

Appendix A: Glossary

Banger (also known as “bird bombs”): an explosive cartridge that makes a loud bang to repel birds. The shell is often launched from a handheld pistol launcher, similar to a modified starter pistol. This is one of many “pyrotechnic” or fireworks-based repellents. Bangers can be used at medium range (50–100 ft.). See chapter five for details.

Barbiturate: a group of drugs that sedate and can kill animals by interfering with the central nervous system (for example, sodium pentobarbital). Their use is heavily restricted at federal and state levels. See chapter five for details.

Best practice: an effective method for solving a nuisance wildlife problem that also minimizes risks to the environment and our health and well-being. Best practices support the problem-solving strategy known as “integrated wildlife damage management,” which balances concerns about safety; the humane treatment of wildlife; practicality; landowner rights; the protection of wildlife populations and habitats; and ethical, legal, financial, and aesthetic issues. See chapters two and five for details.

Bird bomb: see “banger.”

Body-gripping trap: usually a square, spring-loaded, lethal trap available in many sizes (some specialized models are round). The animal must pass through the jaws of the trap to be captured. Ideally, this trap catches the animal directly behind the head, snapping the part of the spine that’s in the upper third of the neck (the “cervical spine” area). This provides a quick death. Body-gripping traps are often called “Conibears,” which is the name of a popular model manufactured by Oneida-Victor, Inc., but there are many manufacturers of other body-gripping traps; the traditional mouse trap is a body-gripping trap, for example. See chapter five for details.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) chamber: an enclosed space into which carbon dioxide gas is added at a controlled rate to kill an animal. Carbon dioxide gas causes rapid unconsciousness followed by death, usually within five minutes, and is one of the most practical humane killing techniques available to NWCOS. See chapter five for details.

Carnivore: meat-eater. Identified by its sharp canine teeth, the pointed, conical teeth located between the incisors and the first bicuspid.

Carrying capacity: the maximum population of a given species that can be supported by a given habitat. For example, a northern forest has a larger carrying capacity for bear than does a parking lot. This ever-fluctuating quantity is affected by many factors such as the food supply; the species’ ability to tolerate neighbors, both wild and human; and the season (some areas can support more animals during the summer, when food and shelter are readily available, than they can during the winter, when those resources are scarce).

Catchpole (snare pole): a device used to capture and restrain an animal. Basically, this is a long stick with a noose (cabled loop) on one end. You place the loop over the animal’s head, and then tighten the cable to hold the animal. (When capturing some species, such as bobcat, you’d place the loop over the animal’s head and over one front leg.)

Cervical dislocation: a killing method commonly referred to as “breaking the neck” that would more accurately be described as “snapping the spine.” The goal is to quickly separate the spinal cord from the brain to provide a fast and painless death. The separation must take place at the base of the brain or within the upper third of the neck (the cervical spine area). It’s used primarily for small to medium-sized birds (duck sized or smaller) and small mammals, such as mice and rabbits. For details, see chapter five.

Cracker: see “shell-cracker.”

Crepuscular: animals that are more active at dawn or twilight than at other times.

Decapitation: a killing method in which the head is quickly cut from the body. Like cervical dislocation, the goal is to quickly separate the spinal cord from the brain to provide a fast and painless death. It’s used primarily for birds that are too large for cervical dislocation, such as geese, and sometimes for snakes. For details, see chapter five.

Depredation permit: a special permit issued by state and federal government wildlife agencies that allows the use of certain wildlife control techniques on federally or state-protected wildlife or game species. Without the permits, these techniques (usually harassment or taking) would be illegal because of the special protection given to those species. See chapter three for details.

Diurnal: animals that are more active during the day-time.

Edge: the zone between two or more adjacent habitats. Edges often have relatively abundant or widely varying sources of food and cover.

Euthanasia: the word means “good death” and it describes a humane killing method that provides as painless a death as possible, specifically, by killing the animal quickly, or causing rapid unconsciousness, then rapid death. See chapter five for details.

Exclusion: techniques and products that prevent wildlife from entering an area, such as protective barrier fences, for example. Barriers do not change the nature of the site; they work by making the target inaccessible. There are many materials and designs for fences, including the popular wire mesh and electric fences. Birds are sometimes repelled by a grid of wires, called “post-and-wire grids.” See chapter five for details.

Exsanguination: known commonly as “bleeding out,” this describes the cutting of the major blood vessels to rapidly drain blood from the body. This technique ensures death after an animal has been stunned into unconsciousness. See chapter five for details.

Feral: describes a member of a domesticated species, such as a cat or dog, that lives and behaves like a wild animal.

Firearm: a device that fires a projectile, using an explosive charge, force of spring, air, or other gas as a propellant. This includes pistols, shotguns, rifles, hand guns, and air rifles (pellet guns). See chapter five for details.

Fledge: when a young bird leaves the nest. These young birds, called “fledglings,” can fly but are still dependent on their parents for some, or all, of their food.

