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**Wildlife Control Technology Magazine**

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- The Artwork of Sharon Knight



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# W.C.T.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

**ERIC ARNOLD, EDITOR**

**P.O. Box 357 ■ Sharon Center, OH 44272**



**A**s you'll see when going through this issue, it is almost entirely on bird control. I haven't forgotten about the AVMA Guidelines and plan on resuming that feature in the July/August 2022 issue. For this issue, I wanted to focus on bird control services. I get a decent amount of calls from operators wanting advice each year and thought now is a good time to focus on them.

While my back will not allow me to perform ladder work or long hours standing, I've received enough invitations to design bird management programs that I am offering to act as a consultant for operators unfamiliar with doing them. Rates vary based on project need, but for operators interested in providing bird management services that need a helping hand, feel free to reach out.

One item that I feel is of utmost importance for bird management projects is knowing when to walk away.

I've written previously about how saying "No" is a skill wildlife control operators need to embrace. Due to the costs and liabilities involved with most bird control projects, saying "No" is one of the most valuable skills you can have.

Recently, an operator contacted me about a bird job at a gas station. This was a referral from a management company, and the information the operator had been provided was minimal.

Looking for direction, the operator reached out to me as they have limited bird control experience. I don't want to get into any of the fine details of this project, but I

do want to touch on some red flags that popped up.

The first red flag was that a management company solicited the work and not the company that owned the property. While I realize that many of the larger companies contract out pest control services, I've worked with very few that let me do what needed to be done and didn't take advantage of the job.

I don't know how many jobs I've bid and lost because the management company doubled the costs instead of making a reasonable profit. With most of these jobs averaging \$30,000 - \$70,000, they priced the jobs out of what the client considered reasonable resulting in no project income for either of us.

The second red flag that popped up was the lack of information. In most cases, when a management company wants only a portion of a job site treated, the reason is the fee they are charging. They know the client won't accept a bid over a certain dollar amount and want to turn the job into "piece" work instead. While this is beneficial to the bottom line for the management company, it can make the operator look like they didn't know what they were doing.

The third red flag appeared when the management agreed to only pay for an inspection if they accepted the bid.

At times, I won't charge an inspection fee for commercial prospects. This is a business decision on my part, and I believe each business needs to decide when charging an inspection fee is ap-

propriate. However, when I don't have a good feeling, I will charge a fee to help qualify whoever is paying the bill.

In this case, the refusal to pay an inspection fee unless the bid was accepted leads me to believe that the management company wanted a bird control plan that they could use with the cheapest materials and labor they could find.

With all these red flags, I recommended that the operator say No and walk away. Even though they were disappointed, they also understood that this job would most likely bite them in the rear if they pursued it. ■

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National Council Meeting

#### Friday June 17

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FTA Auction

#### Saturday June 18

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- Cristina Jones & Eric Arnold—Trapper's Guide to Social Media
- Lee Steinmeyer—Fur Shed Knife Sharpening & Death Ray Usage
- Marty Criqui NATCA—Trap Collecting
- Robert Waddell—Collecting Animal By-Products
- Eric Arnold - Nuisance Wildlife Control
- Matt Peek (KS Furbearer Biologist)—Fur Bearer Biologist Talk
- Leon Windschitl—Fur Handling (1 hour daily)
- Gaylon Oppel (Bitter Creek Fur)—Coyote Fur Grading

#### KIDS EVENTS

Snare Making with Robert Waddell

#### ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION SPEAKERS & TOPICS

Major Boddicker, Gary Jepson & others  
Lure Making & Usage, Predators, Out of State Trapping

### VENDORS

(subject to change)

- 3 Tracks Turkey Calls
- ABC Designs
- Apple Road Bait & Lure
- Badger Land Trapping Supply
- Barnes Fur
- Duffer's
- Duke Traps
- East Fork Predator Bait
- High Country Control
- Hoosier Trapper Supply
- Kansas Dept. of Wildlife & Parks
- Kansas Trapline Products
- L&P Trapline Supply
- LKL Trapping Experience
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- Peterson Furs
- Predator Potion
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- South Dakota Trappers Assoc.
- Sterling Fur
- Tennessee Fur Harvesters Assoc.
- Texas Trappers & Fur Harvesters
- Wisconsin Trappers Association
- Wyoming State Trappers Assoc.

### FTA DEMO SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

#### THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022

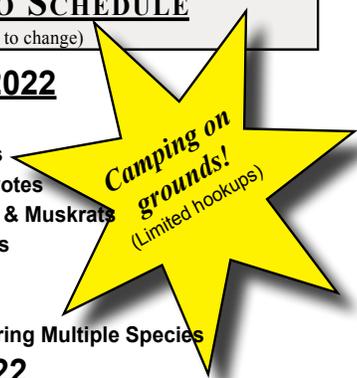
- 9 AM Clay Creech - Otter
- 10 AM Marty Smith - Canines
- 11 AM Kylee Eastwood - Coyotes
- 12 PM Gerald Schmitt - Mink & Muskrats
- 1 PM Gary Jepson - Canines
- 2 PM Jeff Dunnier - Beaver
- 3 PM EJ Kelley - Bobcat
- 4 PM Doug McKenzie - Snaring Multiple Species

#### FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 2022

- 8 AM Rick Hemseth - Trapping Coons in the Water
- 9 AM Tom & John Beaudette - Canines
- 10 AM Dave Eckels - Beaver
- 11 AM Casey Shoopman - Predators on Managed Properties
- 12 PM Mike Fisher - Beaver
- 1 PM Robert Waddell - Coyotes and Cats
- 2 PM Karri Feeney - Bobcats
- 3 PM Lee Steinmeyer - Coyotes
- 4 PM Tim Wilson & Tommy Alexander - Mink & Otter

#### SATURDAY JUNE 18, 2022

- 8 AM Cletis Richards - Predators
- 9 AM Dale Billingsley - Coon
- 10 AM Ed Schneider - Trapping Predators in Waterways
- 11 AM Mark Conner & Jackie Reed - Beaver & Otter
- 12 PM Lesel Reuwsaat - Predators
- 1 PM Red O'Hearn - Coons
- 2 PM Beth 'Coonburger' Hakala - Bobcat
- 3 PM Derrick Search - Snaring
- 4 PM Robert Waddell & Dale Billingsley - Animal By-products



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# WCT RECAP: BIRDS & BOX STORES

by WCT Staff

*(Editor's Note: This article appeared in the May/June 2016 issue of Wildlife Control Technology magazine.)*

One of the most frustrating calls to handle as a wildlife control operator is the bird inside a store. While the majority of these calls involve European starlings or house sparrows, other species such as pigeons, doves, escaped pet birds, and raptors can generate these calls as well. While not that technically difficult most of the time, problems usually come from the client putting restrictions on what, where, and when services can be performed.

They call wanting to hire someone because they have a problem yet insist on telling the operator how to do the job. It does not matter if the store is a standalone location, part of a strip mall, an independent business, or part of an international chain. This leaves the operator with two choices; agree to their terms or walk away. To make matters even more complicated, most of these calls seem to come from service companies that have a contract with the store and need someone to perform the service.

For operators new to these calls, the best advice is not to overthink the situation. Offer several control methods for the conflict and ask questions such as store hours, where the bird(s) are located and the last time seen (be very specific with this question), species of bird if known, billing information, and point of contact. Based on the information received and limitations put forth by the potential client, the operator can now decide to continue forward or walk away. As

with all wildlife issues, remember it is the operator's responsibility to know Federal, state, and local laws and if any licenses or permits are required before starting.

## CONTROL METHODS

More specialty equipment is probably made for bird conflicts than any other animal. Individuals wishing to offer bird control services are best served by learning about the different control methods, their pros and cons, and the products required. Following is a brief description of the most common capture techniques for removing birds from inside structures.

## SHOOTING

Although this is the most controversial control method, shooting is generally the quickest and most cost-effective control method when legal. Because not a lot of energy is required for the humane dispatch of most birds, usually 1 – 3 foot-pounds of energy (fpe) at the point of impact, shooting can be very safe to do. Due to the low fpe required for dispatching a bird, it is more important to focus on accuracy than velocity or power. Any air rifle/pellet combination producing 15 fpe at the muzzle or less and is capable of consistently hitting a half-inch target at 25 feet will work in most cases. Air rifles generating more than 15 fpe at the muzzle will work but have more safety issues with potential misses and pellets passing entirely through the bird.

When lining up a shot, always keep the backstop in mind should the pellet miss or pass through the bird. Shooting holes in the roof or having the pellet ricochet and hit a display light will cost more to fix than most jobs are paying. Ideally, the backstop will be large enough

to prevent ricochets and strong enough to stop the pellet. Getting the bird to cooperate is another matter entirely.

In most cases, baiting will have limited effectiveness and is a waste of time; however, electronic callers and decoy birds have proven very effective. Not only can a caller help locate the problem bird, but it can also help draw it to the preferred shooting location so a safe shot can be attempted. This is especially true when combined with some sort of decoy.

It needs to be noted that most shooting will take place when the store is closed or for stores open 24 hours when the least amount of people are present. This generally means very early in the morning before the first shift arrives. As this may occur outside of regular business hours, a higher rate for service may be justified.

## HAND NETTING

While the most socially acceptable solution, hand netting, is limited to very special situations. Usually, this can only be done in smaller stores where the bird is confined to a storeroom or other small room with no means of escape. Soft or flexible rims the netting is attached to work best, although certain fish landing nests can also be used. The key to successful hand netting is proper preparation.

Survey the capture area and remove as many potential encumbrances as possible. Note the ceiling height of the room and any obstacles such as sprinkler heads that the net may get caught on. Make sure to have a ladder ready in case it is needed. When ready, approach the bird, place the net

*Continued on page 8*

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**WCT RECAP:**

Continued from page 6

over the top, and then restrain it by hand. This is easier said than done and, in most cases, will require multiple attempts. Should the bird fly before the net can successfully be placed, wait for the bird to land, then try again. Avoid trying to catch the bird during flight as this has minimal success and only causes the bird further panic making it more challenging to capture. Once the bird has successfully been captured, transfer it into a container for transport. Solid transport cages are ideal, as they will keep the bird calm while hiding it from the view of employees and customers that may not approve.

