffective, animals should be live-trapped and then released immediately outside the home. Use reuniting techniques if there are babies present, and seal gaps and holes once the whole family has moved out.

### Don't Trap and Relocate

Trapping and relocating wildlife away from their home is generally not a permanent or humane solution. Animals often injure themselves and may die trying to escape a trap. Relocated animals have to set up a new home, may starve trying to find food or get into fights with other animals over territory, and may spend vital energy trying to return home.

When you trap animals, you also risk separating a mother from her babies. Even if you move an entire family, a mother may abandon her young due to the pressure of caring for the babies while trying to find food in a new area.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing raccoons. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control raccoons but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Trapping and relocating (in accordance with the **BC Wildlife Act** – can only relocate within 1 km on Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands, within 10 km in the rest of the province)
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Egg trap (a.k.a. dog-proof trap)
- Killing neck snare
- Penetrating captive bolt
- Shot to brain
- Spring trap (e.g. Conibear-style)



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Chloroform
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Leghold or foot snare
- Vehicle exhaust





## For More Information Contact

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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

# SKUNKS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Striped skunk, *Mephitis mephitis*  
Spotted skunk, *Spilogale gracilis*

### Legal Designation

Schedule B, Furbearer, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Skunks are not rabies vectors in BC

### Seasonal Considerations

One litter of 4-6 babies in spring



#### Did you know?

Skunks mostly eat insects, and sometimes fruits and nuts, but they are also valuable pest control because they eat small rodents.

Striped skunk

## Common Conflicts

Skunks are slow-moving, nocturnal animals with poor eyesight and limited climbing skills. They are notorious for their defensive spray, which they only use as a last resort or when startled. Skunks are attracted to garbage, compost and fallen tree fruit, insects in lawns, and can dig underneath decks and sheds to den.

Signs of skunks include cone-shaped pits or clawed-up areas of earth.

## Conflict Prevention

Remove potential food sources by securing garbage bins and composts, and collecting fruit that has fallen on the ground. Make sure bird feeders are not overflowing and pet food is not left outside.

Maintain sheds and garages to prevent skunks from getting in. Block access underneath porches, decks and crawlspaces. Remove wood and brush piles.

## Skunks Trapped in Window Wells

Skunks are poor climbers, and may get trapped in ground-level window wells and other depressions, and usually need help to escape. You can gently scoop them out with a snow shovel, or place a plank so they can climb out on their own. Wrap a towel around the plank to increase traction, and place it at a less than 45° angle. For a deeper well or depression, use a rope to lower a box with smelly food (e.g. cat food) inside. Once the skunk is inside, pull the box up and allow them to walk free.

If a skunk gets tightly stuck (e.g. in dumpster drains, or heads stuck in lids or jars) they may need to be sedated by a veterinarian or a wildlife rehabilitator so that they can be removed without further injury.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing skunks

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information



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## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

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## SKUNKS

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



Striped skunk



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

If skunks have moved in, try using mild humane harassment. Soak rags in apple cider vinegar, place them in a plastic container with holes poked in the lid, and place the containers in or near den entry points (without blocking access). If babies are present, it is best to wait until they are old enough to leave the den. Injured or orphaned skunks should be taken to a wildlife rehabilitator for treatment.

To evict the animal, install a one-way door for two to three nights so the skunk(s) can leave, but not re-enter. If a one-way door can't be used, or has been ineffective, animals should be live-trapped and then released immediately outside the home. Use reuniting techniques if there are babies present, and seal gaps and holes once the whole family has moved out.

### Don't Trap and Relocate

Trapping and relocating wildlife away from their home is generally not a permanent or humane solution. Animals often injure themselves and may die trying to escape a trap. Relocated animals have to set up a new home, may starve trying to find food or get into fights with other animals over territory, and may spend vital energy trying to return home.

