



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Affiliated with
National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World
and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service

LEADER TRAINING GUIDE

Wildlife Control

Compiled by E.H. Hoyle, July 2006 from information found in HGIC 2362

Objectives:

1. Participants will identify and gather information about animals which could be considered a wildlife nuisance in their area.
2. Participants will learn when wildlife species could become a problem.
3. Participants will learn steps needed for successful control of nuisance wildlife.
4. Participants will learn ways and examples of commonly used methods of controlling nuisance wildlife around homes and gardens.

References:

Identification and Assessment of Wildlife Damage: An Overview. Cooperative Extension Division
Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. University of Nebraska – Lincoln.
<http://wildlifedamage.unl.edu/handbook/handbook>. 1994

Wildlife Control. Cooperative Extension Service Home and Garden Information Center Fact Sheet 2362.
Clemson University. <http://hgic.clemson.edu>. 1999

Before the Program:

Prepare the wildlife rummy cards. Make a copy of pages 2-11 of Identification and Assessment of Wildlife Damage: An Overview. Cut out the animals that could be considered “nuisance wildlife” in your area. Using notecards or construction paper, mount the picture of the animal on one side and the description on the other side. These cards are used in the first step of the lesson.

Suggested Program Steps:

1. Distribute the wildlife rummy cards among the group. Each person reviews the card they have. Ask participants to turn their card so others can see the picture. Take turns asking someone to choose a critter. The person holding that card will give brief summary about the critter on their card.



South Carolina Family and Community Leaders is open to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

2. Define nuisance wildlife by summarizing this information:

Most wildlife species have the potential of becoming pests. Whether or not a species becomes a pest can be directly correlated to the degree at which that animal can be tolerated. For many people, squirrels feeding in their yards or gardens is not a problem; while at the same time, a neighbor may feel the squirrels are a complete nuisance. Common wildlife pests in South Carolina include squirrels, bats, skunks, snakes, moles, voles, deer, rats/mice, chipmunks, and groundhogs.

Wildlife species are usually only pests in certain situations, such as when their numbers become excessive in a particular area. Human change in the environment will often result in increased numbers of a species. For example, piles of scrap building material make excellent sites for rodents or snakes to frequent. Food left out for household pets is often equally attractive to some wildlife species. In these situations, the wildlife have suitable food and habitat and will usually become a nuisance.

3. Give the four steps which lead to a successful wildlife control program.

- Correctly identify the species causing the problem.
- Alter the habitat, if possible, to make the area less attractive to the wildlife pest.
- Use a control method appropriate to the location, time of year, and other environmental conditions.
- Monitor the site for re-infestation in order to determine if additional control is necessary.

4. Discuss ways to control nuisance wildlife and give an example of each. Present this information:

The most commonly used methods for controlling nuisance wildlife around homes and gardens include exclusion, habitat modification, repellents, toxic baits, glue boards, traps, and frightening.

EXCLUSION

Physically excluding an offending animal from the area being damaged or disturbed is the best and most permanent way to control the problem. Depending upon size of the area to be excluded, this control method can range from inexpensive to prohibitively costly. For example, damage by birds or rabbits to ornamental shrubs or garden plants can be reduced fairly inexpensively by simply placing netting over the plant(s) to keep the pests away. On the other hand, fencing out deer from a lawn or garden can be costly. Materials needed for exclusion will depend upon the species causing the problem. Large mammals can be excluded with woven wire fences, electric fences, and poly-tape fences. Small mammals and some birds can be excluded with netting, tarp, hardware cloth, or any other suitable material.

HABITAT MODIFICATION

Modifying an animal's habitat often provides lasting and cost-effective relief from damage caused by nuisance wildlife. Habitat modification is effective because it limits access to one or more of the requirements for life – food, water, or shelter. Rodent - or bat-proofing buildings by sealing cracks and holes prevents these animals from gaining access to suitable habitats. Storing seed and pet food in tightly closed containers, controlling weeds and garden debris around homes and buildings, and storing firewood and building supplies on racks or pallets above ground level are also practices that can limit or remove the animals' sources of food, water, or shelter. However, habitat modification, while limiting nuisance wildlife, may also limit desirable species such as songbirds as well.

REPELLENTS

Using a method such as a repellent that changes the behavior of an animal may lead to a reduction or elimination of damage. Several available repellents, such as objectionable-tasting coatings or odor repellents, may deter wildlife from feeding on plants. Other repellents such as sticky, tacky substances placed on or near windows, trees, or buildings may deter many birds and small mammals. Unfortunately, most wildlife soon discover that repellents are not actually harmful, and the animals may soon become accustomed to the smell, taste, or feel of these deterrents. Repellents applied outdoors will have to be reapplied due to rain or heavy dew or applied often to new plant growth to be effective.

TOXIC BAITS AND PESTICIDES

Methods such as toxic baits may be necessary to reduce nuisance wildlife numbers. The Department of Pesticide Regulation can provide information on products available in South Carolina. There are several types of toxicants available for use. Not all toxicants are labeled for certain species. Most products identified as "baits" are formulations which are designed to be consumed by the target animal. Some pesticides are in a gas form known as fumigants. "Restricted Use Pesticides" are products which may be used only by persons who have been trained and certified to use them due to the products' highly toxic nature.

GLUE BOARDS AND TRAPS

Glue boards and traps can be either a lethal or non-lethal method of control. Glue boards can be used to trap small mammals and snakes. Applying vegetable oil to the caught animal will dissolve the glue allowing for release of the animal. Using traps can be very effective in reducing actual population numbers of certain species. However, many species cannot be trapped without a permit. In most cases, homeowners may trap an offending animal within 100 yards of their residence without a permit.

Traditional live traps such as cage or box traps are easily purchased at most garden centers. These traps allow for safe release of the trapped animal. State law may prohibit the release of the animal to another area. Check with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources for regulations. Leghold traps allow for either release or euthanasia of the trapped

animal. Traps such as body-gripping traps, scissor and harpoon traps, as well as rat/mice snap traps, are nearly always lethal. Knowledge of trapping techniques is essential for a successful trapping program.

FRIGHTENING

Frightening devices such as bells, whistles, horns, clappers, sonic emitters, audio tapes, and other sound devices may be quite successful in the short term in repelling an animal from an area. Other objects such as effigies, lights, reflectors, and windmills rely on visual stimulation to scare a problem animal away. Often nuisance animals become accustomed to these tactics and will return later if exposed to these devices daily.



South Carolina Family and Community Leaders

South Carolina Family and Community Leaders is open to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.