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GOOD PRACTICE IN BIRD MANAGEMENT

James W. Steckel
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I'm going to deviate a little bit from what's been said. I'd like to read to you first of all a Good Practice Statement for Bird Management that was accepted by the National Pest Control Association in the past year, 1965. I think it's important for all the people here, realizing that some of you are suppliers, some of you are from regulatory agencies, some of you are in the bird management business, and others are interested in this field in many other ways.

It's important for us to realize, all of us, that this field is just in the embryonic stage. We're just beginning to get the surface scratched. Any more when you travel and talk to people, the subject of bird control comes up. Now and then you find somebody who had read something about it or has become interested in it, and up to this time, many hadn't realized there was such a thing as pest bird management.

We feel that it is of utmost importance that each of us know what are the federal, state and local laws in order that we can operate consistently within their limits. And really the limits are broad enough for us to operate without too much difficulty. The laws do concern the hazard and public safety of our nation.

General Statement:

Good Practices in Bird Management

As Revised and Accepted by the NPCA Bird
Management Committee, October 20, 1965

General

Bird Management is a relatively new and specialized activity for Pest Control Operators. Strict adherence to good practice is of especial importance while bird management is being established as an acceptable service to the public.

All bird management procedures should be consistent with federal, state and local laws. Interested public agencies should be notified

concerning extensive or unusual bird control work. Unusual and unpredictable public relations and business management problems may occur. The operator and the public both require protection, as by insurance, from losses due to unforeseen accidents.

Workers

Bird Management requires specialized knowledge and abilities. Workers conducting actual bird management operations must either be specialists or be directly supervised. Such workers usually require special physical and mental aptitude, appreciation of public relations, knowledge of the identification and habits of protected as well as pest birds and current information concerning the legal status of bird species subject to management operations and safe and effective control procedures.

Bird Management Methods

Bird Management may be accomplished by one or a combination of: (a) habitat manipulation as removal of food, water, shelter, etc., (b) protection of structures or other sites from birds, (c) dispersal of birds and (d) population reduction.

Protection

Protection of Structures employs non-toxic methods to prevent birds from resting in or on buildings or other sites or objects. Methods used include:

- 1) exclusion by shields, screens or nettings;
- 2) repelling by electrified wires and
- 3) application of non-toxic repellents.

Building protection may provide permanent or prolonged protection and is generally well-accepted by the public. The use of non-toxic repellents may result in birds having so much sticky material on them that they cannot fly. Other limitations include high installation and maintenance expense and moving the problem birds to other sites.

Dispersal

Bird Dispersal Procedures move nuisance birds from trees, buildings and other places where merely driving them away will serve the purpose, and killing is neither necessary nor desirable. Where the birds may go is an important consideration. Dispersal may be accomplished by using, singly or in combination, such methods as distress

calls, fireworks, lights, sounds or dispersing sprays. Also see pyridines under Toxic baits. Birds adapt to most frightening or annoying methods. For best results, some birds must be hurt by, or in conjunction with, the treatment used.

Population Reduction

Removal of pest birds employs: (a) trapping, (b) nest destruction, (c) shooting, (d) poisoning by toxicants which are placed where the birds will contact them or which are incorporated in baits the birds will eat. Toxic agents shall not be used except by procedures described on labeling registered by USDA's Pesticides Regulation Division.

Trapping is a slow and expensive method, but permits liberation of protected birds. Pest birds should be killed humanely and should not be liberated.

Shooting permits the elimination of one or a few birds. It requires special guns and/or loads. It is often illegal or requires permits from local authorities and has poor public acceptance.

Nest destruction is time-consuming and in most cases is by itself an impractical method of control. In conjunction with other control practices, however, nest removal is advisable to eliminate eyesores, fire hazards, and pest arthropod harborages.

Contact poisons, currently endrin or fenthion, are used in special roosts and perches. The use of such a toxicant in an appropriate device is effective when the perches are properly installed but require periodic service and maintenance which, because of accessibility problems, may be time-consuming. As birds may carry toxicants from the perches on their feet, installations in or on food plants is not permitted.

Toxic baits consist of food materials which are acceptable to birds and which are treated with one of the toxic agents such as strychnine, sodium fluoride or pyridine chemicals which are registered for specific bird control uses. Poison baits are usually effective and economical when correctly applied. Great care must be taken to avoid good contamination and bad public relations. Sodium fluoride is restricted to agricultural applications. Strychnine and the pyridine compounds may be used to control pest birds in urban and rural areas. Certain birds with flocking behavior may be repelled from areas where a small part of the flock has been intoxicated. Treated baits should be exposed only where and when protected species are not present. The size and type of bait should be chosen to avoid injury to birds other than the target pest species. Any bait remaining after the exposure period must be picked up for salvage or disposal.

