

## Can You Hear The Squirrels?



By Greg Wheelus

The difference between a major rodent problem and a minor rodent problem is whether it is you or your neighbor who has the squirrel problem. I am in the termite business; I had never tackled the rats with fuzzy tails on an up close and personal basis. Over the years I have been asked numerous times by clients for advice concerning these pesky creatures. I have related to them little bits of wisdom and referred some of them to animal removal specialists. Still the hopeless-looking, empty faces and their horror stories did not affect me.

My recent battles with Squirrels in my own home have given me a newfound respect for those who do this for a living, and I now understand why their fees can be so expensive.

On a cold January night I heard a large animal scurrying around in my attic. I decided that he would leave when it got warmer. I was wrong! Instead, he brought some of his friends over and like unwanted relatives, they came to stay. Directly overhead in my computer room they decided to have a party one night. The rodents were dancing in the attic (on my ceiling); there must have been twenty of the rascals. Cause for concern? Absolutely, in fact, it made me rather mad. I pounded on the ceiling, they just laughed at me. I could hear there drunken little squealing voices.

I ran to the basement, got a ladder to get into the attic, on the way I grabbed my pellet gun ... like this was going to take care of them. I should have bought the M-16 that a fellow was trying to sell me the other day on a street corner in Atlanta.

The critters must have felt me coming and knew that I meant business; when I lit the area with my flashlight, they were gone. I had been correct about the party, they had left behind little beer bottles and a deck of cards.

I bought poison labeled for large rodents. I bought traps, I bought wire mesh and nailed up two by fours on the interior of the attic where they were entering from the roof. I cut down two trees and trimmed the limbs from four others. Each time the Squirrels would find a way to thwart my measures.

When I closed up the hole on the roof, they cut a hole in my vinyl siding; I had no more than covered that hole with metal flashing when the dastardly creatures moved over a foot and cut a new hole. I capped the ends of the gutters with steel mesh; I sealed the hole along the roof line under the shingles where the plywood does not meet the fascia board.

The squirrels continued to out maneuver my best efforts. I spent entire days working on methods of removal or eradication. I tried to get the man at the hardware store to tell me if I could attach his most powerful electric fence charger to my gutters and metal trim coil to fry the little critters without burning the house down. I guess that he thought that I was some kind of lunatic; he demanded that I leave his store and never return. I asked an electrician friend of mine the same question. With a smile he shook his head and suggested that it might not be such a great idea, my clocks might run backwards and the house might glow at night.

Go ahead make fun of me, this was serious. People started whispering behind my back, "Can you hear the squirrels?"

The squirrels chewed one of my 2x4s in half and removed the metal mesh that I had balled up in the hole that led from the attic to the roof. There was the ransom note on the fridge

demanding name brand nuts for the return of my cat. When the cat was returned I redoubled my efforts. All of my thoughts were on this project now, no time for sleep for me, stronger wire, more bait and stronger boards.

And yes, finally I am having some success. It has been three days now since a squirrel has run over my head ... in the attic. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

Except this morning my cat was eyeing something suspiciously in the basement, NOOOOOOOO! Not A SQUIRREL! Yes it was, albeit not a large one. With a towel and a quick hand I caught the little sucker and threw him outside before he could chew off my fingers.

Now I am going to have to find out where this one came inside. I will not be defeated-I have decided to quit work entirely to devote all of my time to this project. I have another idea. "Hello, Humane Society, can I rent thirty of your biggest, meanest, badest cats for about 30 days. Why you ask? Just listen! Can you hear the Squirrels? They're Everywhere!"

*Reprint from CEO of GA*