**TRAPPING**

Trapping is undoubtedly the number one option offered and

accepted for the removal of birds from stores. While trapping can be effective, it generally takes the most time to perform and may include additional services such as prebaiting, capturing decoy birds, establishing special trapping locations, and maintenance. There are many different types and styles of traps available, each with its own specific uses.

**Glue Boards** – while not viewed as a friendly method for bird control, glue boards do have a place. Although captured birds can be removed from the glue with oil, glue boards are best used when lethal control is being employed. Place birdseed or breadcrumbs in the middle of the glue board, then place the baited board in a spot easily seen by the bird. Even though the glue board is for lethal control, it is recommended to monitor the board constantly. This way,

any captured bird can immediately be removed from the store and euthanized.

**Sparrow/Starling Traps** – there are probably more different styles of sparrow/starling traps available today than any other type of cage trap. Most of these traps are more effective for situations with multiple birds versus a single bird. For maximum effect, these traps should be prebaited with the release door left open until the flock becomes accustomed to feeding from the trap, at which point the release door should be closed. Live birds inside the trap will act as an incentive for birds outside the trap, so water should be available for any trapped birds to keep them healthy. When removing captured birds, leave two or three birds behind to continue to act as decoys for the best success.

**Net Traps** – net traps have netting that is launched over the birds trapping them. There are several different sizes and triggering methods for this trap style, including remote firing and timed release after a laser beam is broken. Unlike other bird traps, this trap style can be mounted horizontally or vertically based on the situation. Unlike wire cage traps that can have food and water available for captured birds and left unattended for short periods, these traps need to be monitored once set, and any bird captured removed quickly afterward.

**Sparrow Sled** – this specialty bird trap was invented specifically for house sparrows in box stores. It consists of a two-chamber capture cage placed inside an aluminum carriage and is available from **wild-lifecontrolsupplies.com**. The trap comes with mounting hardware to allow the trap to be hung from a beam out of the way and two water bottles for captured birds. This trap works best with a decoy bird in the back chamber or a decoy and electrical caller. For cases where tampering may be an issue, opera-



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tors can hook up a “pulley” system to raise and lower the trap out of sight. Additionally, the two release chamber doors can be closed with uniquely colored wire ties to show if the trap has been tampered with.

“*Trap Door*” – developed by Bird Barrier, this is perhaps the newest style of bird trap on the market. This trap has a spring-loaded, fall-away door that drops the bird down into the holding area once triggered. Effective for both house sparrows and starlings, this is a single catch trap, so several may be required to cover the bird’s flightpath or when multiple birds are present. An optional electronic birdcall is available that can be installed on the trap to increase its effectiveness.

*Birdhouse* – while this trap style has been around for a while, few operators use it. As the name implies, the trap looks like a birdhouse that sparrows and starlings may enter. The trap works best when mounted high against a wall giving the impression of an available nesting area. Once the bird enters the birdhouse, a colored plate closes off the opening preventing the bird from escaping. This colored plate also makes it very easy to check the status of the trap.

*Mist Nests* – while not considered a typical trap, mist nests have probably captured more birds than any other type of trap. In many cases, they are the most efficient method for removing birds in stores after shooting. Mist nests come in a variety of sizes, materials, and openings. Unlike the other trapping equipment mentioned, a mist nest requires a minimum of two people to operate correctly. They also need additional materials and equipment such as poles, zip ties/tape, and other items to function correctly. Bird Barrier offers several mist net kits for operators looking for an all-in-one package.

The key to using mist nests is

to install and store them properly. When first installing a mist net, making “shelves” that will hold birds that fall into them after hitting the net is important. This is the most misunderstood part of mist nets, as many think that the birds get tangles as they fly into the net. If the net is too tight or the shelf is not deep enough, the bird may bounce off the net and avoid it. This also means that there is a front and back to the mist net, so it must be installed in the proper direction to function correctly.

Installing a mist nest requires two poles, duct tape or zip ties, and a method for hanging the net from the ceiling (unless it will be handheld). It is highly recommended that two individuals set up the mist net, keeping in mind that it may never work correctly if it is not done correctly.

First, unpack the mist net on a flat surface. Each corner will have a string loop making it easy to figure out how the net should go. Next, each person needs to grab the first shelf string from the top of the net and pull it towards the top, leaving approximately 12 inches between the top of the net and the shelf string. While holding the first shelf string in place, reach down to the following shelf string and fold it towards the first shelf string leaving approximately 18 inches between the two. Repeat this process until all the remaining shelves have been created. Carefully insert the poles through the string loops, leaving the shelves in place. Lastly, fasten the loops in place with either duct tape or zip ties. This completes the installation of the net with the poles.

Store and transport the mist net by placing it on a piece of plastic that has been cut to the same size as the net and carefully rolling one end so that the plastic is between each layer of the net. This prevents the net from becoming entangled

with itself.

To use the mist net, carefully unwrap it on location and then have both individuals lift it simultaneously, keeping it taught between them. Do not overtighten the net so that a bird would bounce off it, but also don’t have it so loose that a bird could fly over the top string. Move the net into the bird’s flight path and either hang it in place or have the individuals continue to hold it while a third individual “pushes” the bird toward the net with a laser or pole with loose tape on it. Again, while it is essential to keep the net taught, it does not need to be so tight that any bird hitting it will bounce back instead of falling into the shelf to get tangled. Once a bird has been caught, both individuals need to lower the net to the ground simultaneously so it can be removed. This can be difficult to do without damaging the bird’s feathers, so it may be helpful to use fingernail cutters to cut some of the netting instead. Even if the bird is going to be dispatched, proper treatment of the bird is vital to the business’s reputation and limiting issues with onlookers. In most cases, the “holes” created from removing birds will not affect the net until it has had a good amount of usage, at which time it will need to be replaced.

Once the job is finished, store the mist net by placing the piece of plastic on the floor and placing the net on top of it. Warp the netting with the plastic piece again and store it in a location where it is not likely to be tangled with other equipment until needed.

Birds in stores can be very lucrative provided operators have the correct equipment, knowledge, and ability to work within the client’s guidelines. The key is to have the equipment on hand, know how to use it, charge appropriately, and know when to walk away. ■



## FROM THE TOOLBOX

**JACK AMMERMAN**

5104 Woodstock Drive ■ Swartz Creek, MI 48473

### A NOTE TO MYSELF

**D**riving takes up almost as much time as setting up the wildlife control jobs. I heard a song on the radio the other day as I was bopping around. I don't remember the song's name, but the gist of the whole thing was that the guy was singing about telling his younger self that everything would be okay. I don't remember a point in my younger life when I was concerned about it not being okay. I thought about a few things that

experience has offered me that my "newly-into-the-business" self would have appreciated. If I could go back in time and tell myself a few things, I hope that I would have listened.

**Here are just a few things that a time machine would have changed in my life:**

- If a trap is working for you, the grass isn't greener on the other side of the fence. I started with one cage trap—a Tomahawk 108, and

no desire to supply my neighborhood with traps), and I can't bring myself to scrap them. I'm not advocating for a truck bed full of Tomahawk 108s, but you'll find at least ten Tomahawk traps in each of my trucks. They just don't let you down.

- Buy quality equipment and stop trying to go cheap. Is there a difference between a good quality ladder and an inexpensive one? There sure is—and your life depends on it. Other items that we use daily might not have our lives on the line, but I take pride in grabbing a tool out of the truck box and recognizing its years of flawless service. One tool that I am especially fond of is my original snake tong. I've purchased a handful of snake tongs from whoever had a better price, having to replace most of them. I don't want to sound like a commercial for one particular company here, but I would recommend sticking with a well-known manufacturer to my "first-starting-out" self.

- Speaking of snake tongs, I would recommend buying a few snake tongs of various sizes and skipping on the cat grabber. Each truck of mine has a cat grabber, and, like me, my technicians just smile when I ask them how often the cat grabber gets used.

- It took me years and years to put advertising on my truck. Part of the reason was that I'm not the best driver sometimes, and I didn't want the phone calls admonishing me of my lane-changing transgressions. After buying a small trailer

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24  
Lessons

and having it covered with a vinyl advertising wrap, I soon found out how that wrap paid for itself. At the very least, from day one, my truck should have had my business name and phone number on the tailgate (with letters big enough for people to see from two car lengths behind). Advertising on the doors is okay, but that rear vehicle advertising is what pays off.

- I would tell myself to hire employees as soon as the business could support them. I shudder to think of all the jobs that I have turned down throughout the years because I was a one-man-band. It's like all those dollars that go flying by when you're in a Plexiglas booth, and they turn the fan on. You grab what you can, and the rest goes by the wayside. Starting with one employee and giving that employee-specific jobs (maybe they get all the groundhog jobs or all the raccoon in chimney jobs) will help hone their skills, and they can expand as they get more comfortable.

- I didn't have experience in trapping anything, so it was all a learning experience when I started. Some of my early clients didn't get the quality of work that my clients now receive. I had "competitors" that were 45 miles away in opposite directions. Although we weren't competing on jobs, I hesitated to call them, meet with them, and perhaps ride with them for a day. For some reason, I thought that they would look at me like "the enemy." How wrong I was. I will gladly let people ride along to see how I operate in the future. Even when someone started a business just miles away from me, I was not threatened with his "honing in" on my turf. There's plenty of room for everyone.

- I wouldn't have to tell myself to go to every training seminar that I could, join various wildlife control organizations, take advantage of

everything they offer, or read magazines devoted to my craft. That's just my style. However, I'd probably tell myself anyway! It still AMAZES me the number of people (trying to make a go of wildlife control) that don't subscribe to this magazine. If only one article or even one advertisement gives you value, then the whole year's subscription price has been covered by your savings. It may be time savings, a method, or a product, but I get something out of every issue of this magazine. With almost three decades of experience, I find myself still learning and cannot fathom how the guy with five or six years in the business thinks he doesn't need to learn anything more.

