



VILLAGE PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
WILD ANIMAL POLICY

Adopted by the Board August 22, 2019

This document describes the Association's findings and policies in regard to the following commonly-encountered wild animals in the Association: coyotes, rabbits, squirrels, rats and migratory waterfowl (ducks / geese). Please contact the VPCA office with any questions on this policy.

Major source / reference: University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Integrated Pest Management Program. www.ipm.ucanr.edu.

COYOTES

Description. Coyotes are medium-sized members of the dog family, larger than foxes but smaller than wolves. Males are larger than females, typically 20-35 lbs. when full grown, while females are about 18-25 lbs. They stand approximately 18" high at the shoulders. Coloration is usually a blend of rust-colored to brown to gray. Coyotes have a long, narrow snout and a bushy, black-tipped tail.

Negative impact(s). Coyote diets are diverse and adaptable. They are able to attack and kill large prey. Some coyotes learn to kill livestock and pets and will do so repeatedly unless corrective action is taken. Domestic cats and dogs are vulnerable to coyote predation. They will also feed on rabbits, rodents, garbage, pet food, and the seeds and fruits of garden plants and trees. Studies of these incidents reveal that when coyotes are not harassed, they become accustomed to the presence of people and follow a predictable pattern of increasing aggression. Coyotes inured to human presence will stalk and attack children as well as pets being walked on leashes. As early as 2007, UCANR reported that these behaviors and attacks were particularly becoming more frequent in suburban Southern California, and the frequency of incidents in our area has only increased since then.

Legal Status. Coyotes have no special protection in California and may be killed by any method that is not prohibited by federal, state or local statutes. The only legal method available to the Association is removal and killing of specific coyotes by a licensed predator control specialist operating under specific permit.

VPCA program. VPCA regularly educates its residents about the presence and dangers of suburban coyotes, and measures to take to avoid attacks, in the *Villager* newsletter, new resident welcome packets, at www.vpca.net and on www.nextdoor.com, etc. Through the vigilance and reporting of VPCA staff and residents, VPCA legally contracts for the removal of coyotes it deems pose a heightened risk to pets and persons. The Association reports coyote sightings to Irvine Animal Services and encourages residents to do so, as well (see below for Animal Services' contact info).

RABBITS

Description. Eight species of rabbits are found in California. The rabbits encountered in VPCA are almost always Desert Cottontails or Brush Rabbits.

Negative impact(s). Both types of rabbit eats grass, ornamental plants, vegetable plants and some herbs. They will damage young shrubs, trees and vines by gnawing on bark and girdling their branches, causing die-back. They will sometimes gnaw on sprinkler lines, especially small diameter tubes. Their urine and fecal pellets damage turf areas. They can carry the disease tularemia, or Rabbit Fever, which is relatively rare in humans, but it can be contracted by handling an infected rabbit.

Legal Status. CDFG code classifies rabbits as game mammals. They can be taken by any legal means if they are found damaging growing crops or other property. None of the legal means available to the Association to take rabbits will likely prove effective (though coyotes and hawks prey on rabbits). Exclusion: erecting and maintaining physical barriers to prevent rabbits' access to an area—is a sure means to prevent rabbit damage. Some types of rabbit barriers are unsightly.

VPCA program. VPCA selectively prevents and mitigates rabbit damage by excluding rabbits from the East Pool Area and by reseeding / replanting damaged turf / landscaping. VPCA has adopted the following exclusion products for common area and individual lot use. Owners may install these products without application to the ACC in the following manner: if the fencing is mounted on a perimeter fence or gate, it shall be installed flush to the inside of the fence or gate using matching black cable (zip) ties with the ends closely trimmed.

<https://www.amazon.com/Fencer-Wire-Gauge-Coated-Welded/dp/B008CJ09YS>

<https://www.amazon.com/Fencer-Wire-Gauge-Coated-Welded/dp/B00CPRTP8O>

<https://www.critterfence.com/p/623-Critterfence-Black-Steel-1-Inch-Grid-2-x-100.aspx>

SQUIRRELS

Description. The squirrels encountered in VPCA are of two types: ground squirrels and tree squirrels. Ground squirrels have prominent, mottled markings and narrow tails. They will generally will escape on the ground toward a burrow. Tree squirrels have very bushy tails and fewer markings. They never burrow and will escape most often by climbing.

