



# Wildlife NOTES

## Keeping Wildlife Out of Your House

Exterior openings are not only attractive to animals but they are also energy-robbing outlets. When gutter cleaning and limb-trimming, take the time to look at your house through the eyes of wildlife.



**Before taking action, however, make absolutely sure there are no animals already inside.** Stuff holes loosely with a paper towel. If after three days the paper stays in place, you can safely close up. Use caulk for small holes, staple or screw hardware cloth over larger holes or make permanent repairs.

**Foundation** Inspect for potential entry points where pipes, vents and cables exit the house. Window wells, exhaust vents, brick and siding gaps can all be potential entry points. Small openings can be caulked, stuffed with copper mesh or filled with expandable foam. Larger openings should be repaired to original condition.

**Attic** Look for droppings, chewing and nesting material. If a hole is found, assume an animal is present and NEVER seal it up until you are completely sure that all animals are gone. To inspect, turn off any attic lights and look for outside light leaking in. Openings, like exhaust vents, are often covered with bug screen that small animals can work through.

Take caution when it comes to bats. Look carefully for quarter-inch pellets that are a bit shiny and friable. Call a bat removal specialist if you suspect these animals are using the attic.



**Chimneys** Check inside by shining a light up the flue looking for animal signs on the damper and smoke shelf. Also check the chimney flue from the roof or to make sure no animals are present and install an animal-proof chimney cap.

**Roof/siding/trim board** Look for loose vent screens, warped siding, trim board that is deteriorated and pulled away. Make permanent repairs once you have completed the attic inspection.

More information at [www.humanewildlifeservices.com](http://www.humanewildlifeservices.com).

### *How to Teach Respect for Wildlife*

*Getting children involved in nature is not only time well-spent together but also provides the opportunity to pass on your values of care and compassion for all living creatures.*

Young children don't need to know the term *anthropomorphism*, but it means the attribution of human characteristics to animals or inanimate objects. Many cartoons use anthropomorphism, and the cute talking critters have wide appeal to youngsters.

When you read children storybooks with animal characters, point out the difference between anthropomorphized animals wearing clothes or eating with utensils and naturalistic animals.

We want to respect animals and avoid hurting them unnecessarily, but it is also important to see that wild animals do not belong as pets in people houses.

What kinds of wild animals could have homes in your back yard? Look out the windows and talk about available food, water, shelter, and space. Talk about how we can all help wild animals by making sure they have access to the habitat they need.

Examples include: Feed the birds and provide a bird bath. Leave the brush pile by the garage for shelter for small animals. Clean a stream or pond for wildlife.

*Adapted from Iowa's Project WILD*