

Winter 2022



About Ewing Township Animal Control

Officers work under the auspices of the Ewing Township Health Department. There are 2 full time officers who respond to over 600 complaints a year. Officers work to provide for public safety by preventing wildlife and nuisance animals from endangering the community.

Animal Control

Emergencies

Phone:

609-883-2900 X7175

After hours call

609-882-1313

Officers are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including weekends and holidays.



Living with Vultures in Ewing Township of Ewing, New Jersey

Turkey Vulture - Cathartes aura

Ewing Township is fortunate to be home to many species of wildlife that all our citizens can enjoy watching daily from the windows of their homes without having to travel to a public park or wildlife preserve. These may include squirrels, raccoons and songbirds to the occasional red fox or coyote and many whitetail deer.

As beautiful as these animals are and interesting to watch and observe, there is always a downside to having such a diverse wildlife population in a suburban environment. The abundance of wildlife also comes with a mortality risk when they begin to move within their home range crossing many of our busy roads. When the unfortunate roadkill happens, often the “first responders” are Mother Nature’s cleanup crew. The “evening shift” for cleaning up road killed wildlife is often our fox or coyote population. The “day shift” is taken over by our ample vulture population.

Ewing Township has two (2) species of vulture in residence, the Turkey Vulture (*cathartes aura*), a larger bird easily identified by its red and featherless face, and the Black Vulture (*coragyps atratus*), which is slightly smaller resembling a very large crow. While Mother Nature’s cleanup crew perform a necessary service to the community, they do come with some baggage. While the “evening shift” (coyotes, fox) are more reclusive during the daylight hours and are rarely seen by the public, the “day shift” (vultures) are often seen along roads and back yards doing their job.

Black Vultures

Problems begin to arise when the day shift vultures go home to roost for the night. Often the roosting areas they call home are the trees and roof tops of our residents' homes. Birds as large as these roosting on houses and adjoining trees bring with them certain challenges, including defecating on porches and decks, and structural damage to roof tops. These are not the wildlife most residents enjoy or care to deal with.



This is when complaints begin to come into the Animal Control Department. It's important to know that all vultures are protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Act 1918 ***"It is illegal to take, kill, or possess vultures and violation of the law is punishable by a fine of up to \$15,000 and imprisonment of up to six months"*** Keeping Federal law and regulation in mind, there are certain steps or exclusionary procedures the homeowner can take to alleviate conflicts with vultures.

First, and most important, ***"ALL TRASH MUST BE SECURED."*** What do we mean by secured? By nature, vultures' main meals usually consist of carrion, or what we may call roadkill or dead animals. When residents provide easy meals by not securing trash, our vultures and other wildlife, such as raccoons, skunks and opossums will take the opportunity for an easy meal. All trash should remain in a garage or secure shed until trash pick-up day. Trash should be put to the curb in secure metal or plastic containers with lids, *not in trash bags*.

Do not leave standing food for domestic animals outside. If you must feed your pet outside, pick up the remains immediately after the pet finishes dinner. Remember you are not just feeding your pet if you leave food out.

Do not feed wildlife except for bird seed in feeders. All bird feeders should be at least 10' off the ground. Although we do not have a resident black bear population, we do have the occasional passerby. Bears love bird seed!

Exclusionary Techniques

To prevent roosting on houses, spike strips may be installed along the crest of the roof. CD's or other reflective objects may be hung in trees as a deterrent. Also, vultures don't like to view another deceased vulture, a vulture effigy hung upside down in a tree is often enough of a deterrent to send any roosting vultures looking for another home.

Additional Information

For further information or assistance with nuisance vultures please contact the following agency:

United States Department of Agriculture
N.J. Wildlife Services
140C Locust Grove Road
Pittstown N.J. 08867
908-735-5654 x17