

Oakville Wildlife Strategy (OWLS)



Wildlife Conflict Protocols

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These protocols are primarily directed towards dealing with wildlife conflict situations on town owned property. It should be noted that in most cases, wildlife issues on private property are the responsibility of the landowner, however, the information provided in this document may be of assistance for issues that may arise on private property as well.

The following species are included in the guidelines: bats; beaver and muskrat; Canada geese; coyotes; mice and rats; pigeons; small mammals common to Ontario; threatened and endangered species; white tailed deer.

GENERAL

The protocols are species specific and detail particular wildlife conflict situations that may arise, however, below is information on general issues that may occur.

AGGRESSION

If you are in immediate danger or if the animal is aggressive and may injure someone, call Police at 911; Protection of public health and safety is a priority.

BITES

If you have been bitten by an animal, seek medical attention and report it to the Region of Halton Health Department at 905 825-6000.

If your pet has been bitten, or had direct contact with a wild animal, contact your vet.

DISEASES

If wildlife disease is suspected, Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre can diagnose; 866-673-4781

If a dead or alive, potentially rabid animal is encountered and it has been in contact with humans, contact Region of Halton Health Department at 905-825-6000.

POISONING OF WILDLIFE

Possible cases of outdoor poisoning can be directed to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE), pollution reporting hotline, at 1-866-663-8477.

Suspected misuse of pesticides can also be reported to the Pest Management Information Service at 1-800-267-6315.

If there is a suspected spill, contact the MOE Spill Action Centre at 1-800-268-6060.

REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF WILDLIFE LAW

Reports of animal cruelty to wild or domestic animals should be reported to the Oakville and Milton Humane Society at (905) 845-1551.

Other potential legal violations concerning wildlife, including intentional poisoning of wildlife, should be directed to the local Ministry of Natural Resources office (Aurora) at (905) 713-7400 except in the case of migratory birds. In these cases, suspected violations should be reported to CWS Wildlife Enforcement at (905) 336-6410. For a list of birds included under the Migratory Birds Convention Act is provided in "Birds protected in Canada under the Migratory Birds Convention Act, Occasional Paper number 1. 1991. Canadian Wildlife Service".

DEAD WILDLIFE

Generally, property owners are responsible for the disposal of dead animals found on their property. See the Public Health and Safety section of the Oakville Wildlife Strategy for details on safe disposal techniques.

Dead animals, birds, or bats can be reported to the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre (www.ccwhc.ca) at 1-866-673-4781.

If you suspect there is a public health risk from a sick wild animal, such as rabies, or you or your pet had contact with a suspected rabid animal, contact the Region of Halton Health Department immediately at (905) 825-6000.

For dead wildlife on public property or roads, contact the Oakville and Milton Humane Society at (905) 845-1551 for removal.

Report roadkill sightings to the Ontario Road Ecology Group (OREG). OREG collects this information to get a better understanding of the interactions between animals and roads, and to help identify 'hotspots' where animals frequently get hit by cars. This information can then be used by scientists and policy makers to identify areas where mitigation methods are needed, such as ecopassages and wildlife crossing signs. For more information and to report a sighting, contact, visit: www.torontozoo.com/conservation/RoadEcologyGroup.asp?pg=sighting

SICK OR INJURED WILDLIFE

See species specific information for detailed procedures. The Oakville and Milton Humane Society (905) 845-1551 or the Toronto Wildlife Centre (416) 631- 0662 may be able to assist in some situations, however, neither is mandated by the town to manage these situations and due to the volume of calls received by both of these organizations it may not be possible to address every situation. In particular, small animals that are common (e.g. raccoons, squirrels, rabbits, etc.) may not be a high priority given the limited resources available.

The Ministry of Natural Resources can also provide contact information for authorized wildlife custodians to the public. Note that there are only a small number of these and they are generally home operated by volunteers and do not have much capacity. Contact the MNR Aurora office at (905) 713-7400.

The Toronto Wildlife Centre has developed a comprehensive book entitled *Answering the Call of the Wild* by Erin Luther which provides an excellent resource for dealing with situations that may involve injured or orphaned wildlife. The town has numerous copies available through key departments dealing with wildlife (Environmental Policy, Parks and Open Space). As well, copies are available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library and for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre. It is recommended that this book be used as a primary resource for direction in dealing with “rescue” situations.

For further information, visit

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/274374.pdf

BATS



In Oakville, we have two primary species - the Big Brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) and the Little Brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). Both look very similar with the greatest difference being size. Big Brown bats are a medium to large species, brown fur, with a wing span of 32-39 cm, forearm of 42 to 51mm and weighs 14 to 30 grams. Little Brown bats are small to medium sized species, with a wing span of 22-27 cm, forearm length 34 to 40 mm, fur is olive brown to dark brown, and weighs 5 to 14 grams. Although most bat species fly south

for the winter, both the little and the big brown bat hibernate in Canada for the winter.

They are often found roosting in man-made structures such as buildings, bridges, and decks. Man-made structures provide ideal roosting areas because they often have openings larger than 5 mm (¼ inch). Holes which are the size of your baby finger are large enough for the bats to gain access. These structures provide protection from predators, shelter from the elements, are generally located close to food and water, and the temperatures are ideal for the birth and rearing of young bats. Detailed information on bats in Ontario can be found on MNR's website at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/FW/2ColumnSubPage/278166.html

A) POTENTIAL CONFLICTS

- i) Bat nests are found indoors
- ii) A bat is found indoors (flying)
- iii) A bat is injured or obviously ill
- iv) A bat is found (dead)

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

All eight species of bats occurring in Ontario are listed as specially protected mammals under Schedule 6 of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (FWCA). The FWCA prohibits bats from being hunted or trapped in Ontario. The MNR acts as the steward of provincial Crown land and is responsible for protecting bat habitat, in particular bat hibernacula and roosting sites. OMNR's Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide (OMNR 2000) defines significant wildlife habitat and directs proponents to avoid negative impacts to these habitats during development projects.

With the advent of "white nose disease" (see further information below), bat populations are rapidly declining and a number of bat species are currently under consideration for listing under both the federal and provincial registries.

C) RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES/ DETAILED PROCEDURES

I) BAT NESTS ARE FOUND INDOORS

Primary:

Property owner

Partners:

Wildlife removal service

Many colonial species of bats have both summer and winter roosts. In the summer, bats use these spaces to rear their young. Bats should NOT be excluded from buildings between May and August as there may be young, non-flighted babies inside the structure who will become trapped inside when the adults leave. It is also not possible to exclude bats after they have begun hibernating as they do not normally leave the structure during this time. The best time to exclude bats is during the spring or early fall, when they are observed leaving their roosts nightly. Where possible, it is recommended to hire a professional humane removal company to do bat exclusion jobs as they can be quite complex.

Bat droppings may carry histoplasmosis but the risk is very minimal. See the Health and Safety section of the Oakville Wildlife Strategy for details on cleaning up animal droppings and histoplasmosis.

II) A BAT IS FOUND INDOORS (FLYING)

Primary:

Property owner

Partners:

Oakville and Milton Humane Society; Region of Halton Health Department

Assess whether the bat should be released or not. If any of the following statements are true, contact either the Oakville and Milton Humane Society or the Toronto Wildlife Centre and **do not release** the bat:

- It is between October and April or the average overnight temperature is less than ten degrees Celsius outside. If so, the bat should be in its hibernaculum (winter hibernation). It is possible that the bat was simply disturbed while hibernating, but it should not be put outside as bats cannot fly well if their body temperature drops too low.
- There has been known or suspected direct contact between the bat and a person where a bite or bat saliva entering a mucous membrane or open wound cannot be ruled out. If there has been known or suspected contact, the Region of Halton Health Department and/or the Oakville and Milton Humane Society should be notified as quickly as possible.
- The bat is not flying, or if it is showing any other signs of illness or injury (see iii below).

If the bat has had no contact with people, would not normally be in hibernation, appears healthy and can fly well, it may be removed from the building using one of the following methods:

Open a door or window, close off other potential exit points and leave the room. The bat should find its way out on its own. If it does not fly away within 30 minutes, contact the Oakville and Milton Humane Society or the Toronto Wildlife Centre for further direction.

III) A BAT IS INJURED OR OBVIOUSLY ILL

Primary:

Oakville and Milton Humane Society. Unusual behaviour should also be reported to the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre at 1-866-673-4781 or the Natural Resources Information Centre at 1-800-667-1940.

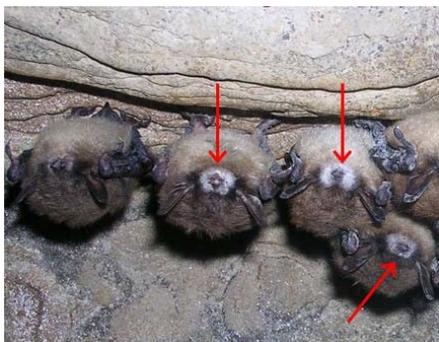
Partners:

Region of Halton Health Department (rabies); Ministry of Natural Resources (White Nose disease, rabies); Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre; Toronto Wildlife Centre (bat injury)

If your pet is playing with a bat, contact the Region of Halton Health Department or the Oakville and Milton Humane Society as bats are a rabies vector species (RVS) and there is a possibility that the pet may have been exposed. The owner of the animal may also wish to contact their vet who can advise them of the proper steps to take to protect the pet.

