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Copesan is an alliance of premier pest management companies that are united as a single entity for the sole purpose of providing quality pest solutions to businesses with locations throughout North America.

Bird watching: Steps to keep birds out of facilities

By Gerry Wegner, Technical Director, Pro-Guard Commercial Pest Solutions, Columbus, Ohio, and David Sexton, Technical Director, Gregory Pest Prevention, Greenville, South Carolina

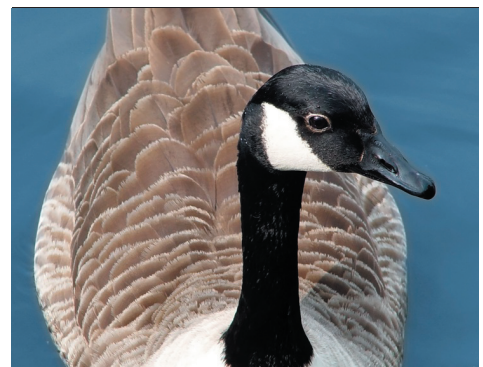
When you’re enjoying the colors of the trees in autumn, birds probably help to make your nature walk more enjoyable. Yet, like other wildlife, birds can become pests when they find their way into food manufacturing plants and other facilities where they can cause damage, contamination and transmit disease.

The most common pest birds – pigeons, European starlings, English (house) sparrows, and the Canada goose – can cause a wide range of problems for facility managers, including:

- **Fire hazards.** Nesting can create fire hazards when nesting material is next to wiring, causing extensive damage to structures, roofs, eaves, and machinery.
- **Safety concerns.** Birds that frequent airport and military base runways sometimes get sucked into jet engine intakes, which may force an aircraft down.
- **Contamination.** Bird droppings and feathers can contaminate the human and pet food supply at all stages of processing and packaging at food manufacturing plants and storage facilities.
- **Property damage.** Bird droppings often deface property by creating unsightly stains that are difficult to remove from building surfaces.
- **Health threat.** Accumulations of

bird droppings in buildings and on soil pose a health threat to humans when they become a growth medium for the air-borne pathogens *Histoplasma capsulatum* fungi, which results in histoplasmosis – an incurable disease, and *Chlamydia psittaci* bacteria, which results in ornithosis (also known as psittacosis).

• **Disease transmission.** Birds host parasites and insect pests that can bite humans. For example, pigeons carry a variety of disease organisms,



including toxoplasmosis, encephalitis, *Salmonella typhimurium*.

Why birds take roost

Buildings have structural features that provide the physical requirements sought after by several bird species, which include:

- A secure place to rest with a commanding view of the ground and

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surroundings

- Recesses and cavities in which to nest that offer protection from the elements
- Access to an abundant food supply, in many cases

Bird prevention steps

What steps should facilities take to keep birds out?

- Close all doors and access points when not in use.
- Repair or cover structural features and flaws conducive to roosting, nesting, and entry, such as construction gaps, vents, and piping.
- Daily clean up spills of cereals, grains, seeds, and other foods that attract birds into and around food processing plants.

You can also render exterior structural features unsuitable for bird loafing, roosting, staging, and nesting by:

- Strategically anchoring sheets of bird netting
- Using bird spikes to prevent roosting in retail signs and other areas
- Installing closely-spaced arrays of stretched or coiled wire
- Mounting devices that deliver a mild electric shock upon contact
- Applying polybutene sticky repellents on roofs and building edges
- Using chemical repellents based on optical and taste properties
- Installing motion- or sound-based intimidation devices

When birds fly in

Depending on third-party auditor criteria and local regulations, birds already within buildings can be removed by using:

- Live-netting systems
- Trapping with nest box traps
- Shooting, where applicable, by a marksman
- Structural or chemical repellents

Contact Copesan

For help with eliminating bird pests in your facility, contact Copesan or your local Copesan Service Center to determine the approach that is best for your facility and your situation. When you call, also ask for a copy of Copesan's new bird management program brochure.



EPA rodenticide restrictions are coming soon

By Jay Bruesch, Technical Director, Plunkett's Pest Control, Minneapolis, Minnesota

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is scheduled to make a decision on new risk mitigation measures to reduce the possible exposure of children and non-target wildlife to rodenticides. Although we may see them earlier, the EPA's proposed label changes could take effect as late as Spring, 2009.

So what effect will these measures have on the integrated

pest management (IPM) industry and what concerns do they pose to consumers?

Industry Effects

In the short-term, the new measures may be good for the IPM industry because they will take the most effective products out of the hands of consumers. This will force consumers to call a pest management company

for their pest control needs or, in some cases, purchase higher-priced retail pest control products.

The pest management industry's strength has always been that it understands pest biology and knows how to properly use pesticides and other available tools to achieve the most effective, long-term pest control. Because the strength of the industry has never been that it can access the

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best pesticides, the initial benefit of additional business will be superficial.

Also, while Copesan's IPM specialists are all state certified to use Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs), farmers, ranchers, city employees and some pest management specialists will need to be trained, tested and certified to purchase or use rodenticides that become RUPs.