- Speaking of educational conferences, I would let my younger self know that there's a lot of hot air being expelled in these get-togethers. Don't get me wrong, there is absolutely some valuable info to be had, but I have never seen so many superheroes in one place. Everyone is happy to tell you how super successful they are—don't believe them. We are all in the same business and face the same struggles. Granted, some guys do very well, but those guys aren't usually the ones that are boasting. As far as presentations go, a guy who bought a fire engine ladder truck to reach high spaces sounds like an interesting hour. However, you'll get more value from the presenter going over the basics of cage trapping or discussing, in-depth, a particular common species of animal. I would tell my younger self that this advice applies for the rest of your career. You'll never stop learning.

*(Editor's Note: Continuing with Jack's thought from above, today's social media/message boards can have the same issues, if not more, than educational conferences. While there is a lot of good information that can be had by participating in these groups, taking suggestions*

*with several grains of salt may be best. Look at who's answering the questions. If you notice someone commenting a lot, especially with long, detailed posts, ask yourself if they are constantly posting, when are they doing any wildlife control work, and how much experience do they have? This way, you can help qualify the comments and decide if they are relevant for you to consider.)*

- I could go on, but I have to wrap this article up sooner or later. One last important tip that I would give myself is about the home life. During my birthday dinner at a nice restaurant, I have taken calls and swung by the house on my way home to help the people out (and make some money!) I have had my wife and kids working with me on Mother's Day, wrapping up a bat job. I have picked up traps in the family vehicle as we left town to go on a vacation. Don't do this stuff. Money is important, but that time with your family is so much more important. You don't realize it just starting out, but those kids grow and go. Your wife will remember your 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary vividly because there was a squirrel in a fireplace that had to be tended to on your way to dinner. Your client's emergency is not your emergency.

That last piece of advice might be the most important and probably, I assume, the most ignored. ■

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## **A SECOND LOOK**

In the last article, we finished the 10-step process by reviewing steps 8, 9, and 10, finishing the Urban Coyote Management Series covering the Urban Coyote Solutions 10-step process. Near the end of the last article, I talked about upcoming removal projects, specifically a large trophy deer hunting acreage in south-central Iowa, where I was hired to remove coyotes causing a lot of predation because of a lack of predator management from the previous landowner. Although this project is not completed at the current writing, I believe it offers some information of value to those of you following along.

Initial meeting with the client and first visit to the property led me to believe that a snare project looked like the best suitable control

method for this acreage in approximately five different areas of the 1000-acre property. I've done this type of control several times with great success, but it does have its downsides and concerns.

After securing and preparing the needed equipment, customized setup snares, Iowa legal, Kill poles, Stihl BT 45 auger, Stihl brush cutter, 5-tine narrow hard rake, and bait. I set out in mid-March to spend two days on the property setting up the bait stations and cutting long trails leading to them. Kill poles were added as well, but no snares at this time as I wanted to see what the activity was like after approximately one week. I have found that setting up this type of control method and allowing the coyotes to come and go as they please for several days makes them more comfort-

able coming into a station before introducing the snares.

Eight days later, I came back to the property to check on the activity at the bait stations. What I found was good and bad. Two of the stations had been hit hard by the coyotes, leaving tell-tale droppings, tracks, and the recognizable heavy digging associated with them trying to get to the bait, with most of it put in 4-inch augured out holes approximately 20 inches deep. This was the type of evidence I was hoping to see, but because of the heavy deer population on this property, deer were also using the cut trails to see what was going on. Although I knew that this could happen, I didn't think that they would be using them as heavily as the coyotes! Ironically, the very animal population I was trying to protect would interfere in my attempt to protect them from Wiley.

In the Midwest, deer populations are high and always a challenge to work around if you're trapping coyotes. Setting off foothold traps and knocking down snares are commonplace. Usually, this is nothing more than irritating. Still, when providing a service to control coyotes on a property specifically designed to attract trophy deer, it's more than just an irritant. Although Iowa law requires deer stops on all snares and no more than an 8-inch loop, there's still the potential of catching a deer around



the head, as they frequently travel and walk with their head close to the ground. The client and I were a bit concerned, and if I were going to change course and pick a different control method, now would be the time to do it. After a bit of evaluation and consultation with the client, I decided that we would change course and implement footholds as the preferred control method instead of the snares. Of course, this was okay by me, as I would prefer to use footholds over snares as I believe they are much more surgical in removing coyotes. I thought that the snare method would initially work better for this particular property and provide faster results. However, as it turns out, it's potentially more of a problem than a solution.

Although I've done several coyote removal projects, both urban and rural, in complicated and challenging conditions, experience has shown me in this line of work that it's better to change course and modify the plan early rather than later. It will probably save you time, frustration, and unnecessary problems in the long run. Snares work and are a great tool, but I didn't want to unnecessarily see a dead deer in a snare, knowing that I could have done something different. Sometimes an initial solution just leads you to a better one!

With only one day left before heading back home, I decided to set up a couple of areas with footholds on travel corridors that the coyotes were using and minimal activity and travel by the deer. I only had time for one check, so four locations were set up with a pair of sets at each one, resulting in the capture of two male coyotes, approximately 2-3 years of age shown in the photos. Yes, some of the sets were tripped from deer stepping on them, but as I said earlier, this is more of an irritant than a problem. I would rather have deer



setting off a couple of footholds than see one unnecessarily dead in the snare.

This time of the year, I chose to go with sets that would appeal to curiosity and territoriality rather than sets appealing to hunger. I have found that this is much more effective in the spring of the year and limits nontarget catches. Staying away from the water is **KEY** in limiting nontargets. Instead, utilize travel corridors leading to property transitions, crossovers, etc. In this case, side-by-side trails and mowed lanes provided healthy travel routes for the coyotes to easily navigate the property, including multiple set placement opportunities. Although I only had a couple of areas set up for one day, it was apparent to me that making the change was the right thing to do and, in the long run, probably saved time. Yes, some time and effort were wasted, but I think pushing through because it was the original plan and control method would have been the wrong thing to do.

Because the client had some unexpected guests and maintenance work to be done on the property, the project will be resumed in June, at which time I will spend 10 to 12 days on the farm taking out the rest of the resident coyotes. New groups will eventual-

ly take over and move in after the residents are killed. That is why this client is committed to a yearly predator management program, unlike the property's previous owner. Whether you're controlling coyotes or other wildlife species, never be afraid to stop and change course and head in a different direction if evidence or situation warrants it. As I said earlier, initially planned solutions can sometimes be the path to a better one.

Until the next issue, be safe out there! ■

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## ***AROUND THE CAGE TRAPS***

**PAUL WINKELMANN**

8041 West Mequon Rd. ■ Mequon, WI 53097

### ***TIPS N TRICKS***

I've now had about the same number of years of fur trapping as I've had of ADC work—about 33 years of each. In this article, I would like to make some comparisons between the two. I am not going to talk about price differences because I was lucky. I started my ADC business just when fur trapping was no longer profitable. I want to talk about the difference between the two from my point of view. These are my experiences, and yours may be entirely different.

Let's start with the smallest furbearers I catch, the short and long-tailed weasels. I rarely fur trapped any weasels on purpose. Most were caught in dry sets made for something else. Back when I was fur trapping, we had very few weasels. I was told that this was because we did not have enough large woodlots and that weasels needed an excellent forest to survive. This was just one of the many lies told back in the Fifties. We have fewer woods and fewer chicken coops now than we had back then, and we have at least 20 times as many weasels.

I remember my first ADC weasel call like it was yesterday. A woman along Lake Michigan called me and explained that she had a weasel living in the basement and that it was doing a marvelous job of keeping their entire, colossal house mouse-free. She explained that it made the mistake of going upstairs to the kid's bedroom and scaring the bejeebers out of them. So now it had to go. She was

pleased to learn that I would catch it in a cage trap and let it go on a property where the rabbits were girdling the newly planted trees. I set a cage trap with fish-flavored cat food and caught the little rascal overnight.



Since then, I have had all kinds of weasel jobs at chicken coops and in people's basements involving entire litters. I once took mom and her whole litter and put them in a cardboard box in a large mink ranch cage in my garage. The next day, I caught a live mouse and brought it home for mom weasel and the gang. All the grandkids gathered around the cage when I let the mouse go. When he walked by the opening in the cardboard box, if you blinked, you missed it. Mrs. Weasel grabbed that mouse so fast that it was like it had disappeared. The kids couldn't believe it. The last weasel I caught was in a kid's bedroom. I chased him around until I finally got tired. I then set the baited trap in front of him and asked him to please go inside.

He looked at me, jumped into the trap, and said, "Why didn't you ask me that in the first place?"

I have caught several thousand muskrats for fur, and when I went into my ADC business, I figured my muskrat trapping days were over. Boy, was I wrong. It seems that if you want to build a subdivision nowadays, the first thing you must do is dig a lovely pond for the geese and the muskrats. Whoever came up with this wonderful idea between the goose poop and the muskrat holes certainly had us damage control guys in mind. Now I do not catch near as many muskrats as I used to but skipping around a dug pond is so much easier than slogging through a marsh in waders that I'll take the difference.

On occasion, I'd catch two muskrats in the same trap while fur trapping. However, I could not ask them how they both managed to get caught because neither one was still breathing. I have also captured two muskrats in a cage trap and was able to see at least how they got along with each other in such a cramped area. Surprisingly, they got along amazingly well. I admit that I rarely used cage traps for muskrat trapping, but why not when you find the perfectly sized culvert? I have several areas where I can release muskrats full of food and short on predators and competition. It is always interesting to leave the cage door open and watch how they respond to being free again.