If the bat is injured, contact either the Toronto Wildlife Centre or the Oakville and Milton Humane Society. Bats should never be handled with bare hands. Never lift a live bat by the wing or tail as they have delicate bones and skin that can be damaged by handling. Refer to *Answering the Call of the Wild*, pp 267-273 for further details on handling injured bats.

Of recent importance is a condition in bats called “White Nose Syndrome” (WNS). In March 2010, Ontario’s Ministry of Natural Resources confirmed the first diagnosis of White Nose Syndrome (WNS) in Ontario bats although as of 2011, no known cases have been identified in Halton.



White nose syndrome with typical white colouration of snouts

WNS is a condition of bats named for the white fungus which grows on the face, ears and wings of affected animals. Other signs include poor body condition (emaciation and dehydration), as well as behavioural changes (bats flying in daylight hours during the winter and early spring). At this time, WNS and the fungus associated with the syndrome are not known to cause any human health issues. If you see a bat displaying these conditions, contact the Ministry of Natural Resources or the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre.

Further details on handling bats are available from the book *Answering the Call of the Wild* (see Resources section below).

IV) A DEAD BAT IS FOUND

Primary:

Property owner (if Town owned building, Facilities and Construction Management department, if public property such as a park contact the Oakville and Milton Humane Society); Region of Halton Health Department; Ministry of Natural Resources

Partners:

Toronto Wildlife Centre; Veterinarian

Do not touch the animal directly. Use disposable gloves and double bag the body by placing the bag over the body and flipping the body into the bag, then placing that bag inside another. Keep children and pets away. Two of the concerns with dead bats are the possibility that it is carrying the rabies virus (a threat to human health) or that it may have had white nose fungus (no threat known to human health).

It is important that if you find a dead bat, contact the Canadian Co-operative Wildlife Health Centre at 1-866-673-4781 or the Ministry of Natural Resources Information Centre at 1-800-667-1940. If there has been contact with the bat, notify the Region of Halton Health Department.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

To discourage bats from nesting in a structure (e.g. homes, businesses), the following may be of assistance:

BAT-PROOF BUILDINGS

- Assess sites where bats may get into your home, including chimneys, joints, at building corners, where pipes penetrate ceilings or walls in attics, between porches/additions and the main structure, between shingles or where walls meet eaves.
- From October to March, when bats are hibernating elsewhere, or after you are sure no bats are roosting in the attic, seal all potential entry holes.

Further details are available on the town's Wildlife Fact Sheets, Living with bats or Answering the Call of the Wild. Property owners may wish to contact a wildlife removal professional for assistance.

PROVIDE BAT BOXES

Bat boxes may provide alternative housing for bats. Refer to the bat fact sheet for more information. Ducks Unlimited provides instructions at www.ducks.ca/resource/general/wetland/pdf/batbox.pdf

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Gerson, Helen, Ministry of Natural Resources, Habitat Management Guidelines for bats of Ontario

(August 1984). Found online at www.grwa.ca/mnr_docs/MNR%20Extension%20Notes/Habitat%20Managment%20for%20Bats.pdf

Luther, Erin, *Answering the Call of the Wild* (2010). Copies available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library; Environmental Policy Department (Town of Oakville) or for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with bats fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290803.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with bats fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290803.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)

F) CONTACT

Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre (866) 673-4781

Region of Halton Health Department (905) 825-6000

Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora Office (905) 713-7400

Ministry of Natural Resources Information Centre (800) 667-1940

Oakville and Milton Humane Society (905) 845-1551

Town of Oakville, Facilities and Construction Management Department (905) 845-6601, ext 3339

BEAVER/MUSKRAT



Beaver/muskrat dams and lodges can have positive effects such as: the creation of important wetland habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife, the regulation of high flow conditions in streams during storm events and the reduction of downstream bank erosion. Their presence in urban areas, however, can often lead to damaging results such as: flooding of roads, trails or basements, as well as damage to engineered structures. Moreover, felled trees may cause damage to public or private property.

A) POTENTIAL ISSUES

- i) Beaver/Muskrat activity in a stormwater management facility
- ii) Beaver/Muskrat activity obstructing a watercourse
- iii) Beaver/Muskrat activity not obstructing watercourse
- iv) Beaver/Muskrat activity damaging trees/plant materials

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

The *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* provides for the protection of beaver dams and muskrat dens and makes it illegal to intentionally destroy them unless specifically exempted by the Act or authorized by the Minister. The following explains the authorization process to allow a person to destroy a den or beaver dam:

The Act specifically exempts the following:

- destruction of a den of fox or skunks by any individual;
- destruction of a beaver dam by a landowner or agent in protection of property;
- destruction of a den of any furbearing mammal or beaver dam by a licensed trapper.

There are, however, exemptions that do not require authorization. Licensed trappers are exempt, recognizing the need to alter or damage a den or beaver dam as part of their trapping activities.

Landowners or their agents may destroy a beaver dam in protection of their property without authorization, however, unless the agent is listed under the class of agents exempted (O. Reg. 665/98, S. 132(1)), they would still need to be authorized by MNR.

They should be cautioned however, that destruction does not exempt them from:

- a) the need for property owner permission to access another landowner's property
- b) potential civil liability through damages to others, caused by their actions
- c) applicability of sections of the *Fisheries Act* which prohibits destruction or alteration of fish habitat.

Contact the Aurora District Ministry of Natural Resources for the names of licensed trappers.

Discharging of firearms in the Town of Oakville is regulated under By-law 2010-156. Under this by-law, shooting a beaver or muskrat may only take place under the following conditions:

A person discharging a firearm, provided that such person is the lawful owner or occupier of the property zoned as Agricultural or Parkway Belt Agricultural under the Town of Oakville Zoning By-law 1984-63, as amended, in order to scare or destroy animals that are found in the act of killing or injuring livestock or poultry and/or destroying property or farm produce, in accordance with:

- (i) the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*, 1994, S.C. 1994, c. 22;
- (ii) the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 41; or
- (iii) the *Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act*, R.S.O., 1990, c.L. 20

C) DETAILED PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:

I) BEAVER/MUSKRAT ACTIVITY IN A STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY

Primary:

Town of Oakville Engineering and Construction

Partners:

Town of Oakville Development Engineering; Town of Oakville Roads and Works; Town of Oakville Parks and Open Space; Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Ministry of Natural Resources

As per the *Town of Oakville Stormwater Management Pond Procedure MS-ENC-001-001*, animals such as beavers and muskrats that are found to be creating habitat (eg dams and/or lodges) disruptive to the function of the pond or that are a potential threat to the adjacent or upstream lands should be removed. If the removal of an animal and the obstruction is required, such activities should be conducted in an economical, humane and effective manner as per the following guidance documents:

- Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) “Ontario Operational Statement for Habitat Management Program” (DFO 2007) www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/regions/central/habitat/os-ao/provinces-territoires-territoires/on/index-eng.htm
- *Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)
- Ministry of Natural Resources “The Beaver Handbook” (MNR 1995) (copy on file with Environmental Policy Department)

II) BEAVER/MUSKRAT ACTIVITY OBSTRUCTING A WATERCOURSE

Primary:

Conservation Halton

Partners:

Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Ministry of Natural Resources; Town of Oakville Engineering and Construction; Town of Oakville Parks and Open Space; Town of Oakville Development Engineering; Town of Oakville Roads and Works; Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Ministry of Natural Resources

In the event that beaver or muskrat activity is disrupting the flow of the watercourse such that it could potentially damage property or create a threat to human health (e.g. flooding due to dam building activities), Conservation Halton should be contacted.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is responsible for protecting fish and fish habitat across Canada. Under the *Fisheries Act*, no one may carry out a work or undertaking that will cause the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction (HADD) of fish habitat unless it has been authorized by DFO. DFO has prepared the Operational Statement for Beaver Dam Removal (www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/regions/central/habitat/os-ao/provinces-territoires-territoires/on/os-ao03-eng.htm) which should be reviewed. Conservation Halton has a Level 2 agreement with DFO, therefore, Conservation Halton is the primary contact when beavers are affecting a watercourse.

III) PRESENCE OF BEAVER/MUSKRAT IDENTIFIED IN A WATERCOURSE (NOT A STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY) AND NO OBSTRUCTIONS TO WATERWAY

Primary:

Property owner

Partners:

Conservation Halton, Wildlife removal company, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Natural Resources,

If no obstruction is occurring or appears likely to occur, the animals should be either left in place and/or consider the prevention and exclusion techniques below if necessary. While Ontario's *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* permits property owners to take action under certain conditions if there is a threat to property, it is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure all relevant regulations and by-laws are followed. Under the federal *Fisheries Act*, any work or undertaking that will cause the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction (HADD) of fish habitat must be approved by DFO. Conservation Halton has a Level 2 agreement with DFO and should be contacted if there is any potential for HADD. If there will be no HADD, the Ministry of Natural Resources and/or a qualified wildlife removal company should be contacted for direction. The Town offers a fact sheet on selecting a humane and reputable wildlife removal company, however, It should be noted that beavers provide many benefits and ecosystem services and if no risk to safety or property is evident, it is strongly recommended they be left in place.

IV) BEAVER/MUSKRAT ACTIVITY DAMAGING TREES/PLANT MATERIALS AROUND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT POND OR OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTY

Primary:

Town of Oakville, Parks and Open Space. If a stormwater management pond is involved, Engineering and Construction, Roads and Works and Development Engineering should also be consulted.

