

**Ask Jon Eakes**

# Animal-Proofing Your Home

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Brad Gates from AAA Wildlife in Toronto talked about the hazards wild animals can present to the health of your home and yourself and he showed how he traps or exits the animals. One critical and poorly known health item is that Raccoon feces often contains worms that can be fatal to humans! Treat it like hazardous waste. Use disposable tools to collect it -- do not garden with the same shovel you use to clean up Raccoon droppings, use a plastic disposable shovel. Actually you can watch the whole HGTV show segment by following this link to the AAA Wildlife web site, click on the problem, then the HGTV video. I learned something really interesting in working with Brad. We always romanticize about taking animals from the city and dumping them into the country. What Brad pointed out to me is that 60% of those animals will die, because they are generations away from knowing how to survive in the forest. Whether we like it or not, most urban wild animals only know the urban environment. The city is their "natural habitat", complete with garbage cans and warm houses. So the humane thing to do is to leave those animals in the neighborhood, but just learn how to block them from doing damage to our houses. The photo shows one very large visitor being chased out of the eaves. Once any rodent is out, the entrance needs to be blocked off with very solid wire, because they will try to come back through their old entrance. Check out segment 3 of this show for dealing with squirrels. This segment was shot in Toronto with Brad Gates of AAA Wildlife Control

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