I also get many calls for muskrats that have managed to trap themselves. They are usually found staring up at you from the bottom of a window well. I remove these little furballs and relocate them as well. If someone is against this idea, I would certainly have no qualms about putting them to sleep, but this hasn't happened yet. I have noticed that more and more people are for moving the animal to another location, and I know a large group of predators who agree. After all, it is hard to beat a warm meal of muskrat when you're a mink.

Speaking of mink, they were my favorite animal to fur trap. Two good mink hides were worth just about the average wage for a week in 1954. A prime large mink brought \$35 back then. That means the same mink should fetch about \$310 now. We do not get very many ADC calls for mink. They sometimes get into trouble that they can't get out of, and they have been known to raid chicken coops. We probably catch as many wild minks by accident as we do on purpose. I release all our healthy mink back into the environment. They seem to be about as bad at crossing roads as the opossum here. I recall one smart mink that got his jaws through the 1- x 1-inch mesh of a cage trap, with the bar in the back of his mouth. He was still able to bite me hard enough to draw blood. I was very proud of that mink but also a little bit worried. As much time as I spend around wild animals, biting me could be dangerous. On a side note, using a fish-flavored cat food seems to work as well for caging mink as it does for all the other meat-eaters.

Opossums were one animal that I hated to catch on the trapline. They were never worth skinning, and it always seemed that the set was screwed up forever once you caught an opossum in it. And I

swear that the fox in our area would pay the opossums to find all the dirt holes meant for them. There is one good thing about opossums that all animals should have: A nice handle at the end for easy carrying. Since opossums don't have crossing guards and can't read the "Don't Walk" signs, they make up for it by having huge litters. I guess they figure that we'll run out of gas before they run out of babies.

My experience with ADC opossums is a much happier tale. Because they seem to be constantly hungry, opossum jobs will build confidence in even the newest ADC techs. If they can't find the opossum hiding somewhere in the garage, all they must do is leave a well-baited cage trap, and the opossum will find it. Several years back, our opossum jobs got even more enjoyable. We ran into quite a few pure white opossums. They looked like little polar bears. They were pretty handsome for opossums, and we took most of them to a wildlife zoo. Opossums are also some of the best deals for customers. Lady: "Did you remove my opossum?" Me: "Actually, there were eight in all, but I didn't charge you for the seven in her pouch."

I don't recall ever targeting skunks as a furbearer. The smell always seemed to overpower the price. I did, on occasion, catch a skunk in a trap set for something else, but I was never really good at coming away without smelling awful. Since I stunk to high heaven anyway, I would skin a prime skunk and sell the hide. I should mention here that a kick in the face by a bull when I was 16 pretty much relieved the skunk odor problem. Of course, that also meant that you wouldn't ask me to smell a bottle of lure and tell you what I thought, either.

ADC work for skunks was amazingly different. In one year, we caught more skunks than we had



in all the years before put together. We also got paid a lot more, and nobody ever forgot to pay us. We learned how to remove them without odor, and unless the customer's dog beat us to the semi-covered cage trap, everything went well. Skunks are a neat little animal, but it still doesn't look like I'm ever going to have a descended one as a pet.

"You can't catch Red Fox in cage traps; you have to use footholds." Another lie from the 1950s era. I was thrilled to catch a red fox in the first dirt hole set I ever made. I enjoyed fox trapping, and in my best year, I caught 37 of them and averaged my best price—\$65 apiece. Once the darn coyote started moving into our area, the foxes had to move farther into the cities to avoid being killed by the larger coyotes. This meant using cage traps so that pets weren't accidentally caught in footholds. We had enough pets being killed by coyotes without adding to the problem ourselves.

I will admit that I caged my first red fox in a Wickenkamp set for raccoons. When I was employed to catch a fox, I continued to use the Wickenkamp cage trap because the trigger blended into the rest of the cage so well. I still have not found a better cage trap for foxes.

*Continued on page 16*



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## NOTE TO CHAPTERS & AFFILIATES:

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## SMALL PIGEON JOB

by Gordon Betts

Upon first inspection, the job appeared to be straightforward. Box in two deep open box ends where pigeons were roosting, then install bird spikes to keep them off the window crowns and decorative 4 X 4s. All could be done with a short extension ladder and an eight-foot step ladder. As it turned out, nothing was as it seemed.

We gave the client two estimates—actually three. The first was the fast, easy way using 1 X 1/2-inch wire mesh. The second was vinyl lattice with 1 1/2- to 2-inch holes and track. The third part of the estimate was for bird spikes. Prices were checked online, and the estimates were emailed to the client. They accepted the lattice price and the bird spikes. With

that, we ordered the needed materials. Descriptions online are terrible, and we refused all the original orders. Thank goodness for free returns, but it still tied up a couple of hundred dollars until the refunds were processed. We then regrouped and bought materials off the shelf and reordered the spikes from a different and cheaper site for brand name materials. These were the correct size for the job that we were doing.

We started the job on the first sunny afternoon without strong winds and blowing snow. We measured and installed the channel for the first section. We then measured and cut the lattice using a six-inch battery-operated circular saw. It didn't fit by three inches on one end. Measuring again, we got the

same numbers. We pondered this for a while and finally cut a piece of wire mesh and crammed it into place. Everything was marked, and a couple of cuts to the wire were made for a close to proper fit. It was then taken out and overlaid on the lattice. We then cut out another piece of lattice around the wire—this one fit. There was something like six or seven angles in play instead of the usual four or five.

There was the regular roof slope. The boxed end roof angles out and down. The fascia board angled out, and there were the standard four corners and the decorative top board to work around. The long side of the box end was much easier to install and match up. Still, what should have taken us an hour took nearly three for that one sec-

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tion. We definitely had a learning curve; there wasn't a square angle on the place. Add in the decorative piece to work around, and it turned into a bigger job than estimated. The only good thing was that we figured it out, and the second side went in much faster.

There were two sizes of pigeon spikes needed for this job. Almost eight feet of bird spike was required for the 4 x 4s, and the window crowns across the top of the windows were only about two inches wide, but the pigeons still roosted on them. There was about 20-feet of that size needed. Shipping costs on some spike orders are as much as, if not more than, the actual cost of the spikes themselves. That makes estimating a job harder than it should be. One place we looked at wanted roughly \$29.00 per box for the spikes and over \$32.00 for standard shipping. We finally found all the needed sizes in one place at a lower price and with free shipping. At least spikes are relatively straightforward to install, and all we had left to get were some smaller diameter screws to use with the narrow row spike units.

Buying off the shelf and shopping around made the difference between turning a profit and just breaking even or even losing money on this job. The total time on the job was much more than it should have been. We didn't get our usual hourly rate due to the learning curve, but we did make money.

There is another area on the front of the house that may need to be boxed in after the snow and ice melt. At present, it cannot be safely reached. That will be dealt with in the spring under another contract if the client wishes it. Labor will be the only cost to us on that job because there are enough materials left over to do one more opening.

On a different note, the ongoing squirrel job mentioned in oth-

er articles, which started back in August of 2020, has been going on for six months or more at the time of writing this article and is finally finished, we hope. We had the squirrels out for nearly a month the last time.

A contractor came in, removed our excluder, and sided the house. A week or so later, we got a call saying that the squirrels had chewed through the outside corner of the new siding and reentered the house yet again.

When the contractor had done the work, they had moved a guy-wire leading to the house for the entrance cable. This new location gave the squirrels an ideal perch to sit on while chewing the vinyl outside corner track. They chewed in and tunneled down the insulation backing between the old tar paper, stone siding, and the new vinyl. That gave them enough room to move until they hit the spot leading to the attic beyond our original exclusion.

At any rate, we finally convinced the property owner to allow us to trap the squirrels and use the excluder for the fourth time. We wound up C-clamping wood to the outside corner and the siding to give us something to screw the excluder into. This done, we set cages around the area where squirrel tracks were evident in the snow. Over the next three days, five squirrels were caught. We are pretty sure that at least two of them were doing the chewing. One was the biggest gray squirrel we've ever seen. It's no wonder that the excluder exit hole was stretched out.

The contractor will wrap the entire corner in tin and use an outside corner piece to replace the plastic one that had been chewed through. Hopefully, this will be the end of the squirrel problems at this location. Now, where have I heard that before? It's been three weeks,

and the squirrels are still out. Who knows when the contractor will be back to finish the job? February is not a great month to do siding work in snow country. ■

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## WCT TESTED: DIRTY BIRD

by WCT Staff

Even if you've been doing wildlife control work for a while, there will still be situations where you aren't sure what's the best way of handling it. This is where having a great network of other wildlife control professionals' shines. Recently, I found myself in this situation as I had a bird job where I'd have to remove droppings and nesting material. The problem was that the building I had to work on was made of Dryvit. In 22 years of offering wildlife control services, I can still count on both hands the number of Dryvit/stucco buildings I've had to work on as it just isn't that popular in my service area.

While some feel the Dryvit and stucco are the same and use the names interchangeably, they are not. Stucco is made up of cement, lime, and sandstone. Dryvit is a brand name for an Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS), a synthetic product commonly described as thick paint with sand added to it. It isn't surprising that there is much confusion between the two products as they are supposed to be applied similarly.

Stucco is applied by troweling it over a metal lattice or woven wire netting that has been attached to wood sheathing. The lattice provides a surface to hold the stucco in place while securing the lattice to the wood sheathing offers a structure for supporting the product's weight. Based on region and construction plans, one to three coats of stucco will be applied with each coat ranging from 3/8- to 1/2-inch

and a cure time of 24 – 48 hours between coats.

Dryvit is commonly applied by troweling the product over a fiberglass mesh that has been attached

then painted. However, as Dryvit is an EIFS (pronounced EEFS), it can also be applied directly to scored EPS (which may or may not have substrate support), masonry block, or even stucco.

Based on formulation, building materials, and installation techniques, stucco and Dryvit can be challenging to work on as they can be prone to cracking, flaking, and chipping. Additionally, due to the rough texture of both products, materials such as bird droppings can be difficult to remove without causing surface damage. Buildings like this cause multiple issues with access, let alone cleaning.

