

## Squirrels

The first step in learning to live in harmony with urban wildlife is to understand that animals are by nature opportunistic and will take advantage of any source of food and shelter they can find. By reducing these resources the level of conflicts will naturally decline.

**More information  
is available from the following  
websites:**

[www.caht.ca](http://www.caht.ca)

[www.wildneighbors.org](http://www.wildneighbors.org)

[www.cfhs.ca/Programs/HumaneEducation/  
GeneralPublic/UrbanWildlife](http://www.cfhs.ca/Programs/HumaneEducation/GeneralPublic/UrbanWildlife)

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# Squirrels



**Do you  
have a  
squirrel  
problem?**

Affix label here

## How do I know whether I may have a squirrel problem?

- Noises from above ceilings are heard day and night, usually in the form of scurrying, scratching and chewing.
- Noises are heard in the fireplace chimney (these may be caused by a squirrel, bird or a nesting raccoon). Squirrels and birds may fall down a chimney and become trapped. (Never attempt to smoke out an animal)
- Stains are noticed on ceilings, which may indicate either that rain is entering through the animal's entry hole or that it is the urine of an animal.

## What can I do to make my house unattractive to squirrels?

Animal proof your property, which includes:

- Trimming vines and tree branches near buildings.
- Covering chimneys with an animal proof chimney cap.
- Regularly inspecting your attic and promptly repairing any opening.
- Screening chimneys and bathroom, stove and dryer vents with galvanized wire mesh. (Do not use chicken wire, it is not strong enough).
- Replacing missing or damaged roof shingles; (Never close any area if you suspect animals might be living inside).
- Installing a 1 meter wide sheet metal collar loosely around trees about 2 meters off the ground and removing all tree branches below the metal.
- Installing a 1 meter wide sheet metal collar tightly around TV Antennas at ground level.
- Cleaning eavetroughs to prevent water damage.
- Making garbage and composting inaccessible to animals.
- Refraining from feeding or attracting squirrels.

## What should I do if I have a squirrel problem?

Exclusion is the only permanent solution to coping with troublesome squirrels. To help minimize conflicts with squirrels, make your house unattractive to them by following some of the suggestions on the previous page. If the problem persists, contact a local wildlife rehabilitator, animal control center, humane society or a humane wildlife control company to discuss humane solutions.

## Since wildlife control companies are not government licensed, what should I look for when hiring a wildlife control company?

- Make sure that the company has been in business for a minimum of 5 years, since there is a high turnover of wildlife removal companies.
- Query whether the company is in compliance with the OMNR Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.
- Request an on-site free written estimate.
- Ask if they provide a full range of animal proofing.
- Confirm that the company carries business liability Insurance.
- Ask for a minimum one year guarantee against animal re-entry.
- Ask for referrals.
- Request a referral from your local animal welfare or animal care and control agency.



## Why not trap and relocate squirrels?

Under the Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act wildlife must be released in close proximity to the original point of capture. Trapping is not an effective method of wildlife control. It does not address the primary reason why an unwanted animal is on the property, which is the availability of food and shelter. Unless the attractant is removed, the animal will return or a new animal will move in.

As well, relocation of trapped animals creates a new set of potential problems that include:

- Animals may be released in areas where populations are already at maximum levels.
- Relocated animals may transmit diseases to other wildlife in the release area.
- During certain times of the year the young may be left behind when they are unable to fend for themselves.
- Trapping and relocating animals late in the season prevents them from accessing shelter and food sources and may result in starvation or death from exposure.