Control of Arthropods

Control of ectoparasites, scavenger insects and other arthropod pests in and around bird nests, roosts and accumulated droppings is an essential part of bird control. (End of statement.)

You heard a talk this morning on histoplasmosis. Probably even of more interest to our industry are the ectoparasites--the bird mite that comes into the structure of a home or a building from a nesting site underneath an air conditioner or around a ventilator. This is very much a part of bird control or bird management as we see it. I wanted to read this to you to let you know what our industry is thinking, feeling, and doing. NPCA has accepted this as a Good Practice Statement.

Now Tony and I are friends, but I am going to take exception to some of these statements here. Tony this morning said some of the things such as repellents and some of the mechanical exclusions are obsolete.

A. CLAY: Just as far as I'm concerned; not with everybody. Just personally.

J. STECKEL: O.K. I'm going to disagree with you there. As far as I'm concerned we still have to start out with the number one principle of bird control and that is Sanitation. I think until we can understand and use good sanitary practices, bird control is always going to be a more difficult problem. Sanitation, to my way of thinking, is control of the food or the habitat. This is the elimination of food sources, the elimination of water supplies, the elimination of nesting sites--those things that have to do with collecting and housing of the bird populations. Probably the thing we should always look to first, after we have considered sanitation, is "can we mechanically exclude this problem?" If we can mechanically exclude this problem, I would say this is the thing we should try to do, because it's more permanent. You're doing something that is going to last a long time, and this is building or screening out the problem. After you've had a look at this, maybe mechanical exclusion is an impossibility. What would be the next thing that we ought to try?

H. FINK Repellents.

J. STECKEL: Why would we want to try repellents? The public accepts repellents and they have a good safety factor. Public acceptance and safety certainly have to be considered in this area of bird management. What is the one thing that the public doesn't really accept about the repellent?

DELEGATE: Downed birds.

J. STECKEL: Downed birds. If a bird gets too much repellent on him, and he gets it on his wings, he gets down and struggles around; the public gets concerned about this.

H. FINK I'd like to say something. I think that your mechanical exclusion is a very good idea. And even as a manufacturer of a bird repellent, I think in many cases this should come first; I'll agree with you. But when it comes to using a repellent, I like to just state one thing again. One big advantage is that you can get so much additional business, not because you chase the birds from one location to another, that'll help, but because you can take advantage of public relations. You can actually advertise to the public through various advertising media, newspapers, which are free, radio and television, which are free on a public relations program. You can publicize the fact that you are bird-proofing a building. The results are unbelievably fantastic. And this is what you can take advantage of with a repellent.

J. STECKEL: This fellow has had some of the good fortune of great public relations. They were able to do the presidential inaugural parade route for the last four inaugurations. This has made Time magazine, and all the newspapers, and they've made great mileage from this publicity.

H. FINK: Forget about the inauguration. Even if it's a small church or a commercial building downtown, you can do the same thing on a smaller scale.

J. STECKEL: O.K., real fine. Anybody got anything more on repellents? There are many repellents. Repellents have to be registered just as all of the bird management materials have to be registered, so if you are going to use them let's use those which have registration. If repellents don't work what do you do?

DELEGATE: Kill them.

J. STECKEL: Kill them. How do you kill them?

DELEGATE: Contact poisons.

J. STECKEL: We were talking in here just a minute ago about the food processing plant. In the food processing plant you have severe limitations as to what you can use. So maybe we're going to have to think about combinations of these tools. Maybe we're going to have to do some mechanical exclusion. We're also probably going to have to use some repellents; we may have to move some birds outside to an area where we can get at them. We must get the bird to a place where it'll

be on target. So let's think about that for just a moment. Contacts. What are some of the contact materials?

L. QUATTROCHI: Endrin. (laughter)

STECKEL: Did you change jobs?

L. QUATTROCHI: Do you mean what is being used or do you mean what is registered?

J. STECKEL: What is registered.

L. QUATTROCHI: There are only two things registered. Fenthion and endrin used in the Rid-A-Bird Perch.

J. STECKEL: Fenthion or endrin used in the Rid-A-Bird Perch. Bob (Bosch), is this current?

B. BOSCH: Entex and endrin.

J. STECKEL: All right, for those of us who are not so sophisticated as Len. We could say Entex is one of the several forms of fenthion.