Focusing on the cleaning aspect, I knew that power washing would be a crapshoot (no pun intended) as there could be areas not affected by the water pressure while other areas could receive severe damage. With the

power washer being ruled out, I needed to look at cleaning agents that would not damage the Dryvit and not cause issues with the surrounding landscape plants. This meant calling someone that not only worked with a lot of stucco and Dryvit buildings but also did a good amount of bird waste removal. While I don't mind talking with sales staff from bird supply companies, I prefer to start with someone I 1) know personally, 2) approve of their work methods, and 3) respect their opinion. I'm lucky that I know several operators I could have called, but the one who drew the short straw was Justin Stevenson. In a nutshell, Justin recommended



to Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) insulation [*Editor's Note: Per Universal Foam Products, EPS is the generic industry name for the white rigid material made by expanding polystyrene beads with steam and pressure to bond the beads together to form blocks or to shape molds while Styrofoam is a registered trademark of the Dow Chemical Company and refers to a range of extruded polystyrene building products used primarily in the construction of wall insulation, floor insulation, and roof insulation systems and is commonly referred to as "blue board."*] that was fastened to a substrate (i.e., wood, concrete board, masonry block, etc.) and

a product called Dirty Bird that he'd had success with on stucco and Dryvit homes.

After doing some quick online research, I found the product on Bird Barrier's website and liked what I saw. Dirty Bird can be used on various materials, including roofs and gutters, vinyl, auto finishes, concrete, and wood, is safe for any fabric or surface that can accept water, and is formulated in compliance with Green Plus+ Standards. That means it's phosphate-free, pH neutral, biodegradable, chlorine-free, phenol-free, carcinogen-free, petroleum distillate free, and made from 100% all-natural biologicals. It has a shelf-life that exceeds two years when kept at temperatures between 30° and 95° F and an effective working temperature of 50° - 105° F.

Dirty Bird is a concentrated liquid sold in one and five-gallon con-

tainers. The label states to mix one part Dirty Bird with four parts water and spray liberally over the affected area to use the product. Let the product set for at least 20 minutes and then scrub or wash away with a hose or power washer.

In my experience, when working in hotter temperatures letting the product sit for 20 minutes before scrubbing allowed it to dry completely, leaving a white residue that required another application of product to remove. However, letting it sit for several minutes and then scrubbing with a soft to medium bristle brush while still wet provided excellent results. Something to pay attention to is how porous the material is that the droppings are on, as the more porous the object, the more difficult removal becomes. Removal of bird droppings from stones and decorative pavers is best accomplished by allowing time for the product to break

down the dropping and then spray clean versus scrubbing. Additionally, I recommend washing down the walls where Dirty Bird was applied with a garden hose to remove any remaining product.

By far, this was the easiest time I've ever had removing bird droppings, and I was able to completely clean a 500-plus sq ft area by myself in less than an hour and a half and highly recommend anyone removing bird waste gives it a try. While I did find several sites offering Dirty Bird, I purchased mine from Bird Barrier. As they are an advertiser in *W.C.T. Magazine*, I like supporting companies that support the magazine and our industry. Not only do they have excellent service representatives, but I was also reminded that if you are a registered installer with them, you get special pricing, so what you see in the catalog or website isn't always the actual cost. ■

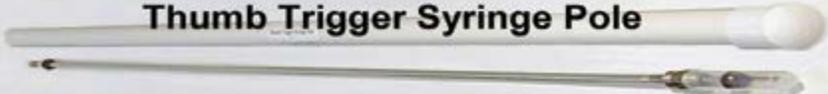
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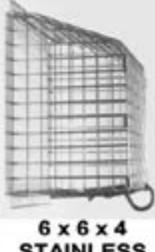
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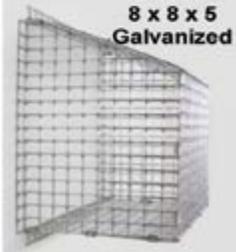
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# CREATING A BIRD MANAGEMENT PROGRAM 2022

by Eric Arnold

It is common to attract birds to specific locations by unintentionally supplementing nesting areas, food, and water today. Most individuals are very tolerant of these actions as it satisfies their need to get close to nature by viewing the birds' behavior, plumage, and songs. Most individuals that is, except for those having bird-related problems.

Birds can cause a host of problems ranging from noise issues to damaging structures to ruining food products and materials, not to mention their potential for creating serious health and safety risks. Before dealing with a bird problem, it is imperative that the WCO understand what can and cannot be done.

## Laws and Regulations

Most birds in the United States are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA). You can view the 2020 amended list of migratory bird species protected by the act online at <https://www.fws.gov/media/list-birds-protected-migratory-bird-treaty-act-2020> or the MBTA at <https://www.fws.gov/law/migratory-bird-treaty-act-1918>. This act protects listed migratory bird species and any parts of birds, including feathers, eggs, and nests, from individuals pursuing, hunting, taking, capturing, killing, or selling. Species that the MBTA protects may require special permits depending on the action to be taken to resolve conflicts. These permits are issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or, in some instances, by State agencies. It should also be noted that just because a bird is not listed as protected in the MBTA does not mean it is not a protected bird species in the State the WCO is

working in.

Species commonly causing building problems include Rock Doves (aka Pigeons), Ring-necked Doves, European Starlings, English House Sparrows, House Finches, Woodpeckers, Chimney Swifts, Cliff Swallows, Barn Swallows, Cardinals, Vultures, and Gulls.

Additionally, species WCOs may encounter around buildings or agriculture areas include Canada geese, Muscovy ducks, Wood Ducks, Mallards, Mute Swans, Cormorants, Crows, Robins, Grackles, and other blackbirds. Only pigeons, starlings, house sparrows, and mute swans are not listed as protected species by the MBTA.

The general rule when dealing with MBTA listed birds is that if the desired control method is to take the conflict bird(s) through any means of capture (trap, mist net, shooting, etc.), more than likely, a permit authorizing take will need to be issued before services can be rendered. There are several exceptions to this rule as some of the previously mentioned species lose their protective status based on what they are doing at the time of the conflict and require no special permit. Hence, it is always advisable that before dealing with any bird species, the WCO should check for changes in the MBTA and the State and local laws before rendering services.

## Understanding the Problem

Problems for WCOs can result from a single bird just as easily as from a large flock. Often, it is easier to resolve problems resulting from larger flocks as the situation is much more noticeable to the client allowing for faster resolution



Closeup of a previous *W.C.T. Magazine* cover image. Notice the squab in the pigeon nest behind the plastic owl. A bird management program involves choosing the correct products for the species and conflict for success.

with less damage. The most notable complaint with birds is their droppings. Aside from being very unattractive to look at, bird droppings can lead to several serious problems.

Most bird droppings are very acidic and can create structural weakness over time on roofs, cornices, and I-beams, to name a few structural locations. Canada Geese can leave over one pound of droppings daily while feeding and can quickly cover lawns and parking lots in excrement creating

slip and fall safety issues. Not as publicized safety issues include bird nests forming fire hazards in vents and attics. Water damage can be caused to roofs and other parts of the structure from nesting materials interfering with proper drainage. Injuries caused by nesting birds attacking individuals too close to the nest result in falls and trips as they try to get away. Nauseous odors from decaying nest material, fecal matter, and dead birds. And let's not forget to mention the disease and parasite issues.

Wild birds can spread over 60 diseases and parasites to people and pets. Conditions commonly linked to birds include histoplasmosis, salmonella, candidiasis, toxoplasmosis, giardia, and encephalitis. Common parasites include lice, mites, fleas, and other ectoparasites.

It is imperative to know what species are being dealt with for several reasons when dealing with bird conflicts. Certain species, such as woodpeckers and Canada geese, will require special permits to take the birds. Second, most products used for bird control are species-specific. Third, certain bird species require different harassment methods than others. Choosing the incorrect product may result in additional problems even if it resolves the initial issue.

A good example of this is the installation of bird spikes for pigeons that house sparrows use to hold nesting material in place. Finally, the method of control selected may require special licensing and training. A bird management program should be developed for each client to address these issues and implement a successful solution.

The first step in creating any bird management program is determining what constitutes a bird problem for that client. Some cli-

ents will have zero tolerance for conflicts for some locations, while other sites may have what the operator considers exceptionally high tolerances. For example, hospitals with pigeons roosting by ventilation shafts will probably have a zero-tolerance level by the ventilation shaft. Yet, they may have a 'we don't care attitude' toward pigeons roosting in parking decks. Regardless of the situation, it is always recommended that the WCO create a no-feeding policy for the client to adopt into their bird management program.

Next, the bird species, number present, and type of activity, commonly referred to as pressure, needs to be assessed. Low pressure is said to exist in areas where birds are easily dispersed. Examples of low-pressure areas may include power lines, ridge vents, and dead trees. Birds in these areas are generally resting and have no strong commitment to return when disturbed. Moderate pressure exists in areas where birds can be dispensed but do not travel far away and return later. Feeding areas associated with outside food courts would be good examples of moderate pressure. Birds will disperse when disturbed but will return to continue feeding. High pressure exists in areas birds constantly use and frequently return to. Regarding buildings, these areas are commonly covered and give protection from the elements and predators. Most nests will be built in high-pressure areas.

Once the necessary information has been collected, a control method and/or control sequence can be selected. Remember that some control methods will require special permits, equipment, and training based on the situation.

### **Control Methods**

The first control method that can be chosen is monitoring the situation. By selecting this method,

the WCO recognizes that a potential problem has been identified, but it does not meet the client's established criteria to have it addressed at that time. This method can also be used for conflicts where clients do not have the funds to complete the project, the birds cannot be harassed or removed at that time, or special permits are required, and nothing can be done until they are received. Once the conflict reaches the predetermined criteria for action or the client acquires the necessary funds or permits, another type of control can occur.