Partners:

Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Ministry of Natural Resources; Adjacent property owners

Stormwater Management Ponds

Beavers chew trees both to eat the bark and for materials to build their dams and lodges. Muskrats tend to cause less damage to trees, however, their feeding habits may damage agricultural or ornamental crops growing near water. Economic losses due to the damage caused by damage to trees and other riparian plantings can be significant, particularly in the case of stormwater management ponds. Trapping or removal of the animal will not solve the problem as a new animal will move in to an “inviting habitat”. A longer term and more sustainable approach to managing this issue is to create a habitat that does not encourage these animals to take up residence in vulnerable areas. Techniques are discussed in the Preventive Measures section and more detailed ones are provided in *The Beaver Handbook*, produced by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

To help prevent conflict situations, particularly with stormwater management ponds, it is recommended that a long term strategy be developed that includes landscaping measures to deter beaver and muskrat.

Safety Concerns due to Damaged Trees

Beaver activity may also cause safety hazards when trees are left damaged and/or partially felled. If a potential hazard tree is identified, the Parks and Recreation department at the Town of Oakville should be notified. A tree hazard evaluation will be carried out by qualified staff using standard industry practices and, if required, town staff will remove the tree. Hazard trees on private property are the responsibility of the property owner.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

The activity of the beaver/muskrat should be observed and evaluated for risk potential and/or property damage. If the animal can be left to continue carrying out its daily activities uninhibited, it is best to leave the animals in situ. If the animal(s) are causing a nuisance that cannot be tolerated (e.g. human safety or damage to property), prevention/exclusion measures rather than dam destruction should be implemented as a first step.

Trapping and killing the beaver or muskrat is not ideal as it is expensive and leaves habitable areas vacant for new beavers to colonize. Trapping should only be used under extreme circumstances, when other preventative measures have been exhausted and the animal’s activities are threatening property or human safety. Trapping may only be undertaken by a trapper licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). The OMNR maintains a list of all such licensed trappers and is available upon request. Prevention/exclusion measures are the recommended management

options. They should be attempted as a means of controlling the problem before trapping is undertaken. If possible, prevention/exclusion measures should also be implemented at the site after trapping, in order to prevent that area from being recolonized by another beaver.

To help prevent conflict situations, particularly with stormwater management ponds, it is recommended that a long term strategy be developed that includes landscaping measures to deter beaver and muskrat.

Beavers

Dam destruction is ineffective - the beaver(s) will always build the dam back up immediately after it is destroyed. Relocation of beavers is regulated under Ontario's *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* and is generally not an acceptable option because relocation transports the problem elsewhere, transmits disease amongst beaver populations, and usually results in suffering and/or death of the beaver which has been relocated to unfamiliar territory.

Prevention/exclusion measures (sometimes called harassment techniques) are used to discourage beavers from occupying a particular area, to manage water levels at a site already inhabited by beavers, or to get a beaver to move to another location. They should be implemented in late summer when the beaver is first starting to stock for the winter and there is still time for it to move to another place before the water freezes. They should not be carried out in the fall or winter when the beaver is making preparations to survive the winter. The following are some of the prevention and exclusion measures which can be undertaken to resolve beaver problems.

Tree Protection

The easiest prevention/exclusion method involves protecting trees. If the beaver is unable to utilize the tree supply in a particular area it will be forced to move on to find another source of food and building material. A single shrub or tree can be protected from damage by encircling it with securely fastened wire mesh.

Tubular Culvert Protectors

Tubular culvert protectors confuse beavers, preventing them from creating a dam near a culvert. A protector can be constructed from concrete reinforcement wire extending from the outside of a culvert and rounded closed at least 2.5 m from the end of the culvert. The tubular protector requires only periodic maintenance, but may need major repairs if damaged by ice in the winter.

Water Level Control Pipe

The water level controller (or Beaver Baffler as it is sometimes called) prevents the beaver dam from functioning in the way that the animal wants it to, thus encouraging the beaver to move on in search of a better living location. A baffler is made of a piece of PVC pipe with a minimum length of 3.0 m and a diameter adequate to carry the appropriate flow for the watercourse. A wire cage is fixed around one end of the pipe which is placed upstream of the dam. The other end is inserted through the dam and conducts water entering at the caged end across the dam. This device is most suitable in situations where a small pond is desirable or acceptable.

Trapezoidal Fence (“Beaver Deceiver”)

The trapezoidal fence prevents construction of the dam near a culvert due to its shape. The narrow side of the trapezoid is formed by the culvert itself, the sides extending outward from either side of the culvert into the watercourse at an angle of 45-60 degrees. The final side of the trapezoid runs parallel to the culvert and connects the two sides extending outward from the culvert. The three sides of the beaver deceiver should be constructed of heavy gauge wire fencing supported by cedar posts (which the beavers will not chew) buried at least 30 cm into the ground to prevent beavers from tunnelling underneath. The fence should be at least 30 cm higher than the water level. River run stone can be placed around the bottom of the fence to improve aesthetics, stabilize the fence and ensure drainage. The downstream end of the culvert should be covered with wire mesh to prevent beavers from entering downstream.

Selective Landscaping

The favorite trees of beaver are willows, aspens, cottonwoods and alders. They also eat birches, oaks and maples and highbush blueberries. They are mostly interested in trees that are within 100 feet of the shore (the heaviest use occurs within about 20 feet), so refraining from planting trees that are favourable to beaver along a shoreline can reduce the occurrence of tree damage and make an area less “beaver friendly”. Planting of shrubs and trees that are not as palatable to beaver, such as hemlock and evergreens, can further assist in discouraging beavers from taking up residence.

Fencing

Because beavers are not good climbers, three to four-foot-high fencing can also be a highly effective way to block their access.

Low fences can also be used to protect groups of trees. Since beavers do not like being separated from water, it is unnecessary to enclose an entire stand of trees. Simply stake the fence tightly against the ground and trail each end toward the water. An L-shaped bend in the bottom of the fence will discourage burrowing. It may be necessary to monitor the fence for a while after it's installed.

Muskrats

Muskrats burrow into the sides of waterways to create their dens. In some situations, it is possible to exclude them or prevent them from digging into structures through stone rip-rapping of the sides of the waterway/pond or laying wire mesh along vulnerable embankments. Serious damage often can be prevented in this way. The best ways to modify habitat is to eliminate aquatic or other suitable foods eaten by muskrats. Favourite foods include cattail, pickerelweed, bulrush, smartweed, duck potato, horsetail, water lily, sedges, young willow regeneration, and other aquatics. These should be avoided if possible when planting around vulnerable areas such as stormwater management ponds.

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Government of Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), *Ontario Operational Statement*

for *Habitat Management Program* (2007). Available online at www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Province of Ontario, *Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997). Available online at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *The Beaver Handbook* (1995). Copy on file with the Environmental Policy Department and the Design and Construction Department at the Town of Oakville.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, Extension Notes: Living with beavers fact sheet.

Available online at: www.lronline.com/Extension_Notes_English/pdf/bvr.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, Living with beavers fact sheet. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/FW/2ColumnSubPage/290005.html

Town of Oakville, *Stormwater Management Pond Procedure and Policy* MS-ENC-001

Town of Oakville, *By-law 2010-156, A by-law to regulate the discharge of firearms*

F) CONTACT

Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Southern Ontario District (905) 639-0188

Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora Office (905) 713-7400

Town of Oakville, Engineering and Construction department (905) 845-6601 ext 3889

Town of Oakville, Roads and Works department (905) 845-6601 ext 3315

Town of Oakville, Development Engineering department (905) 845-6601 ext 3320

Town of Oakville, Parks and Open Space department (905) 845-6601 ext 3076

Mike Callahan, Beaver Solutions, Southampton, MA (413) 695-0484 www.beaversolutions.com

CANADA GEESE



By the early 20th century, over-hunting and loss of habitat had resulted in a serious decline in the numbers of Canada geese in its native range. Today, Canada geese can be found throughout Ontario and they are the most widely distributed goose in North America. While some stay in southern Ontario during the winter, the great majority travel south to the United States, or even to northeastern Mexico.

Unlike many waterfowl species that feed mainly in the water, Canada geese feed mostly on land. In spring and summer, they graze on the leaves of grassy plants, and also eat a wide variety of flowers, stems, roots, seeds and berries.

Due to their numbers, they are often considered a nuisance species in and around waterfront areas.

A) POTENTIAL ISSUES:

- i) Canada geese are fouling town owned properties (parks/trails)
- ii) Canada geese are fouling private property
- iii) Canada geese are aggressive/attacking people
- iv) A Canada goose (or other water bird) is injured or ill

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

The Canada goose is a migratory bird, protected under Canadian law by the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*. The Canadian Wildlife Service, part of Environment Canada, manages wildlife matters that are the responsibility of the federal government, including protection and management of migratory birds.

It is illegal to disturb, kill, capture, injure, remove or disturb a Canada goose or damage, destroy, remove or disturb its eggs or nests. However, special permits may be obtained from the Canadian Wildlife Service to use acceptable deterrent techniques.

C) DETAILED PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

I) CANADA GEESE ARE FOULING TOWN OWNED PROPERTIES (PARKS/TRAILS)

Primary:

Town of Oakville, Parks and Open Space Department

Partners:

Canadian Wildlife Service

The Parks and Open Space department assist the Canadian Wildlife Service with the implementation of an overall goose management program to control the overpopulation of resident Canada geese along Oakville's waterfront. This includes egg oiling and habitat modification. The egg oiling program concentrates on nests located along the Lake Ontario shoreline, Oakville and Bronte Harbours, and along the Sixteen, Fourteen and Twelve Mile Creeks. The relocation program involves capturing moult migrants from along the Lake Ontario shoreline in Oakville to the Aylmer Wildlife Management Centre where they remain until they are ready to fly south again. The intent of this program is to reduce the number of Canada geese along the shoreline.