When you trap animals, you also risk separating a mother from her babies. Even if you move an entire family, a mother may abandon her young due to the pressure of caring for the babies while trying to find food in a new area.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing skunks. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control skunks, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Trapping and relocating (in accordance with the BC Wildlife Act – can only relocate within 10 km in BC)
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Killing neck snare
- Captive bolt
- Shot to brain
- Spring trap (e.g. Conibear-style)



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Chloroform
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Leghold or foot snare
- Vehicle exhaust

### If Pets or People Have Been Sprayed:

#### Combine:

- 1 L of 3% hydrogen peroxide
- 60 mL (1/4 c) baking soda
- 5 mL (1 tsp) liquid laundry or dish soap

#### Use:

Wash the area with the solution avoiding eyes, mouth and ears, and rinse with water. Repeat if necessary to eliminate the smell.





## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
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# SNAKES

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

9 wild species

### Legal Designation

Schedule A, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Rattlesnakes (*Crotalus oreganus oreganus*) are the only venomous snake in BC; bites are uncommon and are rarely fatal

### Seasonal Considerations

Snakes are sensitive to disturbances in winter when they group in hibernacula



#### Did you know?

Snakes generally remain hidden unless disturbed, and also provide excellent natural rodent and slug control!

Rattlesnake

## Common Conflicts

Most species in BC pose no threat to people. Snakes do not cause damage to structures or other areas they live in. They may enter and/or become trapped in houses, or be found during construction when hibernacula (groups of wintering snakes) are uncovered. Rattlesnakes cause fear for some people, but are not a risk unless found close to schools or housing developments. Use caution when hiking in areas where rattlesnakes live.

Garter snake, Photo Credit: Mary Watts

## Conflict Prevention

It is illegal to relocate, capture, or kill snakes without a permit. If the finder is particularly confident with species identification (ensuring that the snake is not venomous or an escaped exotic species), snakes that accidentally enter homes can be removed and placed outside. Capture snakes gently by hand, using gloves, or a box or pillowcase secured with a knot on top. If the species is not known, or is definitely a venomous snake, consult a herpetologist or expert snake professional for assistance.







## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

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## SNAKES

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



Gopher snake, Photo Credit: Lauren Sherwood



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Snakes can be attracted to areas with lots of rodents, so it's important to treat "snake-proofing" similar to rodent-proofing. Managing rodent problems can help prevent conflicts with snakes and other wildlife. Secure garbage bins and composts, make sure bird feeders are not overflowing and no pet food is left outside. Store food in rodent-proof containers and clean spilled food, waste, crumbs, etc.

Prevent access to structures by blocking access to underneath porches, decks and crawl spaces, removing wood and brush piles, and trimming tall vegetation around buildings where snakes may be a problem. Use a tight mesh fence to deter snakes and protect large areas (e.g. school playgrounds). Seal all holes large enough for snakes – they can fit their body through any crack or hole they can fit their head through, even if only a few millimetres wide. Pay attention to possible openings at ground level and plants or structures that snakes may use to climb.



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

It is illegal to kill snakes for nuisance reasons. Injured snakes should be taken to a veterinarian or wildlife rehabilitator for assessment and/or euthanasia. It is illegal to control snakes using:

- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Decapitation
- Drowning
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Glue trap
- Injection of MS-222 (TMS)
- Pithing (without anesthesia)
- Poison
- Shot to brain

### Know before you go

Rattlesnakes are the only species of venomous snake in BC, and bites are rarely fatal. Rattlesnakes will only bite as a last resort if they feel threatened. Most bites happen as a result of people trying to handle or harm the snake. Find out in advance if rattlesnakes are local to areas where you live or visit.

If you encounter a rattlesnake:

1. **Freeze** - rattlesnakes are often heard before they're seen. If you hear their distinctive rattle, freeze in place until you can see the snake.
2. **Make space** - once you can see the snake, back away slowly at least 1.5 m - be careful to check behind you to avoid any tripping hazards.
3. **Avoid** - carefully move around the rattlesnake at a safe distance until you can leave.

