

## Public Health Concerns

Chipmunks and ground squirrels are not considered to be a significant source of any infectious disease transmittable to humans. They may be carriers of rabies; however there have not been any rabid chipmunks or ground squirrels in DuPage County in recent years.

## What Not to Do:

Trapping and removing a chipmunk or ground squirrel is not always the best solution to the problem. Removing an animal is illegal without proper permits and only creates a hole for another animal.

Never remove young from the den.

Do not use poisons. They are inhumane and may be illegal. They can also result the poisoning of raptors, ground scavengers and neighborhood pets.

It is illegal to keep wild animals, even for a short time. They have specialized nutritional, housing and handling needs that you are unlikely to be able to provide. Inexperienced individuals who attempt to raise or treat them inevitably produce unhealthy, tame animals that cannot survive in their natural habitats.

If you come across a wild animal and are concerned leave it alone and contact the Police Department or 9-1-1.

**Joshua Perry  
Animal Control/Community  
Service Officer**

**Warrenville Police Department  
3S245 Warren Ave  
Warrenville, IL 60555  
(630) 393-2131**



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## **Animal Control**

## **Department**

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*Presents....*

*Living with Chipmunks &  
Ground Squirrels*

*Preventions and  
Recommended  
Deterrents*

*And other information*

**3S245 Warren Avenue  
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Chipmunks and ground squirrels are commonly mistaken for the same animal. However they both have distinguishing marks and different habits. The chipmunk has five dark-brown lengthwise stripes from its head to its rump and runs with its tail straight up, looking like a zooming remote-control car. Chipmunks eat a variety of berries, nuts, and seeds and may occasionally climb a tree to find food. They many occasionally eat small animals, including insects, earthworms, slugs, young mice and birds, and small frogs or snakes. Some chipmunks may hibernate while others continue to be active throughout winter.

The ground squirrel has 13 lines on its back from head to rump. They prefer open grasslands where they feed on equal amounts of animal and plant foods. Their diet includes insects, grasshopper, moths and butterflies, earthworms, young birds and mice, seeds, fruits, nuts, roots, and foliage. At the end of the summer, the ground squirrel will fatten up in preparation for hibernation.

### **Preventing Problems:**

Do not encourage them by feeding them.

Do not allow spillage to accumulate outside of bird feeders.

Use welded wire to prevent animals from accessing openings under decks, sheds and porches.

### **Recommended Deterrents:**

Chipmunks and ground squirrels are easily frightened. Leave inflated beach balls in the yard. The wind will blow them around and frighten the animals. Place plastic bags on sticks in various spots in your yard for the same effect. Scarecrows and objects that move in the wind are also effective. However, animals will grow used to these items, and their effectiveness will diminish

Place bright lights in the den for 24 hours a day will disturb their sleep during the day and deter them.

Play a radio, alarm clock, noisy child's toy for 24 hours will deter them as well during their sleep.

Place rags soaked in ammonia in the den for one week. Ammonia has an irritating smell. Over time, the ammonia will dissipate so it is important to re-soak the rags daily.

If a den site has been established in a chimney usually on the smoke shelf in the fireplace flue, use the same techniques listed above.

It is important to use the same techniques at the same time in order for the deterrents to be successful. To determine if the animal has left a den site, wad up newspaper, and pack it into the den entrance. If they are still using the den, the paper will be pulled out. If after a few days, the paper has not been disturbed, you can now seal up and repair that entrance and any other potential openings.

### **Eating Bulbs**

Daffodils, squills, grape hyacinths and crown imperial bulbs are known to be distasteful to chipmunks and ground squirrels. The crown imperial has a horrible smell, and below-ground diners are known to avoid it. Interplant crown imperials among tulips and other "tasty" bulbs. Use chicken wire as a barricade by placing it on the flower bed surface, and then scatter a light layer of mulch or leaves over the chicken wire. Be sure to pick up bulb skins that flake off during planting and to spread a thick layer of the mulch over the bulbs to remove signs of recent planting. The chicken wire should be pulled up in spring so the bulbs can grow.

### **Gardens**

Taste deterrents work, however, they need to be reapplied after a heavy dew or rain. Recommended deterrents include spraying a mixture of one gallon of water and two tablespoons of hot sauce onto the plant, spraying a garlic puree onto the plant, or sprinkling baby powder on the plant. You may wish to visit a nursery or home center for commercial products.