Each year, the Town must submit a relocation Report and a permit request to the Canadian Wildlife Service in order to carry out goose management activities. Adjacent property owners are also notified of the activities and requested to complete permission forms to allow egg oiling on properties where needed.

By-law 1999-159 prescribing rules and regulations for parks in the Town of Oakville prohibits feeding wildlife, including ducks and geese, in public parks. This should be enforced where possible.

Landscaping to discourage geese is also carried out by the town, with a focus on lakefront parks. Modifications have included increasing native and naturalized plantings. See Preventive Measures below for further details.

II) CANADA GEESE ARE FOULING PRIVATE PROPERTY

Primary:

Property owner

Partners:

Canadian Wildlife Service (permits), Oakville and Milton Humane Society, Wildlife Management Company (if required), Town of Oakville Parks and Open Space Department (for information only)

While the private property owner is responsible their own property, the town may include adjacent property owners as part of their annual egg oiling program in lakefront locations. Preventive measures are considered the best option as Canada geese are protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* which prohibits killing or capturing the birds or damaging, destroying, removing or disturbing their nests, without a permit from the Canadian Wildlife Service. Property owners are directed to the Preventive Measures below for further guidance and/or to contact the Burlington office of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

The Parks and Open Space department can provide further guidance or information to property owners attempting to deal with a nuisance situation involving Canada geese, however, it is the responsibility of the property owner to deal with the situation.

III) CANADA GEESE ARE AGGRESSIVE/ATTACKING PEOPLE

Primary:

Property owner (if public property, Town of Oakville Parks and Open Space department)

Partners:

Canadian Wildlife Service, Wildlife removal company

Aggressive geese on town property should be reported to the town's Parks and Open Space department. Aggressive geese on private property should be reported to the Burlington office of the Canadian Wildlife Service. Under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*, it is a federal offense to disturb, kill, capture, injure, remove or disturb a Canada goose or damage, destroy, remove or disturb its eggs or nests.

If the situation requires the removal of the goose (or geese) and/or its nests and eggs for safety reasons, the Canadian Wildlife Service must be contacted and a permit must be obtained before any action is taken.

Geese nesting in areas with pedestrian traffic

Canada geese may nest near commercial or industrial buildings where their defensive nesting behaviour becomes problematic. Geese protecting their nests will often fly at perceived predators (which may only be people parking their cars or trying to get inside an office door). Erecting a temporary visual barrier, such as a section of snow fencing, between the goose's nest and the area where passers-by are being threatened by the geese will often stop the behaviour. The barrier doesn't have to be solid (but should be difficult to see through), nor should it encompass the whole nest. Geese will not usually walk around a barrier if this will interrupt their view of the nest in any way (see Figure 1) (from *Answering the Call of the Wild*, Erin Luther).

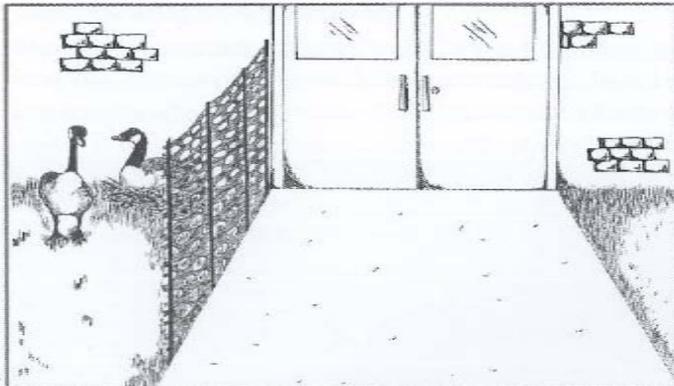


Figure 1: Example of fencing for nesting Canada geese in industrial or commercial area.

What Should I Do if a Goose Attacks Me?

Maintain direct eye contact and keep your chest and face pointed at the goose. If the goose acts aggressively, calmly and slowly back away, watching for obstacles. A neutral demeanour should be maintained (i.e. do not act hostile or show fear).

IV) A CANADA GOOSE (OR OTHER WATER BIRD) IS INJURED OR ILL

Primary:

Oakville and Milton Humane Society

Partners:

Toronto Wildlife Centre

If a Canada goose (or other waterfowl) has a foreign substance on its feathers (e.g. oil), is tangled in line (or other material), is trapped or injured or is demonstrating unusual behaviour, consult *Answering the Call of the Wild* manual. If this does not answer or assist in the situation, contact either the Oakville and Milton Humane Society or the Toronto Wildlife Centre for further information and/or action to be taken.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

A key attractant for Canada geese is large expanses of manicured lawn. This provides a safe environment (predators are easily seen) and a buffet of vegetation that is easily accessed. Key landscaping techniques that have demonstrated effectiveness in mediating human-geese conflicts are:

- 1) Reduce sightlines at access points to and within foraging or nesting areas
- 2) Physically reduce / impede access to foraging areas via water or air
- 3) Reduce actual size of foraging areas
- 4) Reduce forage palatability
- 5) Provide preferred grazing areas

Further details on implementing these strategies can be found in *A Source Book: Habitat Modification and Canada Geese*.

Geese should not be fed. Human food is not appropriate for waterfowl and is a poor health choice for them, it increases fouling and may lead to increased acts of aggression by the geese (competing for food, habituating to humans, begging, etc.). By-law 1999-159 prescribes rules and regulations for parks in the Town of Oakville, including a prohibition on feeding ducks and geese. Although no by-law regulates private property, residents are discouraged from feeding waterfowl.

More information is available for the public through the town's Wildlife Fact Sheets, Living with Canada geese.

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Doncaster, Deborah and Jeff Keller, *A Source Book: Habitat Modification and Canada Geese* (2000).

Copies are available through the Environmental Policy Department or online at www.animalalliance.ca/Goose_Manual%20-%20Habitat%20Modification.pdf

Government of Canada, *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (1994)

Luther, Erin, *Answering the Call of the Wild* (2010). Copies available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library; Environmental Policy Department (Town of Oakville) or for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with Canada geese fact sheet*. Found at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290771.pdf

Town of Oakville, *By-law 1999-159, A by-law to prescribe rules and regulations for Parks within the Town of Oakville*

F) CONTACT

Oakville and Milton Humane Society (905) 845-1551

Toronto Wildlife Centre, Wildlife Hotline (416) 631- 0662

Town of Oakville, Parks and Open Space Department (905) 845-6601 ext 3076

Canadian Wildlife Service, Burlington Office (905) 336-4464

COYOTES



Coyotes play a crucial role in controlling the population of rodents and other small mammals as they make up 80% of their diet, making them Nature's natural rodent control. They also consume carrion, which helps to keep the environment and watersheds clean and free of disease.

When left alone, we benefit tremendously from their activities, however, human-coyote conflicts may arise when we intentionally feed them or inadvertently create free-food opportunities around our properties i.e. pet food left outdoors, free roaming pet cats and small dogs, unharvested fruit, and bird feeders that spill seeds on the ground that attract rodents, which in turn attracts their predators.

Note that the information in this section is an overview only. In 2012, the town developed a comprehensive **Coyote Management Strategy** which outlines the town's approach to handling and preventing conflict situations with coyotes.

A) POTENTIAL ISSUES:

- i) A coyote is identified that has exhibited aggressive behaviour
- ii) A coyote has attacked or taken a family pet
- iii) A coyote is observed in close proximity to residences, trails or other "public places"
- iv) A coyote is obviously sick or injured

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

Coyotes are generally protected under *Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. See the "Roles and Responsibilities" section of the Oakville Wildlife Strategy which provides an overview of the Act. Of particular note in regards to coyotes is the restriction on establishing a bounty or hunt as set out in Section 11 (1) of the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* which reads:

11. (1) Except with the authorization of the Minister, a person shall not,
- (a) hunt for hire, gain or the expectation of gain;
 - (b) hire, employ or induce another person to hunt for gain;
 - (c) trap for hire, gain or the expectation of gain;
 - (d) hire, employ or induce another person to trap for gain; or
 - (e) pay or accept a bounty.

C) DETAILED PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:

I) A COYOTE IS EXHIBITING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

(note below what constitutes aggressive behaviour)

Primary :

Oakville and Milton Humane Society (or Halton Police in case of immediate danger)

Partners:

Town of Oakville Parks and Open Space department, Ministry of Natural Resources

Aggressive behaviour towards people is unusual for coyotes, but people should always exercise caution around wildlife. **In the case of immediate danger or if the immediate destruction of the animal is needed, Police Services (911) should be contacted.** If a coyote is displaying aggressive behaviour but there is not the immediate threat of harm, the Town should be notified and the information registered through the coyote reporting system. **Aggressive behaviour includes stalking, growling, biting, etc directed towards humans and/or in the presence of humans.** As noted previously, coyotes do not distinguish between small pets and their natural prey and attacks on unattended small animals are not considered "out of the ordinary" behaviour. It should be noted that most cases of coyote aggression are related to being fed by humans. This habituates coyotes to people and encourages them to approach in search of food.

The Parks and Open Space department may be contacted and/or involved if the occurrence is on publicly owned lands.

