

Tips to Prevent Wild Animal Encounters

People and wildlife can co-exist more easily if people are willing to take a few proactive and preventive measures. Simple adjustments around the home and garden can help prevent conflicts.

Waste Management

Garbage “raiding” is the leading attraction for wildlife large and small. The best way to safely keep wildlife out of your yard is to better manage your trash. Store cans inside a shed or garage in between pick-ups and secure lids with bungee cords or use a twist-on lid. Place cans at the curb on the day of trash collection, not the night before.

Remove Pet Food

Don't leave pet food outdoors. Feed your cats, dogs and other animals the amount of food they will eat, and remove/store the rest. Pet food left outdoors can become a source of food for wild animals and create a potential for an unwanted encounter. Another tip is to close pet doors at night and not place pet food next to the pet door. Skunks will often enter a home through pet doors.

Remove Other Food Sources

Make your yard unattractive to hungry raccoons, coyotes, opossums and others by removing bird feeders during summer and keeping barbecue grills clean. Even non-food products such as candles, sunscreen and insect repellent may attract some animals, so keep those items indoors when not in use.

No Hiding

Remove potential hiding places, such as rock and wood piles, and seal off access to areas under decks and storage sheds. Be sure to cut off access to attics by sealing potential entry holes. Pay particular attention to screening on attic ventilation. The insect screens typically installed in these areas are easily penetrated by wild animals.

A Little Fear

Safely scare wildlife away with devices that move, make noise or spray water. Try hanging aluminum pans and foil, mylar party balloons or plastic streamers.

Clear the Roof

Trim branches away from your house to limit access for climbing wildlife and be sure to keep the foundation of your home clear of debris. Check all limbs for bird and squirrel nest before trimming.

Flue Season

An uncapped chimney is an open invitation to raccoons or squirrels looking for a snug place to raise their young. Install an appropriate chimney cap after inspecting the flue to make sure animals are not nesting there.