



HOME & GARDEN

HOME AND GARDEN INFORMATION CENTER • 12005 HOMEWOOD ROAD • ELLICOTT CITY, MD 21042 • 1-800-342-2507

Wildlife Pest Tips - January 2009

- As food becomes scarce during cold weather, skunks, fox, coyotes, opossum, raccoons and other wildlife will come closer to homes. Remove food sources like pet food and keep trash can lids tightly secured. Keep attic and basement doors closed to keep mice and other critters out of the home. Chimney caps will prevent squirrels and raccoons from coming down the chimney.
- Leave the flower heads of perennials, like tickseed, purple coneflower and black-eyed Susans, to provide nutritious seeds for birds this winter. Perennials and ornamental grasses can also provide needed cover for over-wintering birds. If you choose to feed wild birds, be prepared to feed them for the entire winter season. Keep bird feeders and baths cleaned and replenished throughout the winter months. Put suet out for birds and keep bird feeders filled. Bird boxes can provide needed shelter to over-wintering birds.
- Squirrels will come to eat the bird food you put out even when your bird feeders are advertised as “squirrel-proof”. Learn to live with visiting squirrels or offer them alternate food like ears of feed corn. Consult the staff at your local wild bird store for more detailed feeding suggestions.
- Where deer are feeding on garden and landscape plants, apply a repellent, such as “Deer-Away”, “Hinder” or “Ro-Pel” to vulnerable plants. If deer pressure is heavy, try rotating repellents. Small deodorant soap bars and other types of repellents are used with some success. Polywire fencing connected to an inexpensive, solar-powered charger can successfully exclude groundhogs and deer.

Have a pest or gardening question?

Call the Home and Garden Information Center

1-800-342-2507

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