Potential Health Concern

With the proposed measures, certain rodenticides will only be available for sale to consumers if they are packaged in tamper-resistant, pre-loaded bait stations. This is an effort to protect children from accidentally being exposed to them.



The EPA reports that 12,000 to 15,000 children per year are accidentally exposed to rodenticide of some kind. It is believed that most of these exposures are due to consumer-purchased products rather than professionally applied products.

The rodenticide manufacturing industry, however, is concerned that these restrictions will take the product out of the hands of lower-income consumers who

need to buy inexpensive rodenticides. They are concerned that if lower-income communities do not get the rodent control they need, rodents will eventually become a worse health threat than use of the rodenticides would be.

Stay Tuned

Once the EPA reviews all of the comments it has received and decides on the final risk mitigation language, rodenticide manufacturers will then be required to make label changes. Depending on when the final ruling is released, the new rodenticide labels might not actually be seen for a couple years.



Protect yourself against LCM, a rodent-borne viral disease, with the facts

By Jay Bruesch, Technical Director, Plunkett's Pest Control, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Lymphocytic choriomeningitis, or LCM, is a rodent borne viral disease that has received recent attention due to several high-profile cases. The virus is primarily transmitted by the house mouse, but there have also been cases of transmission by pet rodents.

The Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 5 percent of house mouse populations are infected with the virus. The National Pest Management Association (NPMA), in conjunction with Purdue University, is currently funding some additional studies of house mice.

How is LCM transmitted?

Similar to the Hanta virus, LCM is transmitted through contact with rodent droppings, urine, nesting materials, or saliva. The viral particles may be inhaled or enter the body through open cuts or wounds. There are no known cases of transmission from one person to another.

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What are the symptoms?

While infected rodents develop no symptoms, infection symptoms in humans can range from no visible signs to swelling of the brain and/or spinal column. Milder symptoms may include fever, muscle ache, headache, nausea, and vomiting. Other less frequent symptoms include a sore throat, cough, joint pain, chest pain, testicular pain, and parotid or salivary gland pain.

Mortality rates are less than 1 percent, but the disease can be particularly devastating for pregnant females who contract it because it has the potential for causing birth defects.

How can you avoid infection?

LCM infection can be



prevented by avoiding contact with house mice and taking precautions when handling pet rodents, i.e. mice, hamsters, or guinea pigs.

Research also reinforces the need for an excellent rodent pest management program that is serviced by knowledgeable and trained IPM specialists who have the proper health and safety equipment.

For example, to protect against LCM, specialists may use a HEPA respirator, gloves, and disinfectant when coming into contact with rodents or rodent-contaminated areas, as well as taking steps to avoid inhaling contaminated dust, double-bagging mice for disposal, and washing hands with soap and water after handling rodents or contaminated surfaces.

Want more answers?

For more information on LCM, visit the CDC site at www.cdc.gov.



Millions of honeybees are dying of a mysterious cause

By Dr. Bart Foster, Technical and Training Manager, Bill Clark Pest Control, Beaumont, Texas

Honeybees are disappearing across North America. In fact, some beekeepers have lost up to 80 percent of their colonies to the mysterious “Colony Collapse Disorder.”

Why are honeybees disappearing, and what effect will this

have on food production in the United States? These questions remain unanswered as researchers seek to discover the cause behind unexplained bee losses.

A shortage of bees to pollinate crops could impact both producers and consumers of agricultural

products. Bee pollination is responsible for more than \$15 billion dollars of increased crop production each year in the United States, making it an important link in the chain that brings fruits, vegetables, and nuts to our supermarkets and dinner tables.

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Beekeepers began noticing the Colony Collapse Disorder at the end of 2006. Since that time, the disorder has been reported in more than 20 states. The main symptom is simply a low number of adult honey bees in a hive that otherwise seems normal.

Several ideas and theories exist as to the cause of Colony Collapse Disorder.

- The disorder is due to a new parasite or pathogen.
- Some pesticides used on crops may be having unexpected negative effects.
- A combination of factors such as parasites and disease, coupled with more intensive honeybee management practices.



Since the 1980s, general honeybee health in the United States has declined due to the spread of certain mites and diseases. During this time, the demand for pollinating hives has increased. As a result, hives are packaged and moved over long distances to areas where crops are grown. Overcrowding and stress amplify the negative effects of mites and pathogens.

Some researchers suggest that these factors may be producing a “perfect storm” that is responsible for recent bee losses. Currently, there are still enough bees to meet the needs of most producers but continued losses will begin to impact crop production.

Research is underway to determine the exact cause and some possible remedies for Colony Collapse Disorder. Only time will unravel the mystery of this honeybee phenomenon.



Information in this publication was researched and prepared by highly regarded experts within the pest management industry who are part of the Copesan Partnership. Copesan has more technical expertise located throughout North America than any other pest management firm. The IPM Update is a small sampling of the knowledge and expertise we provide to our clients. Information in this newsletter is copyright protected and may not be reprinted without permission.

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