Foothold trap: refers to a variety of traps that restrain animals by holding the foot. They may be used as live or lethal traps. Examples of foothold trap include the coil spring trap and the Lil’ Grizz Get’rz® cylindrical trap, designed to selectively capture raccoons. See chapter five for details.

Gestation: the length of a pregnancy—the amount of time it takes from conception until birth.

Herbivore: plant-eater. Identified by its flat molars, which are used to grind plants. Molars are found in the back of the jaw.

Home range: the area in which an animal (or a mated pair) lives, hunts, and mates throughout its life. Generally, this area is not defended. The animal doesn’t necessarily use its whole home range every day. The home ranges of males and females of the same species may overlap, and a male’s home range may include that of several females. Many factors influence the size, shape, and use of a home range, such as the gender and age of the animal, the season, the amount of food available, the nearness of mates, and the degree of fighting among its kind. The boundaries of a home range are often marked by scats, urine, or other signs.

Host: an animal or plant that provides nourishment or a protected home for another animal, such as a parasite, or a disease organism.

Humane: a practice or product that causes no unnecessary pain or stress for the animal to whom it’s applied. See chapters two and five for details.

Hunting: “means pursuing, shooting, killing or capturing (other than trapping as defined in subdivision 11) wildlife, except wildlife which has been lawfully trapped or otherwise reduced to possession, and includes all lesser acts such as disturbing, harrying or worrying, whether they result in taking or not, and every attempt to take and every act of assistance to any other person in taking or attempting to take wildlife.” (Excerpted from ECL 11-0103.)

Integrated wildlife damage management (IWDM): a strategy for solving conflicts between humans and wildlife while reducing risks to people, wildlife, and the environment. IWDM focuses on reducing wildlife damage—not necessarily wildlife populations. It’s a holistic approach that helps the operator decide if control is needed, when and where it should be applied, and which control methods would likely work best (usually a combination of best practices). IWDM balances concerns about human safety, the humane treatment of wildlife, the rights of landowners, public health, the protection of the environment, financial and aesthetic losses, societal values, and legal and

practical limitations. Although there's a lot to it, IWDM can be remembered with three words: "effective"... "selective"... and "humane." See chapters two and five for details.

Limiting factor: anything that puts limits on the growth of a species' population, for example, bluebird populations are limited by the availability of nest cavities.

Listserv, listserv: a computerized "bulletin board." People subscribe to the listserv, which usually focuses on a subject, such as wildlife control. There are two types: open listservs, and moderated ones. In the open ones, when someone posts a message to the "bulletin board" (the listserv) it's immediately sent to everyone, often as an email message. Others can then respond to the message. If there's a moderator, messages are sent to that person, who then decides whether or not to post them for the whole group, and if they need editing.

Live trap: a trap that's meant to capture the animal without killing it. Includes a variety of traps, such as cage (box) traps, foothold traps, nets, multiple capture traps, and many bird traps. These traps are often made of wire or plastic and come in many sizes. They may open on one, or both ends. Cage traps are sometimes called "Havaharts" after a popular model, but there are many types and many manufacturers. See chapter five for details.

Louver: a framed ventilation opening that's covered with horizontal slats, usually located in an attic wall.

Nestling: a young bird that's in the nest, under the care of adults, usually its parents. (Birds are "nestlings" after they hatch, for as long as they remain in the nest. Once they can fly and leave the nest, they're called "fledglings" for as long as their parents care for them.)

Niche: this describes both the animal's job and the part of the environment that it uses (the area and the time when the animal is active). So, for example, bats and chimney swifts have the same specialized job: insect-eaters that feed on the wing. They may even sleep in the same chimney, but bats are active at night, while chimney swifts are active during the day. (A lucky person may be able to watch at dusk as the birds, having completed the day shift, return to the chimney, and the bats, working the graveyard shift, leave it.)

They occupy similar, but not exactly the same, niche.

Nocturnal: animals that are generally more active at night.

Omnivore: an animal that eats both meat and plants. Omnivores have both canines and molars, but neither tooth is as specialized as those found in carnivores or herbivores. (People are omnivores. Compare your canines to those of your cat or dog, both carnivores. My, what big teeth they have...). An omnivore can eat meat but it can't rip flesh the way a carnivore can, for example, nor can it grind plants with an herbivore's ease. Some animals classified as carnivores or herbivores by their teeth are actually omnivorous. For example, foxes (a carnivore) readily eat large amounts of berries, while the herbivorous squirrels eat insects, baby birds, birds' eggs, and even each other—and not only when the food supply is tight.

Opportunist: an animal that will eat whatever's available, within reason. Animals that are opportunists are more likely to become nuisances because they adapt better to human conditions.

Penetrating captive bolt ("captive bolt pistol"): a killing device that forces a bolt into the brain of the animal, causing rapid unconsciousness and death. Captive bolt guns use either gunpowder or compressed air to propel the bolt through the skull. The animal must be adequately restrained to allow proper placement of the bolt. See chapter five for details on proper use.

