



Audubon Society of Rhode Island

Safe and effective alternatives to manage rodents

Integrated pest management is the safest and best way to control rodent populations in Rhode Island. Before you start, it's important to know the extent of the issue and what combination of methods will be most effective. For example, it's not cost-effective, nor humane, to take drastic outdoor measures if a location has a few indoor rodents.

Get rodents to move out, and keep them out

Residents and business owners can use the following proven ways to prevent rodents from moving into your property, inside or out:

- **Buildings:** Seal all holes in roofs, walls, foundation, crawl spaces, and sheds. Seal openings around pipes, cables, and electrical wires that enter walls and foundations. Use wire mesh or hardware cloth to cover plumbing vent stacks, under porches, or crawl space entrances.
- **Landscaping:** Cut branches back three feet away from roof and remove ivy, leaf piles and debris from property.
- **Food:** Remove food and water sources, including bird seed.
- **Trash:** Keep trash secure by keeping lids on cans and dumpsters at all times, and ensuring trash is picked up consistently and effectively.

Dry ice, strobe lights, cayenne pepper, and numerous all-natural repellents are available to get rodents to leave a property. The Audubon Society can recommend products that offer safer alternatives.

Reduce rodent births

Population control

ContraPest, sold by SenseTech, is EPA-registered and available to both licensed pest managers and consumers to manage rat populations by reducing births. The compound does not kill rats, rather, it's consumed and greatly slows their reproduction rate as they continue to consume it. The company says its compound is non-toxic and poses no danger to other animals or the environment. Delivered over time, the product has reduced populations by 95%, according to SenseTech's own research. The Parker EcoPest Control team conducted a seven-month trial on a test site and reduced the population by 91%.

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Increase rodent deaths

Promote natural predators

Rhode Island is home to many birds of prey that consume rodents daily, including owls, hawks, eagles and peregrine falcons, blue herons, and others. Just one family of barn owls can eat 3,000 rodents in one breeding season, and one Great Horned Owl can eat 4,000 mice in one year.

Stakeholders can attract more owls to their property by installing a nest box (as long as there are no rodenticides within a 1.5 mile radius). The Audubon Society of Rhode Island can advise on the best type of box based on location and local habitat.

Use of humane traps

Use snap traps or electric traps indoors or in outdoor locations where pets, wildlife and children cannot reach them, like inside a garage. Avoid using glue traps because they cause horrific suffering and also trap other wildlife, including songbirds.

Cities around the U.S. are embracing the new Internet of Things (IoT) smart traps, which can be placed above ground or in sewers, and continuously transmit data about rodent conditions and the number of rodents killed by blunt force or electric shock, which are both quicker and more humane ways.

Let's talk about alternatives

Audubon Society of Rhode Island is committed to assisting municipalities in determining safe and effective alternatives that work for their city or town. Please reach out to Phoenix Wheeler (they/them), Director of Advocacy with any questions: pwheeler@asri.org.

More resources

- [Rodent Pest Prevention: A Resource Guide to Prevent and Maintain a Pest-Free Providence](#)
- [How to Control Wild Rodent Infestations \(CDC\)](#)

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