



For More Information Contact

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

BCSPCA
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

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 for more information





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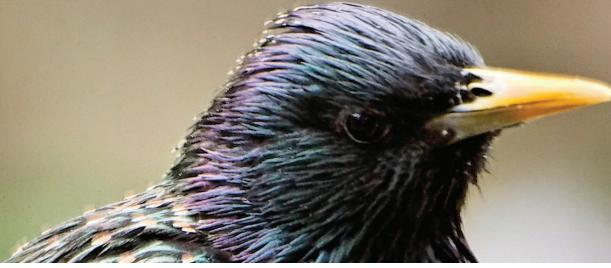
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European starling



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