

# Wildlife Friendly Pest Control

Effective rodent pest management is an absolute priority and frequently requires use of second generation anti-coagulant rodenticides to keep areas free from rodents. These chemicals are extremely toxic and persistent and do not break down in the bodies of rodents. As a consequence they persist in the natural food chain – moving into species of wild birds and mammals that feed on rodents. Our birds of prey and our owl species are among the most important bird species in Ireland. They play a major role in keeping a balance in nature and are a critical to biodiversity. Recent studies have shown that many of them have traces of rodenticide in their bodies which they have acquired through their food. The extent to which they have become contaminated with residual traces of rodenticides (found in carcasses collected as part of ongoing official monitoring) is now a matter of serious concern. Barn owls have been particularly affected with over 80% of them having rodenticides in their bodies. Kites and Kestrels are also known to be affected.



To champion the protection of wildlife while promoting responsible and effective rodent pest management, the Campaign for Responsible Use Ireland Limited - **CRRU Ireland** - was formed at the behest of the regulatory authorities. It is a registered company limited by guarantee<sup>1</sup> formed by companies that manufacture and distribute rodenticides in Ireland. Its aim is to minimise impact on raptor and other wildlife species while promoting responsible use of rodenticides.

**CRRU Ireland Supporters' Club** A 7-point CRRU code, designed to ensure responsible use of rodenticides has been drawn up. It is promoted through the CRRU Supporters' Club for rodent pest management companies and organizations. CRRU Supporters' Club members undertake to abide by the CRRU code. Application for membership can be made *via* the CRRU website ([www.thinkwildlife.org](http://www.thinkwildlife.org)). Membership is free but applicants are required to sign a licence agreement to facilitate their use of the 'Think Wildlife' logo. Companies and Organisations that are CRRU Supporters' Club members are listed on the CRRU website. While membership of the CRRU Supporters' Club does not guarantee that responsible procedures are followed, it confirms that a company has considered the importance of the elements set out in the CRRU Code and has agreed to conduct rodent management operations in compliance with the Code.



Under the terms of current legislation, it is an offence to use rodenticides other than in accordance with label instructions. Regular inspections are conducted by the Regulatory Authority to ensure compliance. On conviction offences are punishable by a fine, or imprisonment or both at the discretion of the court. Rodent control programmes that comply with the CRRU Code avoid risk of infringing current legislation on use of rodenticides. The CRRU Code promotes best practice in rodent control and facilitates achievement of desired

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<sup>1</sup> Companies Registration Office Number 533136

results from rodent control programmes, while reducing to a minimum potential harmful effects for wildlife

CRRU Ireland Supporters' Club membership is a clear indication that member companies and organizations are committed to ensuring effective rodent control with minimum impact on non-target wildlife species, thereby providing them a competitive advantage.

**'Wildlife Aware' Training and Accreditation** The one-day CRRU-IASIS "Wildlife Aware" training course, and associated accreditation scheme, is intended for -

- professional pest control technicians
- other competent users of rodenticides
- persons that provide advice on rodent pest management
- quality assurance managers and auditors in the food, pharma and IT sectors

The course is comprised of modules designed to highlight elements to be observed or taken into account to avoid secondary poisoning of non-target species, while achieving effective rodent control. Species at risk of secondary poisoning include Barn Owls, Buzzards, Golden Eagles, Kestrels, Peregrine Falcons, Red Kites, Sparrowhawks *etc.* An Integrated Pest Management approach to rodent control is highlighted during the course.



Tony Cross (Welsh Kite Trust)

The course developed by CRRU in association with IASIS<sup>2</sup> is offered twice yearly at each of three locations by trained IASIS accredited 'Wildlife Aware' course providers. The next 'Wildlife Aware'

courses to be offered will take place on the the following dates at the locations indicated: –

- 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014, DAFM Laboratories, Backweston Campus
- 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014, Teagasc, Moorepark, Fermoy
- 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014, Ballyhaise College, Co Cavan

Anyone wishing to register to participate in one of these courses should download the registration form from the IASIS website - <http://www.iasis.ie/coursesavailable.php>. Completed registration forms can be returned to IASIS, at 31A Ravens Rock Road, Sandyford Industrial Estate, Dublin 18 or in pdf form to [info@iasis.ie](mailto:info@iasis.ie). The course fee of €210 includes the cost of accreditation in the year of successfully passing the course examination.

European Union legislation on sustainable use of rodenticides and other biocides is soon to be introduced. It is to be expected that on its implementation 'Wildlife Aware' training and accreditation will become compulsory for operatives providing rodent pest management services. Increasingly, invitations issued by industry, public bodies and agencies to tender for provision of rodent pest control services seek responses from pest management companies and

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<sup>2</sup> Irish Agricultural Supply Industry Standards Ltd, Companies Registration Office Number 202978

organizations that are CRRU Ireland Supporters' Club members that employ 'Wildlife Aware' accredited technicians.

Persons successfully completing the 'Wildlife Aware' course will on application made be accredited as CRRU/IASIS 'Wildlife Aware' technicians and subject to their agreement, will be included in the list of 'Wildlife Aware' accredited technicians posted on both the IASIS and CRRU websites. 'Wildlife Aware' accredited technicians are licensed to use the 'Wildlife Aware' logo in their businesses as a symbol of their special competence. The logo serves to inform customers and potential customers that the individual rodent pest control technician has been trained to avoid impact on wildlife while using rodenticides responsibly and effectively to:-



- maintain required standards of hygiene;
- comply with relevant quality assurance schemes; and
- prevent contamination, spoilage and damage caused by rodent pest species.

Further information can be obtained from the website [www.thinkwildlife.org](http://www.thinkwildlife.org)