

NON-LETHAL MOUSE CONTROL

BY ANNE MULLER

The editor of the **Wildlife Watch Binocular** has firsthand experience with the efficacy and superiority of non-lethal methods of mouse control. It does take diligence, however, but it's well worth the challenge.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, get rid of all food attractants. Keep sugar in well-sealed containers, do not leave empty or half-full soda cans, crumbs from breads and cakes, etc. around. Wash dishes, don't leave them in the sink, and keep foods refrigerated and not left in pots and pans on the stove. We've all been guilty of that, but it's imperative to do this when you're trying not to attract mice.

Getting Prepped

Buy two types of plug-ins: electromagnetic and ultrasonic. One is to drive mice out from behind walls and above ceilings, the other is to affect the ones that are in the living space. Both types will be disturbing to the little guys so that they will WANT TO LEAVE.

Additionally, buy a bunch of live traps (@ \$3 to \$4 at Lowe's or any

local hardware store), find a cheap brand of peanut butter (creamy I hear is better than chunky), and set them down in the basement of the building near openings. Plug up those openings with medium coarse steel wool and tape over the hole or crevice to be sure to secure the filling. Do the same on higher floors, and fill every little hole and crack in closets and cabinets, along baseboards, etc. CHECK TRAPS DAILY and refresh the peanut butter. Often it's the same mouse that you keep seeing over and over. Two mice can look a lot alike because, well, they all look alike.

Releasing the Mice

When you release the mice, do so in the same location, so that family members can reunite. Find a nice spot for the mice, somewhere where there's some running water, hiding places, buildings not too nearby, and about a mile from where you caught them.

It took about a month, but we finally won the battle, and it hasn't recurred this year yet.

If you use poisons, the mice will

crawl into the walls and die a painful death. In addition to perhaps having a bad conscience, you will have to live with the odor of the decomposing bodies for months or even a year. That in addition to the possibility of poisoning other animals who may feed on the poisoned mouse.