Negative impact(s). Both types of squirrel will eat or damage many types of garden fruits, vegetables and ornamental plants. They will damage young shrubs, trees and vines by gnawing on bark and girdling their branches, causing die-back. They will gnaw on sprinkler heads, irrigation boxes and lines. Their burrowing can damage and undermine shrubs and trees, create trip hazards for pedestrians, and mar lawns, degrading their beauty and making them more difficult to mow. Squirrels can harbor transmittable parasites and diseases, especially when populations are high.

Legal Status. CDFG code classifies ground squirrels as non-game mammals. They can be taken by any legal means if they are found damaging growing crops or other property. Of the various legal means available to the Association, toxic baiting would most likely be the most effective. The code differentiates among four species of tree squirrels. The tree squirrel common to VPCA is the Eastern fox squirrel: its legal status and control methods are the same as for ground squirrels.

VPCA program. VPCA does control for the number of squirrels in the common area. Their ability to climb makes area exclusion impractical. The Association will continue to monitor and assess the impacts of squirrels the advisability of measures to impact their numbers or activity.

RODENTS (RATS)

Description. The most troublesome rats in California are the Norway Rat and the Roof Rat. Both were introduced. Norway rats are the larger of the two. They have a blunt nose, small eyes and small ears. They burrow under woodpiles, etc., foundations, or in moist foliage-covered areas. When found in buildings, they usually remain on the ground floor. Roof rats are slightly smaller than Norway Rats. Their tails are longer than their head and body combined. They have comparatively larger eyes and ears and pointed noses. They are agile climbers and usually live and nest above ground in shrubs, trees, and dense vegetation. In buildings, they are often found in enclosed or elevated spaces such as attics, walls, false ceilings and cabinets.

Negative impact(s). Both types of rat will eat and contaminate foodstuffs, get into garbage, eat fruits, and can carry and transmit parasites and diseases. They cause considerable damage by gnawing on various materials: house and vehicle engine-compartment wires, wood, plastic, soft metals, etc.

Legal status. Norway Rats and Roof rats have no legal protection and can be killed by any method that is not prohibited by federal, state or local statutes. A successful rat control strategy typically includes three elements: sanitation measures; building construction and rodent proofing; and, if necessary, population control. The most effective and viable population control method available to the Association is toxic baiting.

VPCA program. VPCA employs the three measures listed above in its rat control program. It has performs rodent exclusion / proofing on the Clubhouse, Main Cabana / Office and East Cabana, and is extending the effort to other common area structures and trash receptacles. It contracts with a licensed pest control company to control the rat population at the Main and East recreation areas only using rodent-targeted bait stations. The stations are locked and are inspected on a regular basis. Dead rats that are found or reported in the common area will be promptly removed. The rat population and control program are reviewed on a periodic basis with the goal of utilizing the minimum-necessary control effort.

MIGRATORY WATERFOWL (DUCKS AND GEESE)

Description. The Association is periodically visited by two types of migrating waterfowl that impact the common area: most often ducks, usually Mallards, with the males having bright green head feathers, and less often Canadian Geese, which are white with black markings and bills. These birds arrive in January and February to mate, nest and raise their young. They leave by early spring. Only one pair of ducks, or one pair of ducks with one a pair of Geese, are present each season.

Negative impact(s): Ducks and geese introduce droppings into pool water and onto the pool deck, which are a nuisance.

Legal status. Migratory ducks and geese are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Act of 1918 and related laws and regulations and by similar State laws and regulations. It is illegal to take, harass or disturb nesting migratory ducks and geese, and we typically see these birds only during their nesting season. Property owners can take measures before the breeding season to make their property less inviting. However, the various devices and objects (e.g., floating alligators, etc.) that are designed to scare off the birds are usually ineffective in large pools.

VPCA program. Pool water is treated continuously and the volume of water and chemicals render harmless the limited amounts of feces deposited in the pool. Staff clean up droppings on the deck when seen or reported. Exit devices are laid at pool edge when ducklings are seen struggling to exit the water.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Animal Services and wildlife:

The City of Irvine's Animal Services field operation is part of the Police Department. Animal Services' efforts are mainly devoted to dealing with domestic pet issues. They are not licensed to trap or relocate healthy wildlife and therefore do not provide these services. Animal Services will respond to situations regarding any wildlife that is sick, injured, or has had physical contact with a human or domestic animal.

