

## Vultures

Vultures are protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. North Carolina has both black and turkey vultures. Turkey vultures have a distinctive red head where as black vultures have a dark gray head.

**What is the common damage caused by vultures?** Vultures roosting on houses can cause damage by pulling off shingles, caulking around windows, and vinyl siding. They can also scratch paint, pull of windshield wipers, and crack windows on cars.

**Can a WCA write a depredation permit?** A federal permit must be obtained for vultures. The USDA Wildlife Services facilitates the procurement of federal depredation permits through the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta, Georgia. A state depredation permit is also required. Once the federal permit is received, a WCA can write the required state depredation permit.

**Can vultures be relocated?** No, under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act it is illegal to take, possess, import, export, transport, sell, purchase, barter, or offer for sale, purchase, or barter, any migratory bird without a federal permit.

**What can I do with sick or injured vultures?** There are licensed [rehabilitators](#) across the state that can take in sick or injured wildlife. Advise the individual to leave the bird alone for 24 hours to see if it can recover on its own before contacting a rehabilitator.

**Are there any safety concerns?** Vultures have powerful beaks and feet, be cautious when handling. Thick leather gloves are recommended for handling these birds.

### Non-lethal Options:

- See the [General Considerations for Handling Wildlife](#) document for general ways to prevent damage from wildlife.
- Harassment
  - Vultures can recognize when one of their own is dead and will consequently mark the area as unsafe and avoid it. Vultures can be dispersed by hanging a [vulture effigy](#) (fake, dead looking vulture) in the area where the birds are roosting.
  - Loud noises and visual deterrents can be effective if vultures have just begun to roost in an area. People will often use airhorns, pyrotechnics, whistles, and lasers to disperse roosting vultures. If the vultures have been roosting in an area for a long time, auditory and visual deterrents are less effective.

### Lethal Options:

- A federal permit is always required to remove vultures.
  - The USDA Wildlife Services facilitates the procurement of federal depredation permits through the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta, Georgia.
  - Active nests (nests with eggs or nestlings) are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and cannot be removed without a federal permit.
- In addition to the federal permitting, a state depredation permit is required and can be written by a WCA, wildlife enforcement officer or district biologist.