



7 Steps

To Non-Toxic Rodent Control

1. Exclusion

Rats and mice can enter a home or building through 1/4" - 1/2" gaps. Without sealing off their method of entry, the rodent problem can continue to persist. Seal off possible points of entry. Pest control companies such as Hitmen (www.hitmenpest.com) or Bio Pest (www.bio-pest.com) also provide exclusion services (let them know you were referred by ALL ABOUT OWLS, Inc.).

Gophers are territorial and live alone (except when with young). They will defend their territory, but if one dies, others are immediately ready to move in. Therefore, exclusion, as much as possible is very important. Metal barriers can be installed in the ground to prevent Gophers from getting into an area. Putting plants in raised beds with 20-gauge Gopher wire lining the bottom can help keep them out. Vulnerable plants can be placed in Gopher baskets. Laying Gopher wire down before laying a new lawn will help exclude Moles and Gophers. For a variety of the Gopher and Mole solutions visit: www.gopherslimited.com

2. Prevention

Rats and mice look for food, shelter and water. The removal of these will go a long way in preventing a rat or mouse infestation. Remove places where they nest and hide such as ivy, thick vines, dense shrubs and any debris piles. Do not feed pets outside, clean up under bird feeders, pick up fallen fruit and put fertilizers in metal containers. Keep compost away from buildings, use secure trash bins and keep tree branches away from buildings.

Gophers and Moles can be repelled with castor oil-based deterrents. They work well if used regularly every 4-6 weeks. Plant mostly native aromatic plants and those that deter Gophers (such as Gopher Splurge, Sour Clover and Daffodils). Water less when earthworm eating Moles are present (moist soil will make it easier for them to find the worms).

3. Trapping

Rats and mice can be trapped successfully using regular mouse traps, but placement is key. Please do NOT use inhumane glue traps or any form of trap outside the home to avoid killing non-targeted wildlife.

Gophers and Moles can be trapped successfully. We recommend cinch traps as we have found them to be the most humane and easiest to use (requiring little digging). For traps and information on trapping methods, as well as exclusion and prevention techniques visit: www.gopherslimited.com

4. Work Together

Rodent problems are a community problem. Work together as a community to find solutions. It's important that there is an agreement NOT to use any form of rodent poisons, such as store-bought D-Con, that can be fatal to natural predators of rodents (such as hawks, owls, eagles, falcons, coyotes, foxes, raccoons, opossums, bobcats, mountain lions and more). In 2012, 78.1% of raptors (owls & hawks) brought into our local wildlife hospital tested positive for rodenticide poisoning. Without these predators, rodent populations would explode out of control. Rodent poisons are counterproductive and pose a threat to wildlife, pets and even humans.

5. Be an Advocate

Be an advocate for protecting the environment for natural beneficial predators that are already controlling rodent populations. There are non-toxic solutions that are both cost effective and sustainable. Share the message.

6. Research

Identify the rodent species that are giving you problems and then research non-toxic solutions. There is a lot of information to be found. You can start at these websites: ALL ABOUT OWLS, Inc. (allaboutowls.org), Raptors Are the Solution (www.raptorsarethesolution.org), and the Safe Rodent Control Resource Center (www.saferodentcontrol.org).

7. Attract Beneficial Predators

Once a safe habitat has been created free from any poisons, Barn Owl nesting boxes can be installed to attract owls that will help control the rodent population. A family of Barn Owls (from a single nesting box) can consume 3,000 to as many as 5,000 rodents in a single 4-month breeding cycle. One adult Barn Owl can consume 500 gophers a year. They prey on gophers, rats, mice, voles, moles and more. Barn Owls are cavity nesters and are easy to attract to a location by installing nest boxes.

The owls will help solve rodent issues, as one part of a non-toxic Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach that is safe, successful, long term and inexpensive. The owls alone are not the solution, but they are a very important part of the 7 steps needed for complete rodent control success. For owl boxes, please contact us at learnallaboutowls@gmail.com.