Rentokil®

rentokil.com | 866.309.1315

10 birds that pose the biggest risk to your business.

10 Common Nuisance Bird Species

While many bird species can create issues, certain birds are known for causing persistent problems around commercial properties. Recognizing these birds, their habits, and what draws them to your property can help prevent issues before they start and ensure the right strategies are implemented if professional management is required.

CANADA GEESE

GULLS

CROWS AND RAVENS

ROCK PIGEON

EUROPEAN HOUSE SPARROW

SWALLOWS

EUROPEAN STARLING

VULTURES

GRACKLES

WOODPECKERS

Solution Key

Exclusion / Netting
Blocks birds from accessing vulnerable areas like ledges, signs, and HVAC units

Humane trapping
Our trapping and removal service includes routine visits to ensure that food, water, and shade are available for any trapped birds.

Interior removal / Single bird traps / Mist netting
When small birds enter a building, swift action is essential – the longer they remain indoors, the harder they are to remove. Humane tools like single bird traps and mist nets can safely capture birds when simpler removal methods fail

Visual deterrents
Birds can be deterred using visual tools that mimic natural threats through movement and light reflection. These tools are often used in combination with other strategies and may require periodic replacement to remain effective.

Audio deterrents
These sound technologies help deter birds from a specific area. While a range of tools like fireworks can be used, we recommend a long-term solution that creates species-specific distress calls in response to the presence of birds.

UV repellents
Using a blend of reflective products, UV repellents capitalize on how birds see light to protect rooftops, ledges, and other elevated surfaces. These are often paired with olfactory and tactile solutions.

Olfactory and vapor repellents
Birds have a trigeminal nerve that connects their senses to the brain. Methyl anthranilate, a naturally occurring compound derived from Concord grapes, mildly irritates this nerve, causing birds to flee. In addition to being non-toxic, people enjoy the fruity scent.

Applied repellents
Applied on grass to discourage nuisance birds like geese from feeding. By removing their food source, they are more likely to relocate to other areas.

Perch deterrents
Perch deterrents humanely deter birds from landing on ledges, beams, and other structures. Options include bird spikes, bird wire, bird spiders, and tactile gels.

Electric track systems
These systems deliver a safe but uncomfortable shock that lets birds know the area is not suitable for roosting or nesting. Most often used on ledges and overhangs.

Grid systems
A fine mesh grid of wire or cable that prevents birds from landing. These systems are nearly undetectable from a distance and work best in outdoor social areas and open spaces such as rooftops, courtyards, and bodies of water.

Federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918

Not federally protected

Canada geese

Canada Geese are drawn to water and open areas like large lawns and parking lots. Their large droppings, aggressive behavior, and ground nests can damage property, create sanitation issues, and may pose safety risks. Their protected status makes management difficult.

Common areas of activity

- Agricultural Fields ›
- Lawns ›
- Parking lots ›
- Lawns and golf courses ›
- Retention ponds ›
- Office parks ›

Reproductive activity

- Typically mate February-April
- Mate for life; pairs form around age 3
- Ground nests, often under shrubs
- 1 brood annually; 2-8 eggs

Most effective solutions

- Olfactory and vapor repellents
- Visual deterrents
- Applied Repellents
- Audio deterrents
- Grid systems

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Protection Status

Federally protected

Crows and ravens

American crows, fish crows,
Northwestern crows, common ravens

Crows and ravens are intelligent, omnivorous birds that form large flocks. While they eat pests, they create excessive noise, leave droppings, and cause disturbances. Flocks can be particularly challenging for agricultural operations due to damage that they inflict on crops.

Common areas of activity

- Agricultural fields and orchards ›
- Parks and athletic complexes ›
- Trash cans and dumpsters ›
- Waste management facilities ›
- Healthcare campuses ›
- Signage ›

