

Thinking Outside the Bait Box

By Christine Cummings, Director

A Place Called Hope-Bird of Prey Center- Killingworth, CT

A Place Called Hope admits countless victims of rodenticide poisoning who die in our arms after ingesting lethal rodents, mammals, and songbirds- the primary diet for most birds of prey. Their meals, tainted with potent ingredients which make up Anticoagulant Rodenticide poisons, cause victims to slowly bleed to death.

First/Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides are a profitable method meant to target active rodent issues or used as a preventative measure, even when rodents are not present.

If you look around the perimeter of any man-made structure you will see the recklessly placed bait boxes that line the foundations of grocery stores, commercial buildings, housing complexes, etc. Pest management providers and chemical companies perpetuate the myth that bait boxes are the answer to preventing structural damage or to stop a health crisis. They neglect to mention the damaging effects these poisons inflict on non-targeted victims- small

children, domesticated pets, and our wildlife or how they ultimately harm our environment.

Poisons have never solved rodent problems. Putting poisonous ingredients into a delicious bait only attracts foraging critters. Since anticoagulants can take days to cause victims to die, their compromised condition makes them easy prey for various predators such as fox, owls, or hawks. These predators have now ingested the poisons secondhand, and they too will slowly suffer the same deadly fate. If the victim is not consumed, their contaminated bodies decompose and leach toxins into the soil or water.

Predators are designed to take advantage of the compromised to conserve energy and balance our ecosystem. Our wildlife does not stand a chance against non-discriminating poisons in the food chain. Killing the very animals designed to regulate rodents makes no sense when there are proven long term solutions available.

Choosing multiple non-toxic strategies in combination with sanitation/exclusion work has always been the answer, but too many want short cuts. The truth is poisons only encourage a rodent population explosion since their reaction to a rapid die off is to multiply. This keeps chemical companies or the service providers in business since the rodent problem is never really solved.

The newest non-toxic alternative we are advocating is Fertility Control for rodents. Contraceptol is already available to the public and others are coming to market. This safe method affects reproduction and poses no threat to predators, domestic pets, children or the environment. To be effective, fertility control products must be continuously supplied, so pest management providers can still offer customers repeat service.

California is the first State to eliminate Anticoagulant Rodenticides and there has been no rodent outbreaks or public health crises- proof that we *can* protect wildlife without compromising public health.

In 2025, legislation to ban SGARS in Connecticut will be reintroduced. You can help by contacting State Senators and Representatives to ask them to support the bill and by *Thinking Outside the Bait Box*.

More safe non-toxic alternatives along with sanitation/exclusion techniques can be found on our website at www.aplacecalledhoperaptors.com

[Click here](#) to see CFA's Fact Sheet about SGAR's