If the snake coils and starts to rattle, you are too close! This is their warning to step back.  
**If you or your pet are bitten by a rattlesnake, seek medical attention as soon as possible.**





## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
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# GREY SQUIRRELS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

Eastern grey squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis*

### Legal Designation

Schedule C, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Not known to carry *parapox virus* or rabies in BC

### Seasonal Considerations

Up to 2 litters of babies, in early spring and early summer



#### Did you know?

Grey squirrels' gathering and planting of acorns helps trees grow. They eat nuts and seeds, but also like berries and garden bulbs.

Grey squirrel

## Squirrels in BC

Grey squirrels are the most common squirrel in urban areas of BC – they are native to eastern North America, but non-native to BC. They are large squirrels that can be grey, black, or brindle in colour, and have large, fluffy tails longer than their bodies. Other squirrel species are designated as protected furbearers and generally don't come into conflict with people. Other protected squirrel species in BC include: Douglas squirrels, Northern flying squirrels, and red squirrels.

## Common Conflicts

Squirrels sometimes den in structures like chimneys, attics or walls, and chew wires and tree bark. They can also dig up bulbs in garden beds and are attracted to bird feeders.

## Conflict Prevention

Remove potential food sources for squirrels by securing garbage bins and composts, and make sure bird feeders are inaccessible and not overflowing. Maintain roofs and chimneys to prevent squirrels from getting inside. Block access to vents and other entry points, use secure chimney caps, and remove rooftop access by trimming branches and other materials that squirrels can climb.

## Are Grey Squirrels Invasive?

Grey squirrels are often blamed when other squirrels leave an area, but research in BC shows that grey squirrels are better adapted to living in cities than native squirrel species. Native squirrels prefer forest habitat and move out when urban development moves in.

There is little evidence that grey squirrels displace other squirrels. Grey squirrels live alongside red squirrels over large parts of North America. Grey squirrels were introduced to Stanley Park in 1909 and on southern Vancouver Island in 1966. They are now well-established in the Lower Mainland and in the Capital Regional District, but should not be introduced into new areas.

Squirrelepox virus (or squirrel parapox virus) has not been reported in British Columbia, though grey squirrels in their natural range in Ontario have tested positive for antibodies to the virus. To maintain virus-free status in BC, introductions of grey squirrels from their native range should be prevented.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing squirrels  
Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for



[spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife](http://spca.bc.ca/urban-wildlife)





## For More Information Contact

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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## GREY SQUIRRELS

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



Grey squirrels can be black or grey in colour



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

If a squirrel has moved in, try using mild humane harassment. Place lights at the nest entrance or play a radio nearby. Soak rags in apple cider vinegar, place them in a plastic container with holes poked in the lid, and place the containers in or near den or entry points (without blocking access). Do not haze squirrels if there are babies that are too young to leave the nest – this may frighten the mother and cause her to abandon them. Injured or orphaned squirrels should be taken to a wildlife rehabilitator for treatment.

To evict a squirrel, install a one-way door for two to three nights so the squirrel(s) can leave, but not re-enter. If a one-way door can't be used, or has been ineffective, animals should be live-trapped and then released immediately outside the home. Use reuniting techniques if there are babies present, and seal gaps and holes once the whole family has moved out.

### Don't Trap and Relocate

Trapping and relocating wildlife away from their home is generally not a permanent or humane solution. Animals often injure themselves and may die trying to escape a trap. Relocated animals have to set up a new home, may starve trying to find food or get into fights with other animals over territory, and may spend vital energy trying to return home.

When you trap animals, you also risk separating a mother from her babies. Even if you move an entire family, a mother may abandon her young due to the pressure of caring for the babies while trying to find food in a new area.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Trapping and relocating is not recommended, but grey squirrels are designated as a Schedule C species and can legally be trapped and released within short distances. Grey squirrels should only be released in established urban populations, and not spread into new areas.