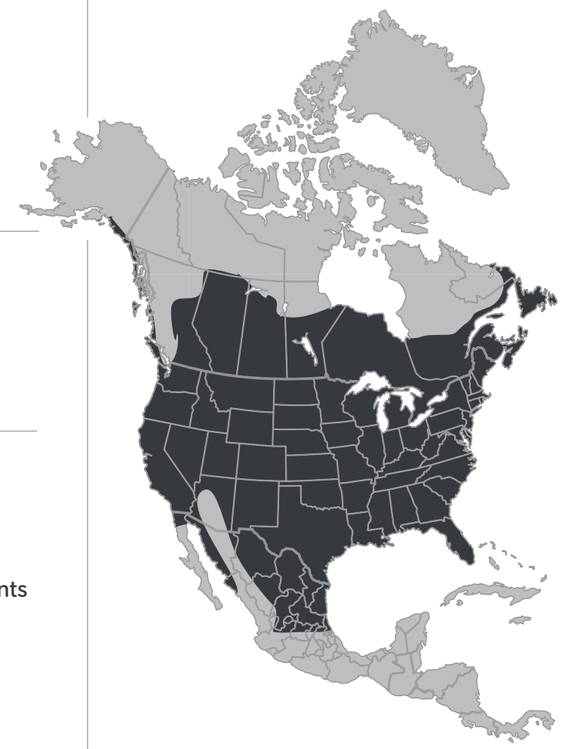
Reproductive activity

- Typically mate March-April
- 1 brood annually; 3-5 eggs (up to 9)

Most effective solutions

- Exclusion / Netting
- Perch Deterrents
- UV repellents
- Electric track systems
- Olfactory and vapor repellents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Protection Status

Federally protected

European house sparrow

House sparrows may be small, but they're resilient. These non-native birds thrive around people and are known for squeezing into tight spaces on buildings and fiercely defending their nests. Once they settle in, they can be difficult to remove.

Common areas of activity

- Interiors; difficult to remove once they have moved inside ›
- Any small, tight, protected openings: corrugated steel, dryer vents, inside building signs, and lettering ›

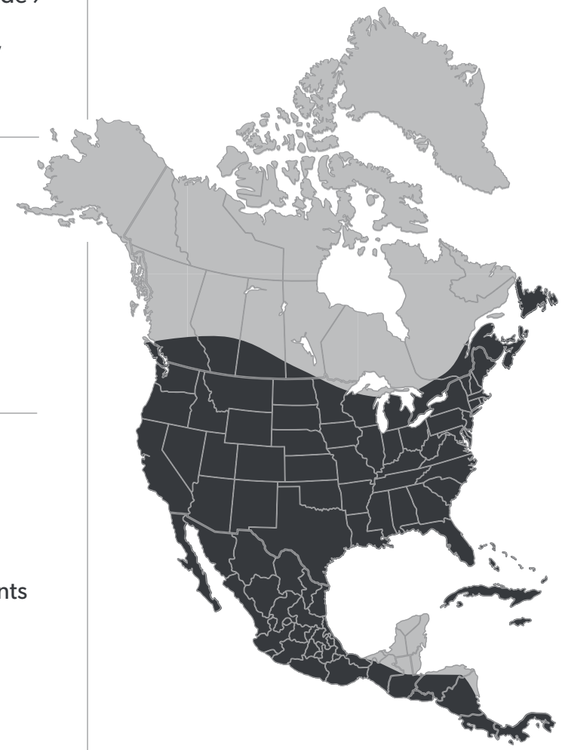
Reproductive activity

- Build nests year-round
- Typically mate March-August, or early as January
- 2-3 broods annually; 3-6 eggs (up to 8)

Most effective solutions

- Exclusion / Netting
- Perch Deterrents
- Interior removal / Single bird traps / Mist netting
- Electric track systems
- Olfactory and vapor repellents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Protection Status

Federally protected

European starling

European starlings may look impressive with their dramatic aerial displays, but they can create serious structural and agricultural problems. This non-native species has spread widely across North America and is now one of the most challenging to manage.

Common areas of activity

- Commercial buildings ›
- Electrical and power structures ›
- Agricultural fields and vineyards ›