Examples of monitoring control include Chimney Swifts using a chimney and Canada geese feeding in a quarter-acre yard. Installing a chimney cap cannot control the chimney swifts until the nesting is complete. The cost of installing a barrier or harassment program for Canada geese may be too great.

### **Capture and Removal**

The second control method is removal. This method allows the problem birds, eggs, and/or nests to be physically removed by using special traps or tools, shooting, and avicides. It cannot be stressed enough that special permits may be required for this method, especially for any species listed in the MBTA, along with an understanding of State and local laws. Once captured, most birds controlled by this method must be euthanized to prevent them from returning. Note that while this method eliminates the problem bird, it does not address why the bird is causing a problem.

Examples of capture and removal include starlings in bathroom vents and pigeons in warehouses. In most cases, it is impossible to capture the adult starlings when dealing with vent issues; however, the nesting material, eggs, and fledglings can be removed with

*Continued on page 26*

**BIRD MGMT:***Continued from page 25*

special tools or by replacing the vent ductwork. On the other hand, adult pigeons can be trapped or shot in the right conditions, and then their nests, eggs, and squabs can be removed by hand.

Traps are the first example of species-specific equipment. Sparrow traps will not capture pigeons, nor will large pigeon traps hold sparrows. There is a whole range to select from when selecting bird traps based on problem and target species. Trap styles can be broken down into net style traps, cage-style traps, and specialty traps. Net style traps include mist nets, launch nets, and spring bar net traps fired by laser, remote, or treadle. Cage-style bird traps are made from wire and generally allow access to the holding chamber through a wire funnel or wire bobbins that can be easily pushed aside to enter. Once inside, the birds cannot exit through the entrance, thus keeping them trapped.

Specialty traps are available for some bird species. These traps tend to be limited to a single bird per capture, although some, such as net traps, may capture several birds at once. Several specialty traps have a dispatch bar "hidden" inside the device, so care must be taken when using them to ensure protected birds cannot enter them unless the WCO has the necessary permits.

Except for specialty traps, a prebaiting program is usually required to entice birds into the trap. Prebaiting requires that the trap be set and baited; accordingly, the birds are allowed to leave the trap instead of being contained. Based on species, location, and activity, prebaiting may be as short as one day to as long as several weeks. When the birds continually eat at least half of the bait between bait

checks, it is time to remove the escape path and truly set the trap.

A point to bear in mind when using cage traps for bird control is that birds are sight-oriented and tend to be attracted to other birds. Whenever possible, always leave a bird or two in the trap when emptying it. This also means that shade, roosting perches, and water should be available to trapped birds as the results are well worth the efforts.

**Harassment**

The third control method that can be used is harassment. Harassment is a behavior modification technique that conditions the birds not to use a specific area. A benefit of harassment is that no special federal permits are required since the birds, eggs, or nests are not handled. Typical harassment techniques include propane cannons, pyrotechnics, distress calls, visual scare devices, lasers, dogs, effigies, etc.

Pyrotechnics are specific products registered for use with wildlife pest control only by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. Pyrotechnics may not be legal to use based on local ordinances. Where the use of pyrotechnics is not permitted, check to see if audio recordings of pyrotechnics can be used instead. This tends to give similar results without breaking any laws but does require a sound system of some type. Today, many electronic game callers allow users to download sounds onto the device. Another option is to put the sound file on a digital music player or cell phone and then plug the device into a portable speaker. When using this method, volume tends to matter, so the louder you can play the sounds, the better the results.

Lasers are handheld devices that emit a visible red or green light to frighten target birds. The distance and size of the laser beam are determined by the power source,

and weather conditions at the time of use and location. It is far easier to move birds from low- or medium-pressure areas with lasers than nesting sites. Additionally, certain bird species react differently to lasers based on light color and time of day. Most bird species tend to respond best to the red lasers. The key to using a laser is directly related to the power source used to produce it. A presentation pointing laser is generally not strong enough for most bird harassment situations, although it can be very effective under certain conditions. It is not always necessary to have a big bulky laser to chase birds with. Generally, it will take some experimenting to determine what laser works best with the situation. Need to move 1,000 crows out of a tree line at night? Nothing beats a high-powered laser for the job. But when you need to move a couple of house sparrows out of a horse barn, a laser meant to be mounted on a gun or even a laser pointer works just fine.

Other visual harassment devices include gels that emit particular light waves, reflective materials such as Mylar or holographic tape, inflatable devices with fake eyes, and kites made to look like birds of prey, to name the most common.

Effigies are photographic images, cutouts, or animal mounts that create a fear response in the target birds. Examples include dead turkey vultures hung in trees to discourage roosting or coyote mounts used for goose control. The purpose of effigies is to create fear or make the birds uncomfortable in the area. Effigies are very efficient tools when used correctly. The effigies need to be moved to a different location every 48 to 72 hours. It is also beneficial to allow the effigy to move with the wind currents. This provides a realism very few birds become acclimated to.

The last harassment technique



is audio harassment. These devices generally have recorded audio of birds in distress and predator calls. When possible, use multiple sounds and timing delays to keep the birds from becoming used to them. Also, whenever possible, reinforce the sounds with other items. In other words, if the WCO wants to use coyote vocalizations to harass geese, play the coyote calls, then chase the geese with dogs and use coyote effigies. When the WCO uses hawk calls, fly a hawk kite or, better yet, bring in a falconer several times if possible. The more the WCO can combine the sound used with physical reinforcement, the more effective the audio harassment will be.

### Deterrents

The fourth control method involves installing products that deter birds from using a specific area. Deterrents are the most common form of bird control in the pest control field and the most species-specific. Common deterrents for ledges and trusses include spikes, gel, wire, coil, and shock tracks. Other deterrents used on ponds, rooftops, and lighting fixtures include daddy long legs, wire grids, motion sprinklers, sound-activated spiders, and fencing.

Proper selection of products is required when using deterrents. As stated previously, spikes installed

on ledges are an excellent control for pigeons; however, smaller birds such as house sparrows can build their nests inside the spikes. Shock tracks work for almost all species of birds, provided the system is working, and the birds land on them to complete the circuit. When there is an inch of snow covering the system, an object laying on the track is shorting it out, the distance from the charger is too great, or not enough of the ledge or area the birds are using is covered, shock tracks will not be effective.

A deterrent product that gained popularity years ago but isn't discussed as much currently involves using 9,10-anthraquinone or methyl anthranilate products. These products are commonly sprayed onto the bird's food source to make the bird sick when ingested or produced as a fog in the problem area, creating irritation for the birds forcing them to move. Certain products in this category may require a commercial pesticide applicator license and may not be legal in all states. Another point to keep in mind when using deterrents is that these products generally require maintenance to maintain their effectiveness through service or reapply or replace products when depleted.

### Birth Control

The fifth control method is very site-specific and only available for select bird species (Canada geese and pigeons). This method requires feeding a particular product to the target species to prevent the development of embryos. Control is achieved over time through natural dispersal and death, reducing the population levels. Additional equipment such as automatic feeders may be required based on the site location. This tool may not be available in all States and may require a commercial pesticide applicator license.

### Exclusion

The sixth control method and

the only effective high-pressure solution is exclusion. Exclusion involves preventing bird access to the problem area through the netting, wire mesh, or construction techniques with building materials. Exclusion should be considered whenever a nesting area is involved. Netting is the most common exclusion method but not the only one available. Installing vent covers, chimney caps, and bird slide are all other commercial products for exclusion. Unique exclusion techniques can range from wall construction to plywood installation to installing wire mesh on gable vents and open windows.

### Management

The final step in dealing with any bird conflict should be a maintenance program to ensure installed devices are working correctly. Maintenance may need to be performed every several days to once a year or longer based on the products installed. For instance, bird netting installed in a loading bay may only need maintenance once a year, while Mylar strips and scare balloons should be moved no later than once every 48 hours to prevent the birds from becoming acclimated to their presence.

### Putting it All Together

It needs to be noted that in most conflict situations, multiple control methods need to be performed to achieve long-term results. Installing netting at a ballpark does not stop the birds from using it. It only prevents them from nesting where the net was installed. Without implementing other control techniques such as auditory distress, visual harassment, and sanitation policies, a solution may not be achieved.

Problem bird management can be a frustrating issue WCOs face. However, it can become just another day at the office with proper planning. ■

# BIRD SPECIES PROFILES

by Serge Lariviere

(Editor's Note: The following is an edited collection from previous Species Profile articles published in Wildlife Control Technology magazine.)

## European Starling

The European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), also called Common Starling, is probably one of the most common and abundant of all "blackbirds". This member of the family Sturnidae (Order Passeriformes) is an introduced species in North America. Records suggest that it was introduced to New York's Central Park in 1890 as a plan to introduce every bird species mentioned in the works of William Shakespeare! Amazingly, the 60 birds released in 1890 eventually swelled to an estimated 150 million birds currently in North America ranging from southern Alaska, throughout Canada and the United States and now well into Central America. Worldwide, populations of starling are estimated at well over 300 million birds, and their adaptability led to successful introductions not only in North America, but also in Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Argentina and Peru, Brazil, Chile and even into South Africa. It obviously occurs throughout Europe, as well as in parts of Asia and North Africa.

European Starlings are stocky birds with short tails, triangular wings, and long slender and pointy bills. Black in overall appearance, starlings are actually purple-green iridescent in summer, and they develop bright spots of white during the winter. Juveniles are brown during their first year. Fairly small, total length may reach 8-9 inches (20-23 cm) with a wingspan of 12-17 inches (30-45 cm). Males and

females are similar in size and color, but can be differentiated by the coloration at the base of their bills, males having a blue base, and females a pinkish base. Legs are pink.

Starlings are extremely gregarious, and large flocks are both obvious and noisy. Flocks may reach upwards of several thousand birds, and in some cases, large migration flocks may develop in late fall and winter. Record flocks of more than 1-million birds usually develop near cities and suburban areas. This swarming behavior is impressive and in Europe is often referred to as "black sun" when flocks of birds gather in roundish aggregates in flight.