Pesticide: any substance designed to prevent, destroy, repel, or mitigate any pest. (Nuisance wildlife are considered "pests.") Repellents, fumigants, rodenticides, and poison baits are all examples of pesticides. Pesticides are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state, following the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and state laws. All pesticides are registered as either "general use" or "restricted use" products. If a product has an EPA registration number on its label, it's a restricted use pesticide. Restricted use pesticides may only be used by, or under the direct supervision of, a certified pesticide applicator. Contact the NYS DEC's Pesticide Program for details.

Polygamous: mating with more than one individual. Commonly used to describe a situation in which one male mates with several females.

Porcupine wire: a mechanical device intended to repel birds from landing on surfaces such as building ledges. It's made of sharp stainless steel prongs that stick out in many angles. The prongs are attached to a base for easy installation on ledges, roof peaks, window sills, and ornamental architectural features.

Propane cannon: a mechanical device that makes a loud explosion to repel birds. This is one of many "pyrotechnic" or fireworks-based repellents. Unlike many other noisemakers, propane cannons can be used with a timer. Most of the other devices must be fired by a person.

Prophylaxis: to try to prevent something from happening, usually, a treatment that protects someone from disease (such as a vaccine).

Pyrotechnics: fireworks. This term is used loosely to refer to repellents that use explosive charges that are like fireworks, such as screamers. Most of these devices are used in bird control.

Repellent: an object, substance, or technique that repels, or drives an animal away. There are several kinds of repellents: scare devices; chemical repellents; and guard animals. Most repellents frighten an animal away from a site or make the desired object (such as a crop or nesting site) intolerable by making it smell or taste nasty, or feel bad to the touch. Animals may be "hazed," or driven away from a site when chased by predators (dogs, falcons) or vehicles (radio-controlled planes, boats). Scare devices include mylar tape, strobe lights, models of predators, and "scare-eye" balloons; noisemakers, such as propane cannons, bangers, clappers, crackers, and distress calls. For details, see chapter five.

Screamer: an explosive cartridge that makes a long, drawn out whistle to repel birds. They can be launched from a handheld pistol launcher or from a twelve-gauge shotgun. The shell flies out about 100 feet, screaming and whistling all the way. This is one of many "pyrotechnic" or fireworks-based repellents.

Shell-cracker: (a.k.a. "cracker"): an explosive cartridge that makes a loud bang that sounds like a M-80 firecracker to repel birds. These shells are fired from a twelve-gauge shotgun, exploding about 75 yards away. This is one of many "pyrotechnic" or fireworks-based repellents.

Soffit: the section of a building underneath the eaves.

Stunning (a.k.a. "blow to the head," "lethal blow"): may be used for two different purposes: it may be intended to make the animal unconscious so another killing method may be used safely (called "stunning"), or it may be intended as a primary killing method, in which case it's usually referred to as a "lethal blow." All of the cautions that apply to cervical dislocation also apply to stunning and the use of a lethal blow.

A lethal blow is a quick, very forceful blow to the back of the head that is meant to kill the animal. It's appropriate for small animals, such as birds, rabbits, and small mammals (mice to squirrel size). The animal should be properly restrained so you can deliver the blow to the right location. Work on a hard surface. Lethal blows can be delivered using a penetrating captive bolt pistol. Although a lethal blow by itself may humanely kill the animal, it's best to use a second method to be absolutely sure.

Stunning is a less forceful blow delivered to the center of the head. The animal must be properly restrained to ensure the correct positioning of the blow. Once the animal is stunned unconscious, you can choose among several techniques to kill it (use of CO₂ chamber, shooting, cervical dislocation, decapitation, exsanguination).

Taking and take: "include pursuing, shooting, hunting, killing, capturing, trapping, snaring and netting... wildlife... and all lesser acts such as disturbing, harrying or worrying, or placing, setting, drawing or using any net or other device commonly used to take any such animal. Whenever any provision of the Fish and Wildlife Law permits "taking," the taking permitted is a taking by lawful means and in a lawful manner." (Excerpted from ECL 11-0103.)

Territory: an exclusive area that is often vigorously defended for a certain time. May be inhabited by an individual, a mated pair, or a group of animals. Territories may be defined by the way they're used, for example, a breeding territory, feeding territory, or nesting territory. An animal defends its entire territory, which is usually smaller than its home range. The defense of the territory may involve ritualistic behaviors that drive off rivals, or actual fighting.

Trapping: “means taking, killing and capturing wildlife with traps, deadfalls and other devices commonly used to take wildlife, and the shooting or killing of wildlife lawfully trapped, and includes all lesser acts such as placing, setting or staking such traps, deadfalls and other devices whether they result in taking or not, and every attempt to take and every act of assistance to any other person in taking or attempting to take wildlife with traps, deadfalls or other devices.” (Excerpted from ECL 11-0103.)

Vector (or “carrier”): an animal that can carry and transmit a disease agent from one animal to another. For example, mammals are vectors, or carriers, of rabies.

Zoonotic, zoonoses (pronounced “zu-not-tick” and “zu-nos-ees”): diseases that people can catch from wildlife.