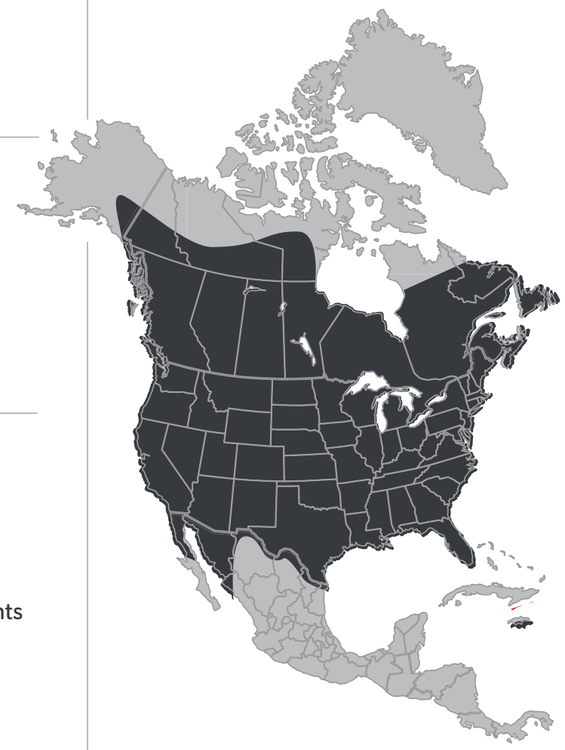
Reproductive activity

- Typically mate February-June
- Nest in natural hollows, sometimes on structures
- 2 broods annually; 4-6 eggs
- May lay eggs in other starlings' nests

Most effective solutions

- Exclusion / Netting
- Olfactory and vapor repellents
- Interior removal / Single bird traps / Mist netting
- UV repellents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Protection Status
Not federally protected

Grackles

Common grackle, great-tailed grackle, boat-tailed grackle

Grackles often travel in massive flocks that can number in the thousands. They are highly opportunistic, feeding on insects, garbage, and food scraps near human activity. Their large flocks can be noisy, messy, and destructive.

Common areas of activity

- Agricultural fields ›
- Lawns and shrubs ›
- Outdoor dining areas ›
- Utility, communications, and industrial facilities ›
- Waste management facilities ›
- Lumber yards ›
- Healthcare facilities ›
- Resorts ›

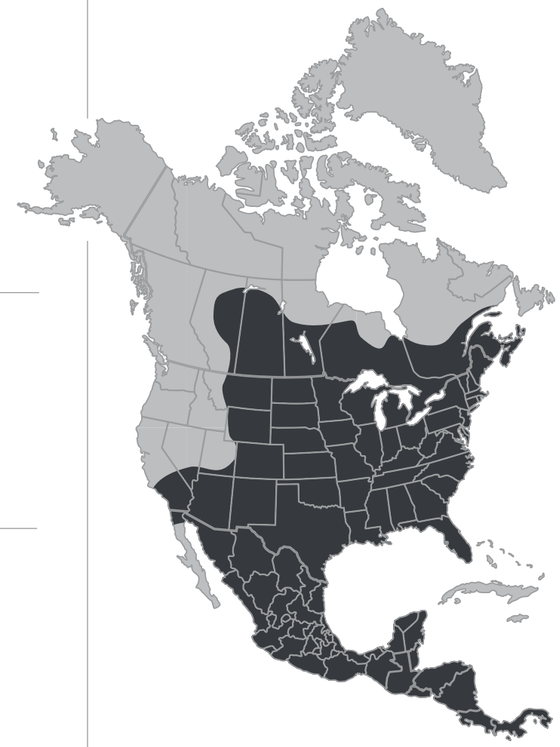
Reproductive activity

- Typically mate March-July
- Nest in shrubs or trees
- 1 brood annually; 4-5 eggs

Most effective solutions

- Exclusion / Netting
- Electric track systems
- Laser harassment
- Olfactory and vapor repellents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Protection Status

Federally protected

Gulls

Herring gull, Western gull, ring-billed gull, California gull, glaucous-winged gull

Gulls, including herring and ring-billed species, are aggressive scavengers that thrive throughout North America. Their noise, droppings, and nesting behaviors on rooftops and other structures can create significant disruptions and sanitation issues.

Common areas of activity

- Outdoor dining ›
- Dumpster areas ›
- Parking lots ›
- Rooftops ›
- Agriculture areas ›
- Athletic fields ›
- Airports ›

Reproductive activity

- Typically mate February-July
- Most species mate for life
- Nest on ground, cliffs, or rooftops; a few species nest in trees
- 1 brood annually; 1-3 eggs

Most effective solutions

- Exclusion / Netting
- Audio deterrents
- Grid systems
- UV repellents
- Visual deterrents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Protection Status

Federally protected

Rock pigeon

Pigeons are the most common pest bird in North America. They are well-adapted to living among humans, where they find ample food and shelter. Pigeons breed year-round, making them a persistent challenge for businesses.