II) A COYOTE HAS ATTACKED OR TAKEN A FAMILY PET

Primary:

Property owner

Partners:

Oakville and Milton Humane Society, Town of Oakville Parks and Open Space department

Incidents should be reported to the Town of Oakville's coyote reporting system and if the incident occurs on Town owned property (e.g. trails or parks), the Parks and Open Space department should be contacted.

This is an unfortunate situation, however, coyotes do not distinguish between their natural prey (rodents, small mammals) and small cats and dogs. This situation can generally be avoided by ensuring pets are not left unattended outside and dogs are kept on a leash when out for walks (except for in leash free parks). This is not considered aggressive behaviour unless the incident was part of an increasingly aggressive pattern, outside of what would be considered normal feeding behaviour by coyotes. Information on "coyote proofing" yourself and your home is available as part of the town's Wildlife Fact Sheets series.

III) A COYOTE IS OBSERVED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO RESIDENCES, TRAILS OR OTHER "PUBLIC PLACES"**Primary:**

No action required, however, information on "coyote proofing" yourself and your home is available on a fact sheet provided by the Town of Oakville.

Partners:

Oakville and Milton Humane Society.

While these situations can be disconcerting to residents, coyotes are a normal part of Oakville's environment. Unless the coyote is demonstrating aggressive behaviour (as defined below), the course of action is to advise individuals on how discourage coyotes from approaching (see "Preventive Measures") and offer to provide a copy of the town's Wildlife Fact Sheets related to coyotes.

IV) A COYOTE IS OBVIOUSLY SICK OR INJURED**Primary:**

Oakville and Milton Humane Society

Partners:

Ministry of Natural Resources (rabies), Region of Halton Health Department, Toronto Wildlife Centre (animal rehabilitator)

Sick or injured coyotes may exhibit the following symptoms: extreme agitation, disorientation, a loss of fear of people, paralysis of limbs, or the animal gnawing or biting its own limbs. While they are at very low risk for carrying rabies, these symptoms may indicate this illness. Coyotes

demonstrating these behaviours or who are otherwise obviously ill or injured should be reported to the Oakville and Milton Humane Society.

Sarcoptic mange is a common disease of coyotes and tends to be more prevalent when coyote populations increase. Mange tends to be fairly species specific and coyote mange is unlikely to directly affect humans or pets (unless through repeated direct exposure). It is not necessary to report cases of mange.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

PERSONAL SAFETY

- Make sure you teach your children about animal safety and what to do if they should encounter various types of wildlife.
- Keep all pets on leashes or confined to a yard
- Never run from a coyote – if you encounter one, either back away slowly towards a safe location or make a lot of noise and make yourself appear bigger by waving your arms or waving a stick.

AROUND THE HOUSE

- Place trash bins inside an enclosed structure to discourage the presence of small rodents, which are an important food source for coyotes.
- Put garbage at curbside the morning of the scheduled pickup, rather than the night before.
- Pick ripe fruit from fruit trees and remove fallen fruit from the ground and keep bird feeders from overflowing as coyotes are fond of fruit, nuts and seeds.
- Protect vegetable gardens with heavy-duty garden fences or place vegetable plants in a greenhouse.
- Keep pet food indoors.
- Use motion-sensitive lighting to make your property less attractive to coyotes and other nocturnal wildlife.
- Fence your property or yard. It is recommended the fence be at least six feet tall with the bottom extending at least six inches below the ground and/or a foot outward. A roller system that can be attached to the top of the fence preventing animals from gaining the foothold they need to pull themselves up and over the top of a fence.
- Electric fencing can also help deter coyotes from properties or gardens in some circumstances.
- Clear away bushes and dense weeds near your home where coyotes may find cover and small animals to feed upon.
- Close off crawl spaces under porches, decks and sheds. Coyotes use such areas for denning and raising young.
- Cats and small dogs may be seen as prey by coyotes, while larger dogs may be injured in a confrontation
- Keep cats indoors and do not allow pets to roam from home
- Walk your dog on a leash at all times. If your yard does not have a fence, use a leash while on your property to keep your dog close to you.

- Spay or neuter your dogs. Coyotes are attracted to, and can mate with, domestic dogs that have not been spayed or neutered.

Detailed preventive measures are included in the town's Wildlife Fact Sheets series.

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Luther, Erin, *Answering the Call of the Wild* (2010). Copies available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library; Environmental Policy Department (Town of Oakville) or for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with coyotes fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290802.pdf

Town of Oakville, Wildlife Fact Sheets, *Living with coyotes* (2011)

Town of Oakville, *By-law 2010-156, A by-law to regulate the discharge of firearms*.

F) CONTACT

Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora Office (905) 713-7400

Oakville and Milton Humane Society (905) 845-1551

Region of Halton, Health Department (905) 825-6000

Toronto Wildlife Centre, Wildlife Hotline (416) 631- 0662

MICE AND RATS



In Oakville, deer mice, house mice and Norway rats are found in abundance. Signs of a rodent infestation include a live sighting, droppings, tracks or footprints, gnaw marks, rub marks, nests and damaged goods, such as food. Rats prefer damp environments and may be found in sewage systems or in other areas where food is easily available. Mice may be found in woodlands, open grasslands, semi-rural areas, farmyards and fields. House mice can live anywhere in a house. They nest in wall spaces, under floors and around cupboards or under counters. In the wild, small rodents are eaten by many other animals and birds. However, if they are living indoors close to human beings, they are somewhat protected from other animals. Both mice and rats can cause serious health issues in humans if infestations occur and conflict situations arise when these animals nest and reproduce in houses, attics and

other buildings.

A) POTENTIAL ISSUES

- i) Mice or rats in: vacant lots or yards (residential), industrial or commercial properties
- ii) Mice or rats inside residential properties
- iii) Mice or rat populations found on public property

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

Mice and rats receive no legal protection in Ontario. Issues related to infestation are governed by property standard by-laws in Oakville and may also involve the Region of Halton Health Department if human health issues arise.

C) RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES/ DETAILED PROCEDURES

I) MICE OR RATS IN: VACANT LOTS OR YARDS (RESIDENTIAL), RENTAL UNITS (RESIDENTIAL) AND INDUSTRIAL OR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

Primary:

Property owner; Town of Oakville, By-law Enforcement (Clerks)

Partners:

Region of Halton Health Department; Wildlife removal company

Property owners are responsible for dealing with mice or rat issues and ensuring they are in compliance with Oakville's Property Standards By-law, By-Law 2007-100. Section 5.1.1.1 requires

that all vacant lots and every yard be kept clean and free from rodents and any condition which might result in the harbouring of them. Section 8.1.1.3 requires that owners and occupants in a non-residential property (commercial/ industrial) shall maintain the property free from rodents and Section 9.9.1 requires that every residential rental property be kept reasonably free of rodents, that methods used for extermination shall be in accordance with any applicable legislation and that any openings or holes in a rental building or unit that might allow rodents in should be screened or sealed as appropriate.

A by-law enforcement officer will investigate complaints under this by-law and charges may be laid. The Region of Halton Health Department should also be contacted if charges are laid under the Property Standards By-law.

Property owners may hire or ask someone to deal with nuisance animals. The town does not provide references, however, a fact sheet is available on how to hire a humane and responsible company.

II) MICE OR RATS INSIDE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

Primary:

Property owner

Partners:

Wildlife removal or Pest control company

If mice and/or rats are found inside a residential property, it is generally up to the property owner to manage the situation. The Town of Oakville supports the humane treatment of animals and does not recommend using glue traps. Not only do they cause undue suffering to the intended target, they can trap other small mammals, birds and snakes. Victims become stuck in the trap and struggle to free themselves until they finally perish of exhaustion, starvation or injuries suffered in trying to escape. It is also illegal in Ontario to use glue traps for most wild species (although mice and rats are excluded). Property owners may hire or ask someone to deal with nuisance animals. The town does not provide references, however, a fact sheet is available on how to hire a humane and responsible company.

III) MICE OR RAT POPULATIONS FOUND ON TOWN PROPERTY OR BUILDINGS

Primary:

Town of Oakville – Facilities and Construction Management for issues regarding buildings or Parks and Open Space department regarding outdoor public spaces

Partners:

Region of Halton, Health Department

In the event that a substantial population of mice or rats is found on public property or in a neighbourhood, the Parks and Open Space department will notify nearby residents via letter and provide a fact sheet (see preventive measures). The Parks and Open Space department will ensure that activities taking place on town owned property are not encouraging the presence of mice or rats. In cases where town buildings are affected, the Facilities and Construction Management Department will take the lead. The Region of Halton Health Department should also be notified.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

LIMIT FOOD SOURCES

- Don't attract mice. Always clean up spilled food and wash dishes right away.
- Always store food, water and garbage in metal or heavy plastic containers with tight-fitting lids.
- Do not leave pet food or water out overnight.
- Clean up spilt seeds under bird feeders.
- If you are having a rodent problem, consider removing your bird feeder permanently.
- Place bafflers above and below feeders to prevent rats from gaining access to feeder foods.

MAKE YOUR PROPERTY UNWELCOMING

- Seal holes around doors, windows and roofs with steel wool or cement. To discourage digging and nesting, place gravel around the base of the building.
- Remove any abandoned vehicles, old tires or cast-off furniture from your property. Cut back thick bush and keep grass short. Keep woodpiles, lawn clipping, leaf piles and trash cans off the ground and away from your home.