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing squirrels. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control squirrels, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Trapping and relocating (in accordance with the **BC Wildlife Act** – can only relocate within 1 km on Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands, within 10 km in the rest of BC)
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Cervical dislocation
- Crossbow
- Gunshot
- Killing neck snare
- Penetrating captive bolt
- Spring trap (e.g. Kania or conibear-style)



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Electrocution
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Fumigant poisons
- Glue traps
- Leghold or foot snare
- Rodenticides, bait poisons
- Chloroform
- Vehicle exhaust





## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@spca.bc.ca  
BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

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# STARLINGS

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species

European starling, *Sturnus vulgaris*

### Legal Designation

Schedule C, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Droppings may pose a risk of *Histoplasmosis*, and should be cleaned carefully and regularly. Starlings may also harbour *Salmonella*, *Toxoplasmosis* and various ticks and mites

Legal designation and control varies widely by species. For more information on other types of birds, please consult our best practices sheet for other birds.

### Did you know?

Starlings consume large numbers of "pest" insects. Starlings themselves are also valuable sources of food for birds of prey.

European starlings, Photo Credit: Claire Huston Arnette

## Common Conflicts

Starlings can come into conflict with people when they nest in structures, gather in large noisy groups, or damage agricultural crops. They are attracted to crops like corn, blueberries, grapes, apples and cherries. They may use structures like oven or dryer vents as nesting sites – look for dry grasses in a vent hole or a buildup of droppings beneath a vent to indicate the presence of a starling nest.

**Careful, it's easy to confuse baby starlings with other baby birds, like robins.**



## Conflict Prevention

Discourage intentional feeding and secure garbage bins and compost to prevent accidental feeding, and only fill bird feeders in winter (if at all). Make sure ripe fruit is quickly harvested and stored.

Maintain urban and residential structures by blocking access to vents, soffits, chimneys and rafters, using door curtains to prevent starlings from flying into buildings, and using strong, well-maintained netting to prevent access to certain areas and crops.

Empty starling nests and nests with eggs can be legally destroyed. If there are babies in the nest, the nest may be moved short distances (where the parents can still see them), or a false replacement nest provided.

Call an **AnimalKind** accredited wildlife control company if you need help managing starlings

Visit [www.animalkind.ca](http://www.animalkind.ca) for more information







## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@spca.bc.ca

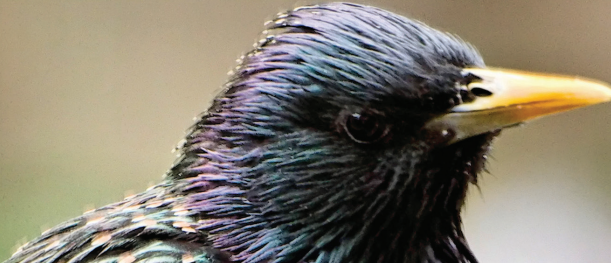
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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

## STARLINGS

WILDLIFE CONTROL  
BEST PRACTICES



European starling



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Use mild humane harassment techniques like bird netting, bird spikes, predator decoys (e.g. owls, hawks), reflective strings, sound deterrents, or wires that deliver a small electric shock. Hazing with a specially-trained raptor may also be used. Humane harassment should not be used if birds are nesting or have babies in the nest.

If starlings are in a home or building, use funnel cones so they can leave but not re-enter. Do not install these devices when birds are nesting. Permanently seal openings when the nest or structure is undisturbed for several days.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommend killing starlings. However, legal regulated methods may be used for euthanasia to relieve suffering when animals are injured. They may also be used legally to control starlings, but are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Alpha-chloralose
- Avicides – permit required
- Blunt force trauma
- Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide
  - using pure gas in sealed chamber with regulator
- Cervical dislocation
- Live traps with food, water, and bedding – checked at least every 24-48 hours
- Captive bolt
- Repellent gels or sticky substances
- Shot to brain



### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Bait poisons or chloroform
- Drowning
- Suffocation
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Glue traps
- Maceration
- Thoracic compression
- Vehicle exhaust



European starlings





## For More Information Contact

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BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
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# TURTLES

## WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

### Species & Legal Designation

Western painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta belli*), Schedule A, *BC Wildlife Act*  
Red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta*), not considered wildlife  
Snapping turtles (family *Chelydridae*), Schedule C, *BC Wildlife Act*

### Disease Risks

Turtles can carry *Salmonella* bacteria



Red-eared sliders, Photo Credit: Beth Christopher

## Common Conflicts

Exotic turtles like red-eared sliders and snapping turtles compete for habitat with the painted turtle, and may move in to backyard or park ponds.