Common areas of activity

- Rooftops and ledges ›
- Pipes and beams ›
- HVAC units ›
- Building signage ›
- Barns and grain silos ›
- Around solar panels ›
- Covered vantage points ›

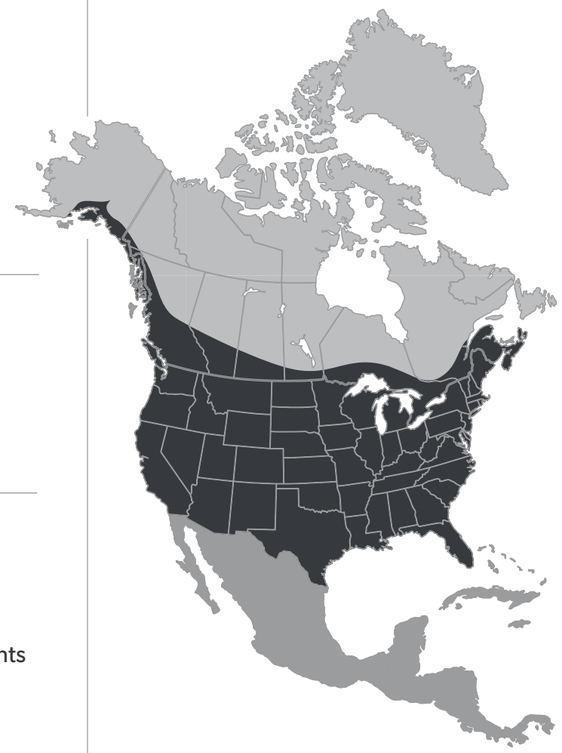
Reproductive activity

- Mate year-round
- 3-4 broods annually; 2-3 eggs

Most effective solutions

- Exclusion / Netting
- Perch deterrents
- Trapping
- Electric track systems
- UV repellents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Protection Status

Not federally protected

Swallows

Cliff swallows (sometimes called mud swallows), barn swallows

Cliff and barn swallows are brightly colored, insect-eating birds that build messy mud nests on vertical surfaces that they return to each year. Cliff swallows nest in large colonies that are hard to ignore. Management can be difficult due to the protected status of these species.

Common areas of activity

- Bridges ›
- Culverts ›
- Barns ›
- Warehouses ›
- Building siding ›
- Eaves ›

Reproductive activity

- Typically mate February-September
- Build mud nests under overhangs in protected areas
- Cliff swallows: Nest in colonies; 1 brood annually; 4-5 eggs
- Barn swallows: Build solitary nests; 1-2 broods annually; 3-7 eggs

Most effective solutions

- Exclusion / Netting
- Olfactory and vapor repellents
- UV repellents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Protection Status

Federally protected

Vultures (buzzards)

Turkey vulture, black vulture

Federally protected vultures, including turkey and black vultures, are carrion feeders that often perch on rooftops or utility structures. Their strong beaks can damage rubber membranes, cables, and equipment, while their large droppings create sanitation issues.

Common areas of activity

- Agricultural fields and orchards ›
- Parks and athletic fields ›
- Trash cans and dumpsters ›
- Waste management facilities ›
- Healthcare campuses ›
- Signage ›

Reproductive activity

- Typically mate March-June, or early as January
- 1 brood annually; 1-3 eggs

Most effective solutions

- Grid systems
- Olfactory and vapor repellents
- Electric track systems

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Protection Status

Federally protected

Woodpeckers

Woodpeckers naturally use their powerful beaks to drill into trees, but in urban areas, their pecking can damage exterior structures, building siding, and landscaping trees. There are over 15 woodpecker species in North America.

Common areas of activity

- Commercial buildings and real estate ›
- Infrastructure and utilities ›
- Agricultural fields and land management ›
- Recreation and golf courses ›

Reproductive activity

- Typically mate March-June
- Nest in tree hollows
- 1-2 broods annually; 4-6 eggs (species dependent)

Most effective solutions

- Visual deterrents
- Audio deterrents
- Olfactory and vapor repellents

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Protection Status

Federally protected

Rentokil®

rentokil.com

866.309.1315

DocID RTKNA100854INT Rev 04/2026