

Living with **Wildlife**
in BC

A new series of wildlife guides is available for free on line. The guides cover options for wildlife management, worker safety, and finding solutions and deterrents for common species that pose problems in agriculture settings.

Covering:

- Black Bear
- Deer
- Coyotes
- Wolves
- Snakes
- Rodents
- Cougars
- Starlings
- Conflict management

Funding provided by:



Okanagan Similkameen
Stewardship Society

Download or view the guides at:

**Okanagan Similkameen
Conservation Alliance**

Living with wildlife pages
www.osca.org

BC Winegrape Council

Health & Safety pages
<http://www.bcwgc.org/health-safety>

**Regional District Okanagan
Similkameen**

Wildsafe/Bear Aware pages
www.rdos.bc.ca/public-works/wildsafe-bc-bear-aware.

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Got critter problems?



Check out a new wildlife management series for agriculture.

Living with Wildlife in BC

CONFLICT REDUCTION TECHNIQUES #8

"Living with Wildlife" is a series of nine wildlife management guides for people who work outdoors where wildlife is encountered. Options for wildlife management, worker safety, and animal deterrents are provided for each species. Many guides suggest completing a wildlife conflict management plan to be used as a resource for managers and large property owners. Web links to the guides and other resources are on the back page.



HUMAN-WILDLIFE BALANCE

Learning to live in balance with wildlife while reducing potentially destructive and dangerous threats has long been an issue for large property owners and those working on the land. Large lands and agricultural holdings are most often on the edges of populated regions, and therefore in wildlife interface zones. Attractants are an unavoidable part of agriculture, and will continue to be an issue when attractants are being produced as a commercial product. This coupled with little or no wildlife mitigation effort will drastically increase the possibilities of conflicts occurring.

Wildlife Control agencies are understandably reticent to respond to complaints about damage to commercial crops or livestock, if little or no predator control is in place such as fencing and basic attractant management practices. Responsibility for the reduction of potential conflicts lies first with the land owner or operator.

Farmers and ranchers can use existing hunting and trapping seasons to control predators but must ensure they comply with all Federal, Provincial and Municipal regulations. See the following link for the BC Wildlife Act at http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/claws_new/documentID/inside00_96480_01



Conflict management requires a balanced approach. Elements of an effective management system include identifying hazards and planning procedures to reduce conflict with wildlife and increase human safety. Ongoing monitoring contributes to sound decision making; insuring impacts to wildlife and the environment are minimized.

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Black Bear, deer and coyotes have learned to thrive in close proximity to humans and cultivated areas. They are attracted to fruit crops but also come into conflict with livestock and domestic pets.



Conflict Reduction Techniques

This 12 page guide provides management suggestions applicable to all wildlife. Topics such as design of buildings, attractant management, fencing options, wildlife gates, predator deterrents, bird deterrent options, worker safety supplies, and safety plans are covered. Links to further information and equipment suppliers are on the back page.

European Starling

This non-native pest of cherries, blueberries and grapes can be controlled through a variety of scare techniques and trapping. Removing nest sites should be part of management.

Snakes

Tips on working in rattlesnake country as well as how to identify and if necessary, relocate snakes.

Rodents

Best practices for rodent control, managing attractants, and reducing rodent nest sites are reviewed.

Living with Wildlife in BC RODENTS #4

"Living with Wildlife" is a series of nine wildlife management guides for the agricultural and natural resource sectors, as well as rural land owners. Options for wildlife management, worker safety, and animal deterrents are provided for each species. Many guides suggest completing wildlife conflict management plans. Web links to the guides and other resources are on the back page. Consult the "Conflict Reduction Guide" for wildlife deterrent management options.



Many rodents have no impact on crops while others cause minimal to significant damage. Proper identification and assessment of damage is important for rodent management. Trapping is effective for small populations and is the preferred method over the use of poisoned bait, which can harm non-target animals such as dogs, hawks, owls and snakes.

Northern Pocket Gopher, *Thomomys talpoides* and Coast Mole, *Scapanus orarius*
Pocket gophers and moles are small burrowing mammals that are not related, but are often confused, because of their similar habits. Pocket gophers are found in the interior, whereas the mole is restricted to the south coast and Fraser Valley. Pocket gophers spend most of their time underground eating roots but will also eat stems above ground. Moles eat insects and worms so are not considered plant pests. The underground burrowing activities and earth mounds of both species can have from little to significant impact on crops. Small earth mounds are visible where new tunnels are being made.

Management:
If only a few individuals are present, round tunnel traps may be placed in an active tunnel, which kills the animal instantly with a cinch wire. Having digs on the property can also be a deterrent to moles and pocket gophers. An effective strategy is to methodically use several traps in one area before moving to another site. Use at least two traps facing in opposite directions in a tunnel. Flag traps to find them and monitor often since traps can get filled with dirt. Trap can be left throughout the year to make sure the population is in check.

When crop damage is significant, the use of poisoned bait may be necessary but must be placed inside the tunnel. Use a hand-probe to locate the tunnel and create a hole for inserting poisoned bait. Strychnine, zinc phosphide and chlorophacinone are registered for use with mechanical "burrow builder" equipment when used by a pesticide applicator. Applicators are required to place pesticides in underground tunnels, and then close the tunnels so the poison is not eaten by other wildlife. Check labels to make sure that products are used and stored safely.



These baits are poisonous to humans, domestic animals and non-target wildlife so use as a last resort. Follow manufacturers' instructions and refer to MSDS sheets. Keep children, pets, and domestic animals away from treated areas. Where possible, remove rodent bodies and bury or dispose of them in a safe manner. If bringing to a landfill, double bag and notify staff when dropping off.