During egg-laying season, turtles may get caught crossing roads. These turtles can be gently picked up and moved across in the direction they are travelling. If painted turtles are in danger because of their location (due to construction, etc), traps may be used to relocate them within appropriate habitat in their home range.

## Western Painted Turtle

The Western painted turtle is the only protected pond turtle in BC. They are often confused with red-eared sliders, which are an exotic species introduced through the pet trade and food markets. Sliders have a thin red stripe behind each eye, while painted turtles have no eye stripe. Painted turtles have red along the edge of their bottom shell, and sliders have yellowish undersides with no red.

## Conflict Prevention

Prevent the spread of released pet turtles by never releasing them in the wild, and remove them from the environment if found. It is illegal to capture or kill painted turtles without a permit. Snapping turtles and red-eared sliders can't be relocated or released. If released/escaped pet turtles can't be rehomed with an appropriate guardian, or there is no capacity elsewhere, humane killing may be the only option.

Western Painted Turtle



Red-eared Slider



Photo Credit: Laurie Schretlen







## For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@sPCA.bc.ca  
BC SPCA Animal Helpline  
1.855.622.7722

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## TURTLES

WILDLIFE  
CONTROL BEST  
PRACTICES



Snapping turtle



### RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

Red-eared sliders, snapping turtles and other escaped pets should be captured by hand, by using a net, or using traps such as a hoop trap or basking trap placed in water. If handling snapping turtles, use caution as their head can reach very far back, and up to 2/3 of their body length ahead of them. Only pick up snapping turtles by the shell behind their back legs or from underneath using a board or box. If available, escaped pets can be re-homed with an experienced guardian. If humane killing is necessary, refer to a professional such as a veterinarian or wildlife rehabilitator.



### NOT RECOMMENDED

#### Actions & methods for control

These are legal, regulated methods for controlling turtles, but they are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-targets, and/or are difficult to administer; check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- 2-Stage injection of MS-222 (TMS buffered solution followed by unbuffered
- Blunt force trauma



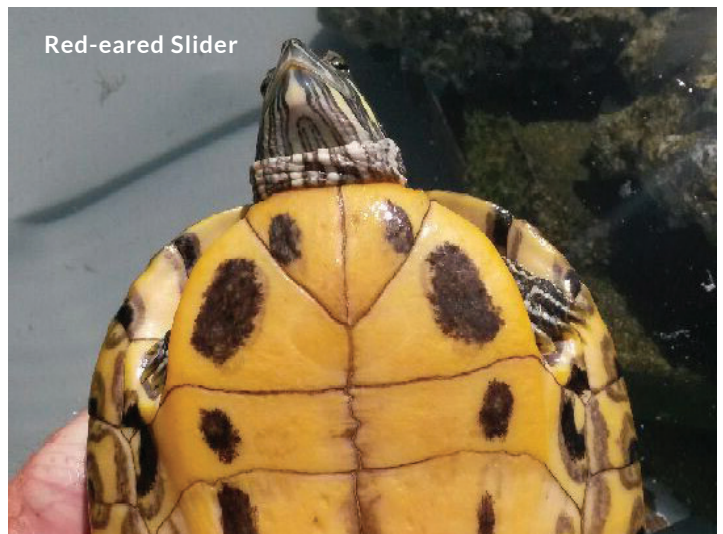
### ILLEGAL

#### Actions & methods for control

- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Decapitation
- Drowning
- Electrocutation
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Pithing
- Poison



Western Painted Turtle



Red-eared Slider

Photo Credit: Nina Simunovic