

Animal Services responds for public safety incidents including wildlife loose in the living quarters of a home or business. A variety of wild species regularly inhabit urban areas including deer, raccoon, opossum, woodchuck, fox, and coyote.

Citizens should refer to the following guidelines regarding various wildlife species.

- I. Trapping Wildlife
 - A. Citizens must not transport trapped wildlife for release.
 - B. Unauthorized transport and release is illegal.
 - C. Such transport and release may:
 - a. Displace the nuisance to another neighborhood;
 - b. Spread disease;
 - c. Create an unnatural concentration of wildlife, which can lead to starvation, disease, dispersal into new neighborhoods, etc;
 - d. Result in death of animal from cardiac arrest due to stress of capture and release.
 - D. Removing an individual animal often creates a void for another to fill. It does not solve the problem.
 - E. Animals trapped indoors should be released on the premises outside of the house or building. Licensed Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators may relocate wildlife but such removal may not eliminate the problem and generally causes problems at the release location as listed above.
 - F. Wildlife causing property damage and/or residing in homes or buildings may require service by a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator or private pest control company.

- II. Raccoons
 - A. Habitat Modification
 - a. Keep pet food indoors
 - b. Clean up spilled garbage and birdseed
 - c. Secure trash cans and lids, metal cans preferred
 - d. Hang trash cans on hooks above ground
 - B. Exclusion
 - a. Keep garage, shed, and basement doors closed
 - b. Cap chimneys with approved covers before spring
 - c. Try to exclude (at night) before young are born or after mother moves young to alternate den
 - d. If trapping must be used when there are young, make sure NWCO removes entire family
 - e. Note that raccoons are the primary rabies vector species in NYS

- III. Squirrels
 - A. Habitat Modification
 - a. Trim overhanging tree branches that allow access to roof, exterior walls, and downspouts (must be trimmed back at least 6 feet)
 - b. Clean up spilled bird seed
 - c. Exclude squirrels from feeders (e.g., use baffles or squirrel-proof feeders)
 - B. Exclusion
 - a. Cap chimneys before spring
 - b. Seal holes only with metal flashing during the day; avoiding March-June when young are inside
 - c. Use one-way doors to exclude squirrels from structures before sealing holes

- IV. Skunks & Opossum
 - A. Habitat Modification
 - a. Remove attractants (e.g., secure garbage, keep pet food indoors, eliminate wood and rock piles that can be used as den sites)
 - b. Seal openings under houses, sheds, decks, and porches with galvanized wire

- B. Exclusion
 - a. Determine if den is occupied by loosely filling hole(s) with soil, leaves, or hay
 - b. If plug is undisturbed for 2-3 nights, it is safe to close (if not in winter)
 - c. If skunk is present, try harassment or eviction with one-way door
- C. Harassment
 - a. Repack the hole(s) with leaves or hay to see if animal moves elsewhere

V. Woodchucks

- A. Habitat Modification
 - a. Remove cover around burrows
 - b. Fill in burrows
- B. Exclusion (from burrows under houses, sheds)
 - a. Use loosely packed hay to determine if burrow is active or vacant
 - b. Use heavy gauge welded wire buried 1ft deep to permanently close burrows and install one-way door
 - c. If occupied, partially dig out entrances and clear vegetation

VI. Bats

- A. Bats Indoors
 - a. Close interior doors and open exterior door or window and allow bat to fly out only if there is no possibility of exposure to a person or pet
 - b. Capture with net, plastic container, or towel and release outdoors if there is no exposure
 - c. Never handle a bat with bare hands (leather gloves are recommended)
- B. Exclusion
 - a. Exclude only when no young animals are present as during winter when bats leave to hibernate in caves, or after August 15 when young bats can fly
 - b. Locate openings at dusk
 - c. Seal all openings except the largest or most obvious (use hardware cloth, netting, or sheet metal)
 - d. Install check-valve or one-way door over last opening and seal permanently after bats have left

VII. Rabies

- A. Rabies is a deadly virus that infects the central nervous system of mammals, including humans.
- B. It is primarily transmitted by bites or scratches.
- C. The virus may also be transmitted if saliva or nerve tissue from a rabid animal get's into a person's eyes, nose, or mouth, or into an open wound.
- D. Signs of rabies (Disease can only be confirmed by testing brain tissue)
 - a. Unusually aggressive or tame or seems dazed
 - b. Excessive drooling, "foaming at the mouth"
 - c. Dragging hind legs, mobility problems
 - d. Nocturnal animals DO come out during day. This alone is not a sign of illness.
 - e. Rabies vector species include raccoons, bats, skunks, foxes, and coyotes.
- E. Contact County Health Department If:
 - a. Wildlife had contact with a person or pet
 - b. Human contact with pet after pet-wildlife fight
 - c. Bat found in living space of home

VIII. Contact Info & References

- A. NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation, Region 8 Office (585-226-5380)
- B. http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/wild_neighbors/
- C. Monroe County Health Dept. (585-753-5864)
- D. Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (contact 911 or NYS DEC for NWCO list)
- E. Local Pest Control companies (refer to Yellow Pages)