Dead Animals. Animal Services does not remove dead animals. Owners are responsible to remove and dispose of dead animals from their own lots (as part of the effort to combat West Nile Virus, OC Vector Control will pick up birds that appear to you to have died within the previous 24 hours). If you observe a dead animal in the common area, please promptly report it to the office, which will arrange for its removal.

City of Irvine Animal Services website: <https://www.cityofirvine.org/ipd-divisions-bureaus-units/animal-services>

"The Irvine Animal Services field operation is an integral part of the Irvine Police Department. The Animal Services program is committed to protecting people and animals, and promoting humane animal care and treatment. This is accomplished through both education and enforcement. By responding promptly to calls for service

and routinely patrolling the city, we are able to effectively serve the needs of the community.

“Services Provided

- Patrol the City; enforce local, state and federal regulations.
- Respond to citizen complaints
- Transport injured animals to care facilities
- Pick up stray and abandoned animals
- Return stray animals to owners when possible
- Investigate, and complete animal bite reports and initiate quarantines.
- Investigate and prepare cases for court
- Regulate animal establishments, livestock, wild, exotic and non-domesticated animals.
- Issue animal licenses
- Assists in city sponsored vaccination clinics
- Promote pet responsibility and kindness to all living creatures”

Hours: 7 days a week | 7 am - 10 pm

IPD Dispatch (Calls for Service):	949-724-7200
Animal Services Supervisor:	949-724-7091
Animal Services Unit:	949-724-7092
Irvine Animal Care Center:	949-724-7440

ORANGE COUNTY MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

Definition of a vector. A vector is any insect or other arthropod, rodent or other animal of public health significance capable of harboring or transmitting the causative agents of human disease, or capable of causing human discomfort or injury.

Mission. The mission of the Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District is to provide the citizens of Orange County with the highest level of protection from vectors and vector-borne diseases.

District website: <https://www.ocvector.org>

Hours of Operations: Monday - Thursday: 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Friday: 7:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Saturday - Sunday: Closed

Phone numbers: (714) 971-2421 or (949) 654-2421
Mailing address: 13001 Garden Grove Boulevard, Garden Grove CA 92843

The Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District provides services for:

Dead birds. If you find a dead bird, and it appears to have died within the last 24 hours, carefully, and without touching the bird, place the carcass in a plastic bag and put it in a cool or shady place. Between 7:00am and 3:00pm on Monday through Thursday, and 7:00am and 12:00pm on Friday, please contact the District at 714.971.2421, extension

4552 Michelson Dr., Irvine CA 92612
Ph: 949-786-8722 Fax: 949-786-8072

117 or send an e-mail to wnsurv@ocvector.org (please include a daytime phone number in the e-mail). We must speak with someone directly to coordinate a pick-up. After hours and on weekends and holidays, we will return the call as soon as possible.

Others services: After the initial assessment of your request, a representative will contact you for a consultation.

Mosquitoes. If necessary, an Inspector will be dispatched to inspect your property (or the reported location) to identify potential mosquito breeding sources. Guidance will be offered regarding long-term control and source reduction. Inspectors will also address other potential sources in the immediate vicinity. Click [here](#) to learn how to address mosquito issues on your own property. The District can also provide Mosquito fish for use on private property.

Rats. An Inspector will examine your property to identify potential rat food sources, harborage sites and structural access points. Guidance will be offered regarding the reduction of conditions favorable to rats. Inspectors do not place poison bait or perform repair work. Click [here](#) to learn how to address rat issues on your own property. Please Note: The Rat Program will be seasonally suspended from July 1st to November 25th due to increased mosquito workload.

Red Imported Fire Ants (RIFA). An Inspector will visit the mound site and determine if RIFA are present. Once positively identified, a pesticide treatment will be performed. It may take up to one month for the colony to become inactive. Click [here](#) to learn more about RIFA.

Flies. An Inspector will survey your property and the immediate vicinity to identify potential fly breeding sources. Guidance will be offered on achieving long-term control and source reduction. Click [here](#) to learn how to address fly issues on your own property.

For most commonly reported issues on residential properties, simply removing attractants and/or breeding sources may immediately resolve the problem without the need for an inspection.