Calls are varied, and usually referred to as "non-musical" meaning they are mostly a variety of hisses, whistles or whirrs. They may associate with other blackbirds such as grackles, and they are very common in towns, lawns, gardens, golf courses, pastures, and often rest on wires or in reed beds. The availability of short grass or short vegetation is key to their feeding behavior and for this reason starlings do well on manicured lawns, pastures, golf courses, farm fields, or urban parks.

Starlings are opportunistic omnivores, and they feed on a wide variety of items, ranging from invertebrates, to seeds and fruits. Most commonly, starlings consume insects, arthropods, spiders, flies, moths, grasshoppers, earwigs, beetles, bees, wasps and ants. In addition, larvae of all kinds, earthworms, snails and even small amphibians and lizards may be consumed when available. Anthropogenic food sources are also exploited when available, and bird

feeders, compost piles, and garbage dumps all attract starlings.

On the ground, starlings feed by probing, walking or running rapidly as they search for food. They often stick their beak in the ground – open it, and then snatch whatever food item they feel or see. Synchrony within a flock is the norm, and birds take off flying simultaneously, turning and rising in a synchronized fashion. Active flight may be interspersed with short bouts of gliding, and during migration, starling can fly 60-80 km (35-50 MPH) per hour, and fly non-stop for distances over 600 miles (1000 km)!

Starlings can be either monogamous or polygamous. Males usually find or build a nest, and their songs attract females. After copulation, both sexes contribute to nest building and maintenance. Starlings typical nest in natural or artificial cavities such as hollow trees, gaps in concrete structures, or nest boxes. Actual grass nests are simple and crudely built, and often include green plant material. Breeding occurs in spring and summer. Typical clutch size is 4-5 eggs that are pale blue in color. Interestingly, some female starlings may parasitize nest of conspecifics, laying eggs in the nest of other females. Hatching occurs after two weeks, and the hatchlings remain in the nest for another three weeks. Both parents feed the young ones. With abundant food, starlings can raise two to three broods per year, often reusing the same nest.

Lifespan of adults is 2-3 years. Most predators are avian, especially hawks, goshawks, falcons, etc. At night, roosting birds may be killed by owls. Eggs are also vulnerable to predation from a var-

iety of mammals such as weasels, squirrels, and raccoons. Starling also host numerous parasites including fleas, mites or ticks. Finally, starlings may contract avian tuberculosis and avian malaria.

The relationship between starlings and humans is complicated. In one sense, starlings are beneficial because of the large volume of insects and invertebrates that they consume. In some areas of Russia and Europe, this even led to the establishment of nest boxes specifically for starlings! However, just like most species, too much of a good thing can be negative and the hyper-abundance of starlings in North America now warrants them an overall "pest status" and they receive little if any protection. Ecologically speaking, starlings also displace native species from nest boxes, and because of that and the damage to agriculture, they are now considered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as one of the 100 worst invasive species.

Starlings also consume or contaminate with their feces foods for cattle or other farm animals. Sites of large roost accumulate large amounts of feces, and in some areas, feces may accumulate and kill the resident vegetation because of the acidity.

Starling control is no simple task. Shooting is common in part of Europe, but is inefficient at reducing populations. The migratory nature of starling also limits the effectiveness of lethal measures. Some poisoning campaigns have been established in highly problematic areas. Alternatively, non-lethal techniques such as scaring with visual or auditory devices usually only offer a temporary solution.

### English Sparrows

English sparrows are an excellent example of an invasive species. Introduced into New York in 1950 by a well-intending poet who

wanted this continent to have all the species written about by William Shakespeare, the English sparrow quickly colonized the continent. The small, chunky bird (about 5.5") is found in almost all habitats, but excels in human dominated landscapes. The male sparrow has a distinctive black bib, buff to white colored cheeks and chestnut-colored feathers on the upper wings. The female and young have a dingy-grey breast and a streaked back. Because these birds are primarily granivorous, both sexes have a thick, short beak designed for cracking seeds.

English sparrows may nest at any time of the year in warmer climates, but nesting is most active between March and August. Loose material is gathered and added to the nest, often located in open buildings. From 3-7 eggs per clutch are laid and brooded for 10-14 days, mostly by the female. Young remain in the nest for another 15 days and both sexes feed the young. Young may continue to be fed by the adults for another 2 weeks after fledging, but the original pair may begin reneating. Multiple clutches are expected. The nesting of sparrows is the single largest complaint wildlife control operators have to deal with. I tend to categorize sparrow conflicts into three types- nesting conflicts, sparrows inside big, open buildings and sparrows in livestock feed. In all three cases the problem usually involves sparrow droppings as well as other conflicts, but the way to solve these problems is vastly different.

English sparrows are not protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and no federal permit is required to manage their damage. Likewise, most states recognize the English sparrow as a nuisance species and most do not provide state-level protection. However, many local jurisdictions consider

themselves bird sanctuaries, and local regulations may dictate how English sparrow conflicts may be resolved. As always, you need to know the local laws as well as be proficient in identifying native sparrows as well as English sparrows to avoid unintentionally running afoul of the laws.

Sparrows nest in almost any type of space, but they frequently build the nest in a small space to eliminate the chance of nest predation. Sometimes these spaces are behind lighted signs or are in rafters in carports, office buildings or barns or shops. In all cases, sparrow nests are made from combustible materials may be a fire hazard. Almost without exception, sparrows leaving and returning to the nest leave droppings on anything nearby, including cars, other equipment or even food materials.

The only permanent solution to nesting problems is to exclude sparrows from sensitive areas. IN some cases, such as an open carport, exclusion may be as simple as nailing up thin strips of plywood to prevent sparrow access. In other cases, netting with mesh smaller than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch may be necessary to prevent access. Some of the more difficult exclusion cases are those where access is necessary for service, such as behind lighted signs. In these cases, porcupine wires may be installed, again not allowing any space larger than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch. Be sure to coordinate with the service company or maintenance workers when designing sparrow exclusion. Some pieces of equipment are not only very vulnerable, but need a certain amount of ventilation to function properly. You may be able to completely exclude sparrows with a solid surface, but if it interferes with ventilation it will not be a practical solution.

Nests may be removed at any time without federal permit, but re-

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**SPECIES PROFILES:**

Continued from page 29

moving the nests can be disturbing to sensitive viewers. During nesting season, you can expect eggs and nestlings in every stage of development and in an office setting it seems that there is always some sensitive person who objects. If you intend to remove active nests from a public space, be sure to schedule the event after hours. Nests and nesting materials should be removed before installing exclusion, as even inactive nests may be a fire hazard. Nests will be rebuilt by the sparrows, so nest material needs to be completely removed from the site or they will simply reuse the same material. Nest removal should be conducted every two weeks to prevent successful nesting.

**Open buildings**

With few exceptions, architects don't consider wildlife conflicts when they design open, public buildings. In some cases, such as a warehouse or aircraft hangar, the large space is necessary for the size of the materials housed inside. In other cases, such as a shopping center or airport building proper, the open space may just be

for looks. Nonetheless, sparrows inevitably find their way inside these buildings and make a home. If food is available, there may even be a colony of sparrows developing over time.

Excluding sparrows from open buildings may be impractical or even downright impossible. Clear hanging strips may be somewhat effective in keeping out birds while allowing vehicle access, but these will never be 100% effective. Heavy winds may permit bird access and the hardware holding the strips up may fail. Still, these can be effective for reducing much of the conflict if the buildings have limited openings.

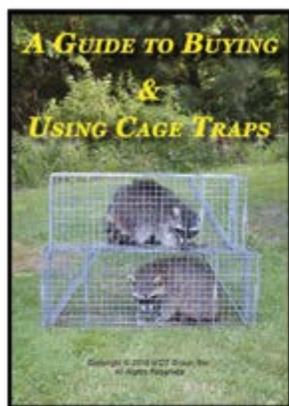
Removing sparrows from these buildings can be time consuming and is always delicate. In a public space, individual sparrows may be hand netted (if you're very lucky) or trapped, but both methods take time and planning. Food baited traps need to be placed out of sight of the public to avoid tampering. Netting **may** be possible in a warehouse setting if the lights can be completely shut off and the bird effectively approached. I have had very poor success with this method unless the ceiling is closed off and less than 10' high.

Funnel traps are effective if oth-

er food sources can be controlled. Commercial traps are available or you can make one from ½" hardware cloth. Baiting a funnel trap with grain (chopped corn is my favorite) and allowing the sparrow to find it is the best option. The trap is even more effective if another live sparrow is placed inside as a decoy. Traps should be checked daily in public buildings, but they can be checked every 2-3 days elsewhere. The bait serves as ample feed for captured sparrows.

In an agricultural or industrial setting, sparrows may be removed effectively with a small caliber pellet rifle. Again, timing the control to when sensitive viewers are not present is important. Also important is selecting the proper rifle/ ammo combination. You need to look at the situation and make sure a missed shot or a pass-through will not damage the building. I prefer a .177 caliber pellet rifle and flat-nosed pellets to minimize pass-through. I also sight the rifle in for the exact distance I expect and pass on a lot of potential shots if I'm uncomfortable with the shot. I prefer to shoot the sparrow in the center of the breast to try and maximize the chance that the pellet will not exit, or at least if it does it will do so with minimum energy.

Night shooting sparrows is effective, as they are reluctant to fly in pitch black. If you can control ambient light, turn off all lights and locate the sparrows by flashlight. I minimize the time the flashlight is on once the bird is found. The technique is very effective for two people when one has the pellet rifle and the other has the flashlight. On signal, the light is turned on one bird, a shot is quickly fired and the light is turned out. Another target may be found and the process repeated. One person can do the same alone if they use a light affixed to the rifle and turn it off and on briefly. ■



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## Questions & Answers

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**Q:** I've got a large pigeon job at a factory another company has been working on. I'm concerned about offering to shoot the pigeons with an air rifle as the supervisor said he'd have employees come in if necessary to help. What types of traps would you recommend using for a job like this? **T.W., GA**

**A:** First, we need to change your thought process on why you've been hired. As with most wildlife control jobs, you are being hired because the company (or anyone that hires you for that matter) doesn't have the skillset, desire, or in many cases, the time to deal with the problem. Remember, the methods of control and equipment

you choose are based on your knowledge and experience, not theirs. If the company were serious about having their employees perform the work, you wouldn't have gotten the job (especially as another company was doing this before you). However, if you feel the supervisor's comment could be a problem, look at how to address it by adding value to your services (e.g., certification, training courses, equipment, INSURANCE, knowledge, etc.).