L. QUATTROCHI: Try Queletox.

J. STECKEL: I can't spell it, and besides it isn't registered. We'll get to Queletox in a minute and at that time I'll ask you to spell it for me. Now do we understand that these are only registered for use in the Rid-A-Bird Perch?

In the realm of toxic baits the only ones which have been developed and approved for use are strychnine, sodium fluoride, and the frightening agent pyridine compounds (Avitrol).

These materials are greatly restricted in their location and time of use. It's best to rely heavily on the package label. With that I'll close formally and ask if there are any questions.

F. GLEASON: I'm in the dark about sodium fluoride; I don't remember ever having a permit to use it.

J. STECKEL: I'm beginning to love you too. We're laughing here and we shouldn't be. Torco has the registration on sodium fluoride. Sodium fluoride is registered at a 3% level in a bait material for the use of controlling starlings in feedlot situations or in agricultural areas. It's limited to this and we don't stress it too much because pest control operators are not particularly involved in that area. Fish and wildlife people are not particularly involved in that farm area; it is basically a

farm tool. It's distributed through farm outlets, seed and feed companies and stores of that nature. It is sodium fluoride in a bait material, pelletized for the control of starlings in feedlots and ag purposes.

F. GLEASON: Thank you.

J. STECKEL: Now that the commercial is over we'll go on. I know it's noontime. We could go a little bit further. Does anybody have any questions or additions to what we've put up here so far?

DR. SPEAR: There ought to be a little discussion to the strychnine registration.

J. STECKEL: O.K. Fred, Dick, or Ki, any of you want to talk on that one?

C. FAULKNER: 0.6% strychnine on whole corn is registered as bureau registration.

J. STECKEL: Now this is 0.6%.

C. FAULKNER: On whole or cracked corn. Pigeon--sparrow control. It is sold only during the framework of November 15 to March 15, regardless of what state you are from.

J. STECKEL: You get a little notice if you're from Ohio advising you that it's time to cease your operations. You get a little thing that is called "Animal Control Bulletin: termination of pest bird control operations. With the advent of warm weather protected migratory song birds are beginning to reappear in Ohio. Therefore it is important that pest bird control operations that employ strychnine-treated materials be terminated. Please complete any reductional operations by March 24, 1966." Signed, The Boss. (Laughter)

D. GRAY: What's the restriction on strychnine-treated milo?

J. STECKEL: Strychnine-treated milo--O.K. boys, answer the question.

R. SMITH: Just because he's registered this federally, he must register it by the state also.

J. STECKEL: This is in some states, Dick. I don't know how many, but I know it doesn't have to be in all states as yet, but there does have to be state registration. Are you going to be answering his question? Then his question was answered--it's registered, but not for bird

control. Are there any other questions? Yes, Lew.

L. STEVENS: You didn't give me a chance to do my advertising.

J. STECKEL: All right. Lew Stevens, Chemagro. Would you like to advertise?

L. STEVENS: I would like to clarify one thing, and that is for Queletox, containing the active ingredient fenthion, we do have an experimental registration for this product as a 12% paste for treatment of roosting and perching sites of pigeons, sparrows and starlings.

J. STECKEL: Do I understand you to say that you do have a registration?

L. STEVENS: We have an experimental registration.

J. STECKEL: Experimental. Tell us what an experimental label means.

L. STEVENS: Experimental label means that the material is available for use, providing the user furnishes a report to the company which will in turn be used to support future labeling.

L. QUATTROCHI: There are two more restrictions to this particular experimental permit. One is that they are either members of the Bird Management Committee of the National Pest Control Association, or affiliated in some way with public health, or they are working with a conservation unit of the USDI, or in association with them.

J. STECKEL: And this work, where it is being done, is being done under the supervision and with the cooperation of the local Fish and Wildlife Agent.

L. QUATTROCHI: Right.

J. STECKEL: So this is not a material that you can go out and buy on the open market and use as you see fit. It's not sold. It's given to you if you qualify and are willing to use it under the supervision of the Fish and Wildlife agent in your area, and report its results on the forms which are supplied with the material. Queletox is the material's name. It is 12% fenthion in a tacky paste.

D. SCHNEIDER: What is the fenthion percentage in the Rid-A-Bird perch?