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Luther, Erin, *Answering the Call of the Wild* (2010). Copies available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library; Environmental Policy Department (Town of Oakville) or for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with mice and rats fact sheet*. Online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/stdprod_078041.pdf

Town of Oakville, *By-law 2007-100, A By-law to prescribe standards for the maintenance and occupancy of property*

F) CONTACT

Region of Halton, Health Department (905) 825-6000

Town of Oakville, Parks and Open Space department (905) 845-6601, ext 3076

Town of Oakville, Facilities and Construction Management Department (905) 845-6602, ext 3339

Town of Oakville, Licensing and By-law Services (Clerks) (905) 845-6601, ext 3872

PIGEONS (ROCK DOVES)

Pigeons, also known as rock doves, are found throughout much of Ontario. In urban areas, pigeons are commonly seen roosting on buildings and scavenging on sidewalks. They will often be seen feeding in groups. They eat grasses, seeds, grains, berries, discarded food scraps and other garbage.

In Ontario, pigeons are preyed upon by various birds including peregrine falcons and owls. In urban areas, pigeons are prey for small mammals like opossums and raccoons. Pigeons can reproduce at any time of year. One brood consists of only one or two eggs, but pigeons can raise five or more broods each year.

Domestic pigeons are considered a separate issue as they fall under domesticated animals, not wildlife. Their regulation in the Town of Oakville is covered under By-law 2010-157, A By-law to regulate the keeping of animals in the Town of Oakville.

A) POTENTIAL ISSUES

- i) Pigeons are congregating on private property
- ii) Pigeons are congregating on public property

In large flocks, pigeons can be very vocal. Their droppings may damage property including buildings, cars and statues. When roosting, pigeon nests may block downspouts and vents on buildings.

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

Pigeons (Rock doves), their nests and eggs do not receive any special protection under either the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* or the *Federal Migratory Birds Convention Act* as they are considered an introduced domesticated bird gone feral. Other birds that do not receive protection are American Crow, Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Grackle, Red-winged Blackbird, European Starling, and House Sparrow.

C) DETAILED PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

I) PIGEONS ARE CONGREGATING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Primary: Property owner

Partners: Business Improvement Association; Wildlife removal companies; Town of Oakville, Licensing and By-law Services (Clerks)

Property owners should ensure that they are in compliance with Oakville's *Property Standards By-law*, By-Law 2007-100 in regards to issues that may arise where large number of pigeons regularly congregate.

If a single pigeon gets into a building, turn off all inside lights and open all windows and other exits. The bird should leave on its own. If necessary, a broom or long pole with a T-shirt at the end can be used to direct the bird out an exit, or tire it to a point where it can be caught in a towel or similar item.

Pigeon nests should be continually removed to discourage the birds from nesting if their presence is undesired. Pigeons will leave an area after several unsuccessful attempts at nest building. Other methods to deter pigeons include installing a sprinkler in the roost tree or other roosting site or lighting up the interior of the roost with bright fluorescent lights.

If there are no alternatives but to have the pigeons removed, it is recommended that a local wildlife control agent be used. Trapping and humanely euthanizing pigeons is preferred. Relocating pigeons does not work as they will return to their nesting areas due to their strong homing sense. Relocating animals more than 1 km away is also illegal under Ontario's *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. The use of pesticides such as Avitrol are strongly discouraged as this method causes extreme distress and undue suffering in birds and can also affect other birds such as raptors that may eat the pigeons or other animals that may ingest the pesticide. Local wildlife control agents can also assist in the clean-up of droppings or nesting material if needed. The Town of Oakville offers a fact sheet on selecting a humane wildlife removal company.

II) PIGEONS ARE CONGREGATING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

Primary: Town of Oakville, Facilities and Construction Management for issues regarding buildings or Parks and Open Space department regarding outdoor public spaces such as parks

Partners: Wildlife removal company; Oakville and Milton Humane Society

Unless the pigeons are creating a health hazard or are damaging property (e.g. issues with excrement), pigeons should be left alone. If action is required based on a health or property damage basis, the recommended procedures outlined for private property should be followed.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

For both private and public property:

LIMIT FOOD SOURCES

- Install a cage around bird feeders so that only smaller birds can access feed
- Pick up spilt feed around bird feeders
- Feed pets indoors

- Protect fruit crops with flexible bird netting
- Always harvest ripe fruit immediately

MAKE YOUR PROPERTY UNWELCOMING

- Seal off entry holes to homes and other buildings. Use vent covers or wire mesh to cover any openings that cannot be sealed
- Install barriers on ledges, windowsills and window air conditioners to prevent roosting.
- Deter birds from landing with spiky perch wires on ledges or preferred roosting areas.
- Set up plastic or ceramic birds of prey in your yard
- For open buildings like barns or car ports, place netting over doors to enable vehicles to enter but keep out pigeons and other birds
- Attach netting to the underside of beams so that the pigeons cannot access the beams for roosts

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Luther, Erin, *Answering the Call of the Wild* (2010). Copies available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library; Environmental Policy Department (Town of Oakville) or for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with Pigeons fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/stdprod_070819.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)

Province of Ontario, Ministry of the Environment, *Pesticides Memorandum on Pest Bird Control and the Peregrine Recovery Program in Ontario* (June 2010)

Town of Oakville, *By-law 2010-157, A By-law to regulate the keeping of animals in the Town of Oakville*.

F) CONTACT

Bronte BIA (905) 825-3258

Downtown Oakville BIA (905) 844-4520

Town of Oakville, Facilities and Construction Management department (905) 845-6601, ext 3339

Town of Oakville, Parks and Open Space department (905) 845-6601, ext 3076

Town of Oakville, Licensing and By-law Services (Clerks) (905) 845-6601, ext 3872

Kerr Village BIA (905) 849-8865

SMALL MAMMALS COMMON TO ONTARIO (RACCOONS, RABBITS, SQUIRRELS, SKUNKS, OPOSSUMS, VOLES)



Although there may be species specific conflicts (e.g. raccoons nesting in attics, rabbits damaging gardens, voles damaging trees or tunneling through lawns, etc.), those associated with “small mammals common to Ontario” are generally considered nuisance issues. In these cases, generally, it is up to the property owner to manage the conflict.



A) POTENTIAL ISSUES

- i) Nuisance issues (property damage due to nesting or foraging, depositing of feces, etc.)
- ii) Animal is sick or injured
- iii) Animal is dead

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

Generally, small mammals common to Ontario only receive the basic considerations provided to wildlife under Ontario’s *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997). See the Roles and Responsibilities section for an overview of this Act and its regulations.

Small mammals that are exceptions to this are the Least shrew, Eastern Chipmunk, Northern flying squirrel and Southern flying squirrel which are listed as specially protected mammals under Schedule 6 of the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (FWCA). The FWCA prohibits these animals from being hunted or trapped in Ontario.

In addition, species listed as Endangered or Threatened under the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) are also exceptions. An up to date list of species that qualify for protection under the ESA in Oakville can be obtained through the Aurora District office of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

C) RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES/ DETAILED PROCEDURES

I) NUISANCE ISSUES (PROPERTY DAMAGE DUE TO NESTING OR FORAGING, DEPOSITING OF FECES, ETC.)

Primary:

Property owner (if public property, Town of Oakville, Facilities and Construction Management for issues regarding buildings or Parks and Open Space regarding outdoor public spaces)

Partners:

Town of Oakville (for information only); Wildlife removal company

Where possible, tolerance is encouraged. There are many situations that can easily be resolved through educating the property owner and/or providing methods to discourage the animal from engaging in the undesired behaviour on the property (e.g. exclusion techniques, etc.). In cases where an animal is clearly identified, the Town of Oakville has developed species specific information sheets that may offer assistance to the property owner in humanely resolving any issues.

The *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* states that on your own land, you generally may capture, kill or harass wildlife to stop the wildlife from damaging your property (with certain exceptions). See the “Roles and Responsibilities” section of the Oakville Wildlife Strategy which provides an overview of the Act.

If you live-capture a nuisance animal, and do not kill it humanely, you must, within 24 hours, either release it within one kilometer to where you caught it, or as directed by MNR, or, if is sick, injured, or immature, turn it over to a veterinarian or an authorized wildlife custodian.

You may hire or ask someone to deal with nuisance animals on your land, such as a wildlife removal company. The town does not provide references, however, a fact sheet is available on how to hire a humane and responsible company. With the exception of mice and rats, it is recommended that if an animal needs to be removed that property owners retain the services of a wildlife professional. You may not keep a wild animal for any purpose without authorization from MNR.

II) ANIMAL IS SICK OR INJURED**Primary:**

Property owner

Partners:

Oakville and Milton Humane Society; Toronto Wildlife Centre

Generally, it is up to the property owner to manage the situation unless rabies is suspected or there is an immediate threat to human health or safety. Answering the Call of the Wild provides an excellent resource for managing situations and providing appropriate treatment and/or care to the animal. The Oakville and Milton Humane Society and the Toronto Wildlife Centre may be able to offer care options and/or further advice, however, due to the high volume of requests they receive they are often unable to directly care for common small mammals.

III) ANIMAL IS DEAD**Primary:**

Property owner (private property); Oakville and Milton Humane Society (dead on or near roadways or on public property)

Partners:

None

Generally, property owners are responsible for safely disposing of dead animals found on their property unless rabies is suspected or there is an immediate threat to human health or safety. If rabies is suspected, contact the Oakville and Milton Humane Society or Ministry of Natural Resources (Aurora office) immediately and do not touch the dead animal. While any mammal may carry the rabies virus, the most common are bats, skunks, raccoons and foxes.