In most cases, shooting is the quickest way to gain control of pigeon populations, so I'm going to start with that service. Despite popular belief, using an air rifle for pigeons is not as simple as many

make it out to be. There is a big difference between someone using an air rifle that occasionally works versus a business using one for making money. Wildlife control businesses need more than just an air rifle; they need a shooting system and the skillset to use it effectively. I've sold more shooting jobs by talking about my shooting systems (high-end air rifles with adjustable power, quality optics, night vision equipment, achievable accuracy, knowledge of foot-pounds of energy required, pellet selection, and safe shooting practices) than by focusing on the birds.

First off, look at your equipment and determine if it is a quality shooting system or just a cheap air

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rifle. In other words, would you be using quality gear, or would it be something that looks like it came from Walmart's bargain bin? Even when I was using a "cheap" springer (RWS 34 w/ 4x fixed scope), I would always drop in the sales pitch that I use a \$600 air rifle, which I paid back in 2000. This fact ends most of the "I can do it myself" statements, as most won't invest that much money into a tool; they only use it a couple of times a year. These days, I honestly tell them I use a \$1,500 - \$2,200 shooting system with an \$800 night vision system when needed. Again, this stops any "I'll just buy a cheap air rifle and do it myself" comments.

Furthermore, whenever possible, I do my best to show them the equipment I'm using so they can get up close and personal. If they still had doubts, those go away quickly as once the client gets to see what I've pulled out of the truck that there's no question I've got a few dollars tied up with the gear. Lastly, when they see the performance of the equipment at 10, 40, 50, 80 yards, and longer, they understand why I spent the money I did.

Next, look at what you can realistically expect to do and the time frame it may take. If you're working at a food production facility, they need the birds gone today, and they don't care how you do it, provided it isn't a danger to workers. You need to ask yourself if it will be acceptable to have traps that may require up to four weeks or longer of prebaiting time to work, how many birds the trap can hold, and how many traps and trap sites will be required to control the problem adequately.

Then look at the bird pressure (high, medium, low), the time of day the birds are on the property if they are roosting there at night, and how big the roost site is. This, more than anything, will establish

how you need to address the problem. Suppose there aren't many birds during the day. In that case, trapping is most likely the best way to go, as it won't be financially feasible for you to sit around for several hours to try shooting if only a couple of birds are present during the day unless you're doing it to get some practice in or test gear. Also, if only a few birds are roosting on the property at night, it probably won't pay to make a night trip. However, if a large number of birds are present during the day and/or night, you can do an effective shooting program.

In most cases, the best solution isn't just one control method but a combination of them. When the population warrants it, I recommend doing a shooting program first. It is the fastest method for knocking down the population and allowing the trapping program to work on the "stragglers." You can even add other services such as exclusion, auditory/visual harassment, and nest removal to strengthen your control services further.

The best pigeon traps I know of for a trapping program are the WCS™ Large pigeon trap and the Tomahawk Extra large pigeon trap. While there are many other pigeon traps on the market, I like large traps when it comes to pigeons. They aren't small birds, so the more comfortable you can make them feel inside the trap, the better. The key to success is to prebait the trap and area BEFORE setting the trap. I generally place the trap and bait it with whole kernel corn and a water container. Based on the trap I'm using, I'll either wire the doors up or leave at least one roof panel off, making it easy for the pigeons to enter and exit. Once I see that at least half the bait is being taken in a couple of days or less, I set the trap. It helps to keep one or two decoy birds in the trap when possi-

ble and add some perching rods so the caught pigeons can get up to a resting area instead of constantly being on the bait.

**Q:** What is the best way to safely get sparrows out of an attic? The customer thinks they are starting to build a nest and want them out before more critters try to move in.  
**R.K., WV**

**A:** The first step is to identify the species using the attic. Both English House sparrows and European Starlings can be found in attics (with starlings being the biggest offenders in my experience). However, I have had several protected species that would require special permits using attics as well. Starlings tend to build their nests in open ductwork and gutters and enter attics through broken ductwork, construction openings, or holes created by other wildlife such as squirrels around the gutters. Sparrows tend to build their nest in more confined areas such as holes in the siding, space between shutters and windows, and under attic vents. At times, a significant accumulation of nesting material may be found under a vent opening giving the appearance that a long-time nest was constructed inside the attic. It is more common for the nesting material to fall into the attic once the vent screening is broken.

Several tactics can be used to safely remove the birds, although some are species-specific. The first tactic would be to use an air rifle where legal to cleanly dispatch the birds and then carefully climb over to the carcass to collect and remove them along with any nesting materials. It is highly advised to wear a respirator, gloves, Tyvek suit, or at least a long sleeve shirt and pants to prevent breathing in potentially hazardous dust or getting parasites over your skin any-

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## Q &amp; A

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time you remove nesting material.

If shooting is not an option, capturing the birds in netting may be possible. When birds are flying in the attic, mist netting is the best choice as it can be strung between rafters, and the birds can easily be pushed into the netting and then removed. When mist netting is not an option, it may be possible to use fishing or animal capture nets to net the birds. These types of nets work best when dealing with fledgling birds that cannot yet fly. Place the nets over the fledglings to prevent them from dispersing and then remove them by hand. At times it may be easier to mount the nets on extendable poles so that you don't have to walk on the trusses while trying to net the birds.

In my experience, most bird-

cage traps will not work in an attic. Glue boards may be used based on starlings and house sparrows where legal. Place the glue boards around the nest to capture adult birds and monitor with remote cameras or frequent checks. Captured birds can then be removed by applying mineral or vegetable oil to the board where the bird is stuck while gently pulling it away so that you don't injure the bird or its feathers.

When dealing with starlings, exclusion devices can be used to allow the starlings to leave and not reenter the attic. To use this technique, the entrance/exit the starlings are using must be identified, and any other potential opening they could use must be sealed first. Once all other outlets have been addressed, you can install a commercially available device or make one out of 1/2- x 1/2-inch hardware cloth.

A simple method is to form the hardware cloth into a 4- x 4- x 12-inch tube and then install a one-way door made out of a 3 1/2- x 6- or 7-inch piece of hardware cloth that has a 2-inch lip bent into it. To install the door, insert it into the tube so that the 2-inch flange sits flush with the bottom of the tube and the rest of the door is at a 45-degree angle facing away from the exit and attach it to the top of the tube with wire ties or J-clips. Make sure not to tighten the ties or clips too much as you want the door to swing open easily. The flange helps prevent the starlings from lifting the door and reentering the attic through the tube as they need to be on top of it, thus holding the door down as they try to open it. Once the starlings have been removed from the attic, remove the nesting material and exclusion device, then seal the opening the starlings were using. ■



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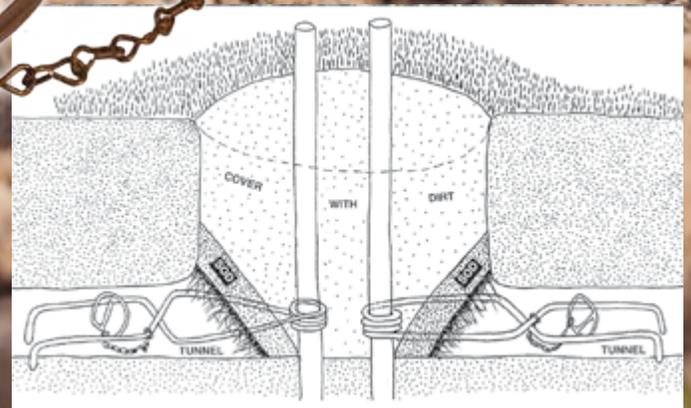
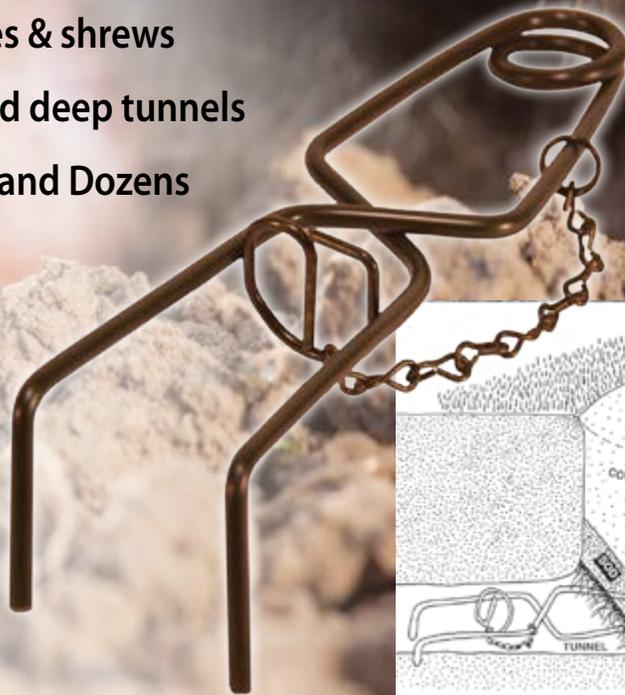
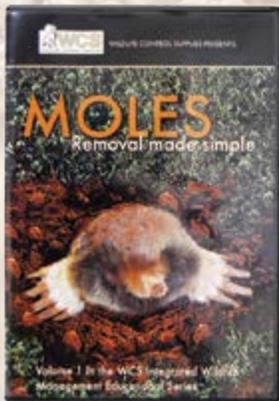
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