



RAPTORS ARE THE SOLUTION FACT SHEET: ALTERNATIVES TO POISON



Photo by Verne Nelson

HELP PRESERVE BIRDS OF PREY BY NOT USING POISON

Birds of prey are increasingly being poisoned when they eat rats and mice that have consumed poison bait—whether loose pellets or bait in “bait boxes.” Common brand names sold over the counter include D-Con Concentrate Kills Rats & Mice, D-Con Ready Mixed Kills Rats & Mice, D-Con Mouse Prufe Kills Mice, D-Con Pellets Kills Rats & Mice, D-Con Mouse Prufe Ii, D-Con Pellets Generation Ii, D-Con Bait Pellets Ii, D-Con Ready Mixed Generation Ii, D-Con Mouse-Prufe Iii, D-Con Bait Pellets Iii, D-Con Ii Ready Mix Baitbits Iii, D-Con Bait Packs Iii, Generation Meal Bait Packs, Difethialone Bait Station, Difethialone 6g Paste PI Pks, Rid-A-Rat Rat & Mouse Killer, Hot Shot Sudden Death Brand Mouse Killer, Hot Shot Sudden

Death Brand Rat Killer 1, Hot Shot Sudden Death Brand Rat & Mouse Killer, Hot Shot Sudden Death Brand Mouse Killer Bait Station.

Raptors are the solution but... they can't be the whole solution. Any time you see a "bait box" with an exit hole—beware. Rats and mice can "check in," eat poison, and then check out, easily becoming food for a hawk, owl, other wildlife, or your pet cat or dog. Bait boxes are NOT safe for wildlife unless you get them from a company that uses snap traps inside of them—most do not. Glue traps are inhumane and have also been known to kill birds.

Most of the large, common pest control companies still use poison in their bait boxes because the EPA has not been able to take those products off the market since the manufacturers have sued them. Alternatives to poison include hiring companies that do NOT use poison but instead use snap traps (sometimes enclosed in boxes) and who come back and check the traps. In the Bay Area, those companies include The Hit Men, Pestec, and Biopest (outside of the Bay Area, try googling "integrated pest management").

The Hit Men

<http://www.hitmenpest.com/>

Pestec

<http://www.pestec.com/>

Biopest

<http://www.bio-pest.com/>

There are many brands of inexpensive snap traps (most of which can be re-used). Here is just one example:

<http://www.acehardware.com/product/index.jsp?productId=3132844>

Other tips on discouraging rats: Pick up bird seed waste in your yard—feed birds with seed blocks or cakes instead of bulk seed—those products leave less seed on the ground. Remove ivy—rats thrive in it—and replace it with native plants that offer wildlife habitat. Do not leave pet food out and make sure garbage bags are tied tightly and secured—if you live in or manage an apartment building, make sure that dumpsters are kept closed at all times and preferably locked.

Consider installing a barn owl box—but ONLY if everyone in your neighborhood commits to not using poison. See also www.hungryowl.org for more information and tips.

Thanks to Verne Nelson for the gorgeous Cooper's hawk photo.