

Products in stores can be a death sentence for wildlife

By Cheryl Millham

I received a call asking if I had ever heard about a product called Bird Repellent by Tanglefoot. The person told me they were going to do some work on their house and wanted to stop any birds from nesting.



Tom and I were in town a few days later and stopped to buy this Bird Repellent. It made me sick when I read the warnings on the label.

First, there are hazards to humans and domestic animals. It can cause eye injury and is harmful if absorbed through the skin. In addition, it says to avoid contact with the skin. When you apply, wear goggles or a face shield, wear disposable gloves and consider using a respirator approved by the U.S. Bureau of Mines.

“Under environmental hazards, small birds may become fatally entrapped by the tack repellent.”

Think about what you just read. If this product is so toxic to humans, what in the world do you think it will do to birds, which do not wear rubber gloves or goggles and are not able to wash their feet or feathers?

This product is fatal to small birds. Please, do not use this bird repellent product – ever.

Another bad product for the life of many species of wildlife is the glue strip. I can tell you so many sad stories about some of the birds and chipmunks we have been able to save,

and, some we could not. Please, do not use glue strips.

I got a call from a young man who is a student at South Tahoe Middle School. He asked for information about Cliff Swallows. Upon questioning him, it turned out that some of the students were making a documentary about how good Cliff Swallows are for our environment.

He told me some students were throwing rocks at the nest, knocking the nest down. The nest had babies in it and they were killed when it hit the ground. Cliff Swallows are federally protected. It is illegal to disturb a Cliff Swallow nest when there are eggs and/or babies in the nest. It is accompanied with a hefty fine and/or jail time.

If you need some help with these birds, give us a call and we can offer some suggestions.

Some of the species of birds – in Tahoe during the summer months – come all the way from South America, just to raise their family. Unfortunately, they are met with hostility and death.

I wish we could welcome all of our birds as they arrive each spring.

Years ago, I got a call from a maintenance worker as he found dead birds on top of a time share roof. It turned out that the management was putting poisoned seed to kill the pigeons. But every bird that eats seed came for a free meal. There were about 30 dead song birds, along with a few pigeons.

Because of his concerns and his phone call we were able to put a stop to this one.

Again, please consider calling Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care (530.577.2273) if you have a situation where wildlife is a bother to you. We probably have come across a similar situation and have some suggestions for you.

Cheryl Millham is executive director of Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe.