Wildlife in Workplaces - Research Centres and Off Guelph Campus

Wildlife Safety Reminder

Wildlife can carry zoonotic diseases and should never be fed, chased, cornered, or handled. This includes bats, birds, raccoons, skunks, and other wild animals.

Exercise caution when removing dead wildlife.

Wildlife occasionally enters buildings or other work areas. If this occurs:

- If it is safe to do so, open exterior doors or windows and allow the animal a clear path to exit on its own.
- Maintain a safe distance. Use barriers such as boards or other solid objects to gently guide wildlife toward an exit without making physical contact.
- Do **not** attempt to capture or handle wildlife by hand.
- If an animal cannot safely leave on its own, or if it appears sick, injured, aggressive, or is in an inaccessible location (e.g., roosting bats), notify your manager or foreperson so appropriate arrangements can be made. Keep yourself and coworkers safe from the wildlife, as appropriate.
- Where practical, identify and report potential entry points so they can be sealed to help prevent future wildlife entry.

Removing Dead Wildlife

Avoid handling dead wildlife by hand.

Safety Gear and Removal

- Put on heavy-duty rubber or latex gloves, safety glasses, and a face mask or respirator.
- If possible, use a tool such as a shovel to transfer the carcass to the appropriate waste stream for your location. Clean and disinfect any tools following use.
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Or, if suitable size, with heavy gloves on, place your hands inside a doubled plastic trash bag, grasp the carcass, and invert the bags over the remains.

- Pick up any visible body fluids, bugs, or nesting materials using paper towels.

- Seal the inner bag tightly, then the outer bag for bin disposal or follow the appropriate waste stream for your location. ?(Resources, Dead animals or fish found on your property, 2025)?

Cleaning Areas Contaminated by Wildlife

When cleaning areas contaminated by wildlife droppings (feces) or urine:

- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including eye protection, suitable respiratory protection, and gloves.

- Avoid creating dust by sweeping or disturbing dry droppings. Spray urine, droppings, and the contaminated surface thoroughly with an enzymatic cleaner or a mix of household bleach and water (1 part bleach to 9 parts water). Let soak for 5 minutes or more before wiping up with paper towels.

- For an overall cleanup, use disinfectant and let it site wet on hard surfaces for at least 10 to 20 minutes to kill lingering bacteria and pathogens.

- Wipe the area dry with paper towels and dispose of them in your double-bagged trash. Or mop and change the mop head.

- Wash gloved hands with soap and water or a disinfectant before removing gloves. Remove PPE. Perform handwashing and consider changing your protective clothing. ?(Control, U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024)?

Reporting Contact with Wildlife

***Never* touch bats or other wildlife with your bare hands, even if the animal appears injured or dead.**

Immediately report **any** physical contact with a bat to your manager and the local public health unit [1]. Complete the UofG incident report [2] to document it.

- Wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water (or hand sanitizer if soap is unavailable)

- **Report any contact with a bat promptly**, even if there is no visible bite or scratch, as bat bites and

scratches can be difficult to detect and rabies exposures require urgent assessment.

If you are unsure how to respond to a wildlife encounter, contact your supervisor or manager before taking action.

There may be a need to report unusual bat deaths or submit for testing; check with your local Public Health Unit **[1] for guidance or call:**

- Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre: 1-866-673-4781
- Natural Resources Information Support Centre: 1-800-387-7011

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[1] https://www.phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/PHULocator/Default.aspx [2] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/system/files/Incident%20Reporting%20Form_1.pdf