



HWCC Humboldt Wildlife Care Center

Dealing with “Nuisance” Wildlife

What Not to Do and Why

Trapping

- **Trapping and relocating wildlife without a license is illegal in California.** It is unsafe for both the animal and you. Be aware, a licensed trapper will euthanize the animal.
- **Moving the animal does not solve the problem.** Others will soon move in because the food, water and/or shelter are still accessible.
- **Wildlife can carry diseases.** Rabies and Canine Distemper have been spread by people who captured an animal in one area and then released it somewhere else.
- **Wild animals already live where you release your problem animal.** When a new animal is introduced into another’s territory there is increased stress and conflict within the resident population as well as hardship or death for the relocated animal. Studies show that less than 50% of wildlife survive relocation.
- **Relocated animals often return to where you caught them.** Squirrels, raccoons and other wildlife can return from relocations of 5, 10, or even 15 miles. Such animals are more likely to be killed by automobiles or succumb to other accidents as they cross unfamiliar areas while attempting to return to their original territories.
- **Relocation only transfers your problem to someone else.** In unfamiliar territory, an animal accustomed to living near people will likely seek out human habitations and damage someone else’s property.
- **You may be trapping a mother with babies in a den.** It is very costly for the HWCC to care for any babies once the mother is relocated or euthanized. Babies in centers do not learn as well as if they were with mom and therefore are less likely to make it in the wild.

What to Do and Why

The best way to deal with nuisance wildlife is to take preventative measures.

Wildlife is attracted to an area by two basic things:

- Food
- Shelter

By removing these attractants the problem animals will go away.

- **Secure food sources.** Secure garbage cans with bungee cords or straps. Keep all pet food, birdseed, chicken feed etc...in proper storage containers and not accessible. Do not leave cat or dog food outside at night for your pets. Secure livestock such as chickens and ducks.
- **Block off entrances to attic space and under your house.** These are common areas for dens. See other side for more specific information.
- **Educate your neighbors.** You may do all the right things to keep nuisance wildlife away from your property but if neighbors are not doing the same you may still have a problem. Be sure that others in your area are not feeding wildlife as well.