If removing a dead animal, do not touch the animal directly. Use disposable gloves and double bag the body by placing the bag over the body and flipping the body into the bag, then placing that bag inside another. Dispose of the body as you would regular garbage.

Animals found on or beside roadways are the responsibility of the Oakville and Milton Humane Society as per agreement with the Town of Oakville.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

It's important to remember that homes, particularly those backing onto natural areas, may provide many attractants for wildlife: the potential for food, shelter and other necessities. Tolerance and understanding is encouraged unless there is the threat of human health and safety or property damage. To discourage small mammals, there are a number of techniques for "wildlife proofing" your home or business. Fact sheets are provided on general wildlife proofing techniques and if a specific animal is involved, species fact sheets are available that may further assist in providing a better understanding as to why the behaviour is occurring and reducing the conflict.

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Luther, Erin, *Answering the Call of the Wild* (2010). Copies available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library; Environmental Policy Department (Town of Oakville) or for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with rabbits fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290773.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with raccoons fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290799.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with skunks fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290801.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with squirrels fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290775.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)

F) CONTACT

Oakville and Milton Humane Society (905) 845-1551

Toronto Wildlife Centre, Wildlife Hotline (416) 631- 0662

Town of Oakville, Parks and Open Space department (905) 845-6601, ext 3076

Town of Oakville, Facilities and Construction Management Department (905) 845-6601, ext 3339

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SPECIES AT RISK)

Species at risk may be identified both Federally or Provincially. Southern Ontario is fortunate to have one of the highest biodiversity rates in Canada, however, due to its high rate of population and development it also contains a high number of “at risk” species. These are indigenous animals, fish, birds, insects or plants whose numbers have decreased significantly over the years and who have been identified as being either threatened or endangered in their traditional range. The Halton Natural Areas Inventory was completed in 2006. This was a collaborative effort between the Hamilton Naturalists’ Club, the Halton-North Peel Naturalists’ Club, the South Peel Naturalists’ Club and Conservation Halton that mapped, inventoried, consolidated and made recommendations on Halton’s natural areas.

A) POTENTIAL ISSUES

- i) Private development: review of development proposals
- ii) Public development: infrastructure projects such as roads and buildings; maintenance activities such as right-of-ways and municipal drains

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

For details on the provincial *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) and the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), please refer to the legislative portion of the “Roles and Responsibilities” section of the Oakville Wildlife Strategy.

Federally, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assesses species to determine whether they are at risk. Once a species is listed under Schedule 1 of the SARA, it becomes illegal to kill, harass, capture or harm it in any way. Critical habitats are also protected from destruction. The Act also requires that recovery strategies, action plans and management plans be developed for all listed species.

Species listed as Endangered, Threatened or Extirpated species on The Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) list receive legal protection under the ESA. Providing legal protection to threatened species is a change from the original Act which only applied to endangered species. The new Act also provides protection for species habitats. When a species is classified endangered or threatened, the habitat of that species is protected under a general definition. The ESA 2007 further requires the creation of recovery strategies for endangered and

threatened species, and management plans for special concern species. These documents provide advice to the government on steps to take to protect and recover species at risk. The provincial government is still working on these plans, however, many have now been completed. For Oakville in particular, the Red Side Dace recovery strategy is of importance.

The SARA works in conjunction with the provincial Environmental Species Act (ESA). Normally, the SARA applies only on federal lands, to aquatic species listed under Schedule 1 or to migratory birds listed under Schedule 1 of the SARA. The exception to this is when “prohibitions could also be applied, through an order, to other species listed as endangered, threatened or extirpated in Schedule 1 of SARA when found on private land if provincial/territorial legislation or voluntary measures do not adequately protect the species and its residence. Public consultation would first be sought in accordance with normal federal government regulatory procedure” (SARA Public Registry). In general, the ESA would be the more restrictive Act of protection within Ontario.

Species are assessed twice a year by COSSARO. An up to date list of species at risk that may be present in the town (Deciduous Forest Region) can be found at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Species/2ColumnSubPage/276504.html

Section 2.1.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) notes that development and site alteration shall not be permitted in the significant habitat of endangered species and threatened species.

The Natural Heritage Reference Manual (NHRM) for Natural Heritage Policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 Second Edition (April 2010) provides technical guidance for implementing the natural heritage policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005. Section 5.0 deals with Significant Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species. While the PPS states that no development may occur in the significant habitat of endangered and threatened species, adjacent lands must also be considered. These are the lands relevant to which impacts must be considered and the compatibility of a proposed development or site alteration must be addressed. The Province recommends that adjacent lands are those lands within a minimum of 120 metres of the significant habitat of endangered or threatened species. This distance, however, is recommended only as the initial step in establishing an appropriate adjacent lands boundary.

The NHRM is available online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@lueps/documents/document/289522.pdf

C) DETAILED PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

I) PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT: REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Responsible Agencies:

Town of Oakville, Planning department; Town of Oakville, Development Engineering; Conservation Halton; Ministry of Natural Resources; Halton Region, Planning department

Conservation Halton reviews applications made under the Planning Act, through Permit applications made pursuant to Ontario Regulation 162/06, and reviewed under Section 35(1) of the Fisheries Act. Conservation Halton also provides comments to municipalities under Conservation Halton's Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the Region of Halton and its municipalities including Oakville (see Roles and Responsibilities, Section 5.5 of the Oakville Wildlife Strategy for more information).

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Conservation Halton reviews applications as they pertain to policy 2.1.3 (b), however, the Ministry of Natural Resources is responsible for the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Development applications in Oakville are subject to review by Conservation Halton who, under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), act as peer Review experts who will advise the town if there are any flags raised under the *Endangered Species Act*, the *Species at Risk Act* or regulations pertaining to the Conservation Authority's statutory responsibilities.

As per Part D, 16.1.1 (b) of Livable Oakville, any planning application to establish or expand a permitted use in a "Natural Area", that is not subject to the *Environmental Assessment Act*, requires an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Lands designated Natural Area are identified in Schedule B of Livable Oakville. They may contain any of a number of natural features, together with their required buffers.

As per the *Endangered Species Act* (2007) and Livable Oakville, development and site alteration are not permitted in the significant habitat of endangered or threatened species and development proposed within 120m requires an EIS to demonstrate there will be no negative impact on the habitat or its ecological function.

Recovery strategies are required to be prepared for endangered and threatened species within one or two years respectively of the species being added to the Species at Risk in Ontario list. A recovery strategy provides the best available scientific knowledge on what is required to achieve recovery of a species. Recovery Strategies that are currently in place (2011) that may impact development in Oakville include the Red Side Dace. Fourteen Mile Creek provides the preferred reddsides dace habitat consisting of gravel or stony substrates in a pool-riffle sequence, cool water and long overhanging grasses. They take refuge under overhanging banks, stumps and in cool pools. Historical records of this species date back to 1957 but records are as current at 2004. Redside dace have also been observed in the creeks in North Oakville (Halton Natural Areas Inventory, 2005).

The MNR should be contacted for up to date information on species at risk.

II) DEVELOPMENT ON PUBLIC PROPERTY (INCLUDING INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS SUCH AS ROADS AND BUILDINGS; MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS RIGHT-OF-WAYS AND MUNICIPAL DRAINS)

Responsible Agencies:

Town of Oakville, Planning department; Town of Oakville, Engineering and Construction; Town of Oakville, Roads and Works (roads and infrastructure); Town of Oakville, Capital Assets (buildings); Town of Oakville, Development Engineering; Conservation Halton; Ministry of Natural Resources; Halton Region, Planning department

Conservation Halton reviews applications made under the Planning Act, through Permit applications made pursuant to Ontario Regulation 162/06, and reviewed under Section 35(1) of the Fisheries Act. Conservation Halton also provides comments to municipalities under Conservation Halton's Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the Region of Halton and its municipalities including Oakville (see Roles and Responsibilities, Section 5.5 of the Oakville Wildlife Strategy for more information).

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Conservation Halton reviews applications as they pertain to policy 2.1.3 (b), however, they do not provide "clearance" on behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Ministry of Natural Resources is the only agency that can determine if an ESA permit is or is not required.

Should a species at risk (SAR) be found on the site or is known to inhabit a site, the ESA permit process is required to be initiated by the proponent and an ESA permit application submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources for a review. The Minister is the only one at this time who approves the permits and there are no guarantees that permit would be approved. If species that are listed as Endangered or Threatened under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) or listed under Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) are identified on lands that may be subject to impacts from infrastructure and/or maintenance projects, clearance from the Ministry of Natural Resources (and potentially the federal government, depending on the species) must be given prior to commencing work. Likewise, if any project is underway and a listed species is found, work must stop immediately in order to obtain clearance to proceed.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Ensure any work being done (whether private or public) is screened by Conservation Halton for the possible presence of listed species and/or their habitat.

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Ministry of Natural Resources, Draft Guidance for Development Activities in Redside Dace Protected Habitat (February, 2011). Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/groups/lr/@mnr/@species/documents/document/stdprod_082290.pdf
Integrated Halton Area Planning System, Memorandum of Understanding, Part 4 of 9 – Region, Area Municipality and Conservation Authority Review of Planning Applications as They Relate to The Natural Environment (February, 1999). Full document found online at www.conservationhalton.on.ca/uploads/Planning%20Permits/HASR%20MOU%20Feb%2012%2099%20HHS%20Version.pdf

Conservation Halton (and partners), Halton *Natural Areas Inventory* (2006). Copies of Volume 1 (Site Summaries) and Volume 2 (Species Checklists) are available through the Town of Oakville Environmental Policy department or for purchase through Conservation Halton.

