

# RESCUING “PEANUT” STOP – THINK – BEFORE USING LETHAL METHODS TO REMOVE MICE

BY JEAN SMITH

Our office is located in an old Tudor house, so we didn't think too much of it when we heard some light scratching sounds behind a bookcase. We've had mice in the building before, so we weren't particularly concerned, and a brief search didn't turn up anything. So we went on about our day.

But the next morning, similar scratching sounds were coming from behind a box tucked under an upholstered chair. Sadly, we discovered it wasn't a free-roaming mouse after all. A baby flying squirrel was hiding under the chair... with his rear leg mangled in a spring-snap mousetrap. The poor little guy was panicked and in pain, trying to escape but dragging the trap behind him as he tried unsuccessfully to burrow farther under the chair.

Wearing leather gloves, we managed to lift “Peanut” into a cardboard box, and carried the box outside before attempting to pry open the trap and



As the photos of Peanut weren't clear enough for publication, we are using an Internet photo of what this little guy looked like.

release him, in case he bolted. Once he was free from the spring, we could see how badly damaged his leg actually was, and we realized such a young squirrel was unlikely to survive if we released him ... especially when he wouldn't be able to climb trees in a neighborhood with at least two outdoor cats prowling about.

So we constructed a small cardboard hiding place in a corner of the box, pro-

vided some leaves and other nesting materials along with water and bits of apple, and placed the box near a warm radiator while we started searching online for wildlife rehabilitators nearby. Fortunately, a network of rescuers came through quickly, and we were able to deliver Peanut to an experienced caregiver at the end of the day.

Needless to say, we're lobbying for the removal of all poisons and lethal traps from our building, and we're passing along recommendations for more humane alternatives. We're also keeping local rescuers' phone numbers handy ... but hope we won't need to use them again!

**Stefanie Juell** contacted **Wildlife Watch's Hotline 877-WILDHELP** and we were able to provide the names of wildlife rehabbers in her area. Peanut was taken in by local rehabber **Loraine Izzo Mignardi** from Bronxville, NY.