

may wish to visit your local nursery or home center for commercial products.

TREES

Occasionally, woodchucks climb trees in search of food. To prevent this, wrap a 4 to 6 foot wide piece of aluminum flashing around the tree trunks so that the woodchuck cannot get a foothold on the bark. Make sure the aluminum flashing is a minimum height of 4 feet from the ground. This technique provides an immediate solution; however, it is recommended to leave the flashing up for five to seven days.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS...

- As a last resort, trapping can be an effective method of dealing with troublesome wildlife. The most commonly used device is a live-trap which captures the animal physically unharmed. Traps should be checked twice a day (morning and evening) to replenish bait or to humanely deal with captured animals. Raccoons, opossums, and skunks cannot be released off-site; they must be euthanized or released on the same property. Contact the ODNR Division of Wildlife (1-800-Wildlife) for additional trapping regulations.
- Do not use poisons. Poisons are illegal, inhumane and may result in secondary poisoning of raptors, wild scavengers and neighborhood pets.
- Native wildlife is legally protected. It is illegal for anyone to possess a native wild animal unless permitted by the ODNR Division of Wildlife. Wildlife rehabilitators have a permit to care for orphaned or injured wildlife.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you find a wild animal and are concerned, leave it alone and call Brukner Nature Center at 937-698-6493, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.



5995 Horseshoe Bend Rd.

Troy, OH 45373

www.bruknernaturecenter.com

Brukner Nature Center is a non-profit, privately funded organization promoting the appreciation and understanding of wildlife conservation through preservation, education, and rehabilitation.

The purpose of our wildlife rehabilitation program is to educate people regarding the natural history of Ohio's wildlife, to offer help and advice when wildlife and people conflict, and to care for, rehabilitate, and release native Ohio wildlife expected to survive in their natural environment.

Living with WOOD- CHUCKS

in Miami County



Brukner Nature Center

Woodchucks are known as groundhogs or marmots. Woodchucks are excellent diggers. It is said that they can move up to 700 pounds of dirt in one day. Woodchucks have short, strong legs with curved claws on their front paws that are designed for burrowing. One of the true hibernators, they sustain themselves during the winter off fat reserves they accumulate during the warmer months. Woodchucks are active in the early morning and early evening and are commonly seen by roadsides foraging for food. Woodchucks are primarily vegetarians who like to sample from gardens, lawns (dandelions and clover are a favorite), nurseries and orchards but are known to eat insects like slugs, grasshoppers and June bugs.

WOODCHUCKS LIVING IN YOUR YARD

Woodchucks are traditionally associated with crop fields; however, suburban neighborhoods provide adequate food and shelter. Woodchuck burrows can have one to four entrances with a tunnel system averaging 20 to 25 feet in length and 2 to 5 feet in depth. The main entrance to the burrow is approximately 1 foot in diameter. Common areas for woodchucks to burrow are; under decks, buildings, sheds, openings under concrete slabs, porches, and tall grassy areas. They are cautious animals and do not travel far from the entrance holes when foraging for food.



PREVENTING PROBLEMS

Do not encourage woodchucks by feeding them. Do not allow spillage to accumulate outside of bird feeders. Use welded wire to prevent animals from accessing openings under decks, elevated sheds, concrete slabs and porches.

RECOMMENDED DETERRENTS

Woodchucks are easily frightened. Leave blown up beach balls in your yard; the wind will blow them around and frighten the animals. Place plastic bags on sticks in various spots in your yard for the same effect. Scarecrows and objects that move in the wind are also effective. However, the animals will grow accustomed to these items and their effectiveness will diminish. Place rags soaked in ammonia in the den for one week. Ammonia has an irritating smell. Over time, the ammonia will dissipate so it is important to re-soak the rags daily. This particular technique should be avoided during the months of March to August. The overall effects of this technique may injure infant wildlife that is too young to escape. It is important to use all the techniques at the same time in order for the deterrents to be successful. To determine

if the animal has left a den site, wad up newspaper, and pack it into the den entrance. (This also helps to hold in ammonia fumes.) If the woodchuck is still using the den, the newspaper will be pulled out. If after a few days the newspaper has not been disturbed, securely repair any access openings. Failure to do so may result in another animal moving into the open space.

GARDENS

Exclusion is always the best technique. Build a 3 to 4 foot high wire mesh fence around the garden leaving the top 12 to 18 inches unattached to any support and bent outward. The woodchuck's weight will pull the fence downward, landing it right back where it started. Also, fold the bottom 6 inches of the wire mesh out to a 90 degree angle, and bury 1 to 2 inches of the wire mesh underground. Woodchucks are not only skilled climbers but also good diggers.



Try deterring woodchucks from your garden by planting the following around the perimeter of your garden: onions or flowering onions, garlic, fritillaria, or tropaeolum (nasturtium). These plants have either an unpleasant taste or smell.

Other kinds of taste deterrents work, however, they need to be reapplied after a heavy dew or rain. Recommended deterrents include: spraying a mixture of one gallon of water and two tablespoons of hot sauce onto the plant or sprinkling baby powder on the plant. You