Government of Canada, *Species at Risk Act* (2002). Available online at

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/S-15.3.pdf>.

Province of Ontario, *Endangered Species Act* (2007). Available online at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

Province of Ontario, Endangered Species Act Permit Process. Available online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@species/documents/document/stdprod_084992.pdf

F) CONTACT

Conservation Halton, Planning department (905) 336-1158

Environment Canada, Report Sightings of Species at Risk (800) 668-6767

Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora Office (905) 713-7400

Ministry of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) (705) 755-2159

WHITE TAILED DEER



Although not abundant throughout the town, in Oakville, white tailed deer can be found in areas such as Bronte Creek Provincial Park, the Shell Park area and north of Dundas Street. As development pressures increase, deer may be at risk of losing habitat which forces them into more urbanized settings (e.g. backyards, roadways, etc.).

It is important to recognize that conflicts can occur not only when deer are abundant across the entire landscape, but also when only a few deer exist on a single property. Also, the different perspectives and values that people place on deer will influence whether they perceive an interaction as being a conflict. For example, a landowner may feed and “protect” deer on his or her property, while neighbours may experience negative impacts such as deer damage or increased traffic hazards.

A) POTENTIAL ISSUES

- i) Vehicle/deer collisions
- ii) Deer foraging damaging property (gardens, trees and crops)
- iii) A deer is trapped (e.g. beside highways, in hydro fields or residential areas)
- iv) A deer has crashed through a plate glass window

B) LEGAL STATUS IN ONTARIO

While Section 31 (1) of the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* allows property owners to harass or kill wildlife if a person believes on reasonable grounds that wildlife is damaging or is about to damage the person’s property, **there is an exception to this for White tailed deer** under Section 31 (3) unless authorization (e.g. a permit) is obtained from the Minister (through the Ministry of Natural Resources). Note that these authorizations are only available to farmers and airports, are subject to conditions and not available to residential property owners. Hunting and/or trapping of deer is restricted to licensed trappers or those holding a valid hunting license in the Province of Ontario and must be in compliance with municipal no discharge of firearm by-laws. The Ministry of Natural Resources should be consulted for current hunting regulations.

C) DETAILED PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

Generally, conflicts with deer are minimal in the Town of Oakville as there are not significant deer populations and agricultural lands are limited.

I) VEHICLE/DEER COLLISIONS

Primary:

Halton Region Police Services, Oakville Milton Humane Society

Partners:

Toronto Wildlife Centre, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Road Ecology Group

Caution should be exercised when driving at dusk and dawn, along rural roads and particularly during the spring/fall seasons when deer collisions are highest, although there are typically few if any deer collisions in Oakville anymore. If a deer is hit fatally or if there has been damage to the vehicle, Halton Region Police Services should be contacted. Tell them exactly where you are and they will come and euthanize the animal if necessary. If the animal does not appear to be critically injured do not try to care for the animal yourself. The Oakville and Milton Humane Society and/or the Toronto Wildlife Centre should be contacted immediately.

The Ontario Road Ecology Group collects data on wildlife collisions. Information can be reported to them at www.torontozoo.com/conservation/RoadEcologyGroup.asp?pg=sighting

II) DEER FORAGING DAMAGING PROPERTY (GARDENS, TREES AND CROPS)

Primary:

Property owner

Partners:

Town of Oakville fact sheets (information only)

Property owners are responsible for managing issues on their own property. As with other conflict situations, prevention and education are the most effective strategies. See Preventive Measures below.

III) A DEER IS TRAPPED

Primary:

Property Owner (either to manage the situations as per the guidelines below or to contact one of the Partners listed below if further support is needed)

Partners:

Ministry of Natural Resources, Oakville and Milton Humane Society, Toronto Wildlife Centre

Deer seen in small bordered green spaces are often mistakenly assumed to be trapped. Deer are common in suburban areas and even in some urban pockets where their habitat needs can be met. It is uncommon that a deer seen behaving normally (e.g. walking around, grazing) is actually trapped, even if the area seems to be an unusual one. Even deer who appear panicked are not

usually truly trapped; deer sometimes wander into residential or industrial areas when those areas are quiet, and become stressed when activity around them increase. White tailed deer are an extremely high stress species, prone to injuring themselves and potentially others when chased or cornered.

The best way to help deer in these circumstances is to leave them alone and allow them to find their own way out when there is less human activity. Adult White tailed deer can jump fences that are 2.4m/8ft (and higher), although if they are panicked may not be able to clear this height. If the deer appear panicked (i.e. bolidng around or trying unsuccessfully to jump over barriers), people should be advised to clear the area immediately to allow the animal to calm down. Consult the Oakville and Milton Humane Society or the Ministry of Natural Resources if the deer does not leave the area over night. For further details, consult Answering the Call of the Wild by the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

IV) A DEER HAS JUST CRASHED THROUGH A PLATE GLASS WINDOW

Primary:

Property Owner

Partners:

Ministry of Natural Resources; Oakville and Milton Humane Society; Toronto Wildlife Centre; Halton Police Services

There are very few options for medically treating adult deer due to both their size and complications from their high stress levels. If the deer has suffered only minor injuries (i.e. a few cuts and scratches but no major wounds, bleeding or impaired movement), the best course of action is to usually let the deer exit the building by providing an open door to the outside. Ask that all people immediately vacate the building to allow the deer a chance to calm down and leave of its own accord. This may take hours or even overnight. Do not chase or coral deer toward a door or broken window as this will only cause the animal to panic and create a hazard for both the deer and people involved.

If the deer has significant injuries or there are problems with allowing exit to the building, contact the Oakville and Milton Humane Society, the Ministry of Natural Resources or the Toronto Wildlife Centre to assist in immobilizing and/or tranquilizing the deer and then treating/removing the animal from the building. If the deer has significant injuries where treatment is not possible, the last option is to contact the police to attend and humanely euthanize the deer via firearm.

D) PREVENTIVE MEASURES

FEEDING DEER (DON'T)

Although some people enjoy feeding the deer, it's not necessary and may be doing more harm than good.

- Using the wrong feed can result in digestive problems.
- Feeding may encourage more deer in an area than the habitat can support.
- Deer-vehicle collisions may occur as deer cross roads to and from feeders.
- Concentrating deer in an area increases the risk of disease transmission between animals.
- Deer are designed to store fat, reduce their metabolism and successfully process that fat in the winter, while feeding on natural foods according to their daily needs. If deer become dependent on artificial feed their metabolic rate increases and they require more food to survive.
- When artificial feeding stops, deer can die from the resulting stress.

DEER EXCLUSION TECHNIQUES

Fencing

Fencing yards, vegetable gardens and flowerbeds, or wrapping individual plants and shrubs, are the best methods to prevent deer damage. There are many effective fencing materials including snow fencing, plastic bird netting, burlap or wire mesh (chicken wire) and permanent woven-wire or wood fencing with gates that can provide protection from deer.

Repellents

Repellents help prevent deer from feeding on vegetables, flowers, ornamental shrubs and trees. A wide variety of repellents are available, in two different categories:

- area repellents which repel by smell, and can be applied near plants and shrubs, and;
- contact repellents which are applied directly onto plants and shrubs and repel by taste (taste aversion).

The effectiveness of commercial or homemade repellents depends on the number of deer, their feeding habits and weather conditions. Contact repellents are more effective than area repellents. Most repellents must be reapplied on a regular basis to be effective. Property owners should still expect some damage, even when repellents are used.

Deer-smart Landscaping and Gardening

If deer are hungry, they will eat most types of vegetation, however, they are selective feeders that prefer some plants to others. To minimize damage to vegetable gardens, ornamental plants, shrubs and trees, try gardening with plants that deer usually avoid. Some of these include:

- vegetables — cucumber, onion, hot pepper, sweet pepper, tomato
- annuals — amaranth, dusty miller, marigold, snapdragon, zinnia
- perennials — bleeding-heart, chrysanthemum, foxglove, ornamental grasses, sage
- woody plants — Colorado blue spruce, dogwoods, junipers, pines, paper birch

A number of native plants are less palatable to deer and include yarrow, goldenrod, Canada milk vetch and nodding wild onion. Another option is to plant vegetation that is palatable to the deer to lure them away from your garden.

Further information is available through the town's Wildlife Fact Sheets, Living with white tailed deer.

E) SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Luther, Erin, *Answering the Call of the Wild* (2010). Copies available at all branches of the Oakville Public Library; Environmental Policy Department (Town of Oakville) or for purchase through the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (1997)

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Strategy for Preventing and Managing Human-Deer Conflicts in Southern Ontario*, (2008). Available online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/244545.pdf

Province of Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources, *Living with deer fact sheet*. Found online at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@mnr/@fw/documents/document/290800.pdf

Town of Oakville, *By-law 2010-156, A By-law to Regulate the Discharge of Firearms*

F) CONTACT

Conservation Halton (905) 336-1158

Halton Police Services (905)825-4777

Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora Office (905) 713-7400

Oakville and Milton Humane Society (905) 845-1551

Toronto Wildlife Centre, Wildlife Hotline (416) 631- 0662

