

INSIDE: Focus on Wyomissing & West Reading • Spring Clean Social Media • Protecting Your Assets

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PATRIOT PEST

***Keeping Wildlife
in the Wild***



JAMES AND DENICE HARRISON

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PATRIOT PEST

Keeping Wildlife in the Wild



PHOTOS BY STYLISH IMAGES



Denice and James Harrison, Owners

By Kathy Hunt

Spring welcomes the return of so many lovely things — lush, green grass, blossoming flowers and trees, and baby birds, squirrels, and other wildlife. For safety and warmth, these animals may opt to build their nests and raise their offspring inside a garage, basement, or attic of a building without a home or business owner's knowledge. Cute as they may be, these creatures can cause damage to a home or office by chewing through wood, wires, and insulation and leaving behind disease-causing waste and fleas.

When unusual creaks, bumps, and scratching sounds aren't caused by wind or a house settling, it's time to contact the trustworthy wildlife removal experts at Patriot Pest Solutions. The veteran-owned, pet-friendly business has been resolving wildlife and other pest problems in Southeastern Pennsylvania since 2011. Patriot Pest has the experience and expertise to take care of every pest control need.

Safe, Humane Wildlife Removal

When a homeowner or business makes that initial call to a pest control business about animals in the attic, termite damage in the basement, or bed bugs throughout the building, often the response is, "We don't do that type of pest removal." And so, the hunt for a qualified pest control professional continues. People quickly learn that not every company has licensed and insured technicians who can trap and remove wildlife or detect and eradicate termites and other destructive insects. That's not the case with Patriot Pest Solutions.



Owned and operated by Denice and James Harrison, Patriot Pest has a staff of six trained, licensed, and insured technicians who are able to handle all types of wildlife and insects.

“Birds getting into your dryer vent and making a nest. Raccoons having babies in your attic. Regular pest control companies don’t handle these calls, but, if you have wildlife, we can take care of them and termites, ants, mosquitos, and other pests. We’re a one-stop shop,” Denice Harrison said.

Each Patriot Pest Solutions remediation effort begins with an inspection. “When someone needs wildlife control, it starts with ‘I hear something up there and I don’t know what it is,’” Harrison said. “Sometimes it’s obvious, when you see a vent or roofline soffit pulled back or bent, it means that you have wildlife going in and out of that location. Even if we don’t see the actual animal during an inspection, many times, just by looking at the insulation and seeing patterns, feces, and other things, we can determine what’s gotten into your home.”

Once a Patriot Pest wildlife specialist has established that a wild animal has entered an attic or other part of a building, he performs “wildlife exclusion.” All of the entry points, except for one, are sealed so that the animal has only one way to go in and out. A one-way trap is then set to guarantee that, once the critter exits, it can’t return. Patriot Pest is required by law to go to a site and remove the trapped animal within 24 hours of its capture. To ensure that no other animals are left behind, the technician will wait seven days before sealing up the remaining opening.

“If you get a mom, you have to get the babies, too,” Harrison said. There are times when we have to climb roofs and scale a building’s rafters to get to and remove the babies. We are very in tune with not being cruel to animals.”



Patriot Pest has three wildlife specialists on staff — business co-owner James Harrison and technicians Eric Gromalski and Nate Swarthout. In February 2024, the three specialists and Denice attended the Wildlife Expo in Houston, Texas. Co-hosted by the National Wildlife Control Operators Association’s (NWCOA) and National Pest Management Association’s (NPMA), Wildlife Expo provides educational programming on wildlife techniques and control practices and the opportunity to network with others in the industry. Patriot Pest is listed as a NWCOA certified wildlife professional. Through the NWCOA, technicians maintain their knowledge and skills for safe and humane wildlife management.

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**Eric Gromalski,
Wildlife Specialist**



**Nate Swarthout,
Wildlife Specialist**

COVER STORY

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The company is also part of the Pennsylvania Trapper's Association, which advocates for the humane trapping of wildlife. Its technicians are licensed through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and fully insured. The latter makes Patriot Pest especially valuable in the pest control world.

A Bit About Bats

In the United States, many species of bats are federally protected, including Northern long-eared and Indiana bats, both of which are found in Pennsylvania. Habitat loss, disrupted hibernations, disease, and people killing bats have resulted in their decline. In the U.S. alone, over half of bat species appear on endangered or 'in severe decline' lists.

Long known for their beneficial nature, bats pollinate plants such as peaches, cloves, and bananas, distribute seeds, and, of course, eat an abundance of insects, including mosquitoes and beetles. The Pennsylvania Game Commission noted that a bat eats up to 25 percent of its weight each night, with the smaller, hibernating species devouring nearly a million insects per bat per year. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, bats consume enough pests to save more than \$1 billion per year in crop damage and pesticides in the U.S. corn industry.

In spite of all the good that bats do, no one wants a colony residing in their soffits, behind their shutters, or in their crawl spaces. Bat colonies can be removed without harm by licensed professionals. Patriot Pest's licensed technicians will carefully remove the bats in accordance with local, state, and federal laws. Once a bat or bat colony has been relocated, the technician will bat-proof the affected space. Openings are sealed. Attic and gable vent guards are installed. Shutter exclusions are set up to prevent bats from nesting behind shutters again.



After the bats, or other animals, have vacated the premises, the technician disposes of any contaminated insulation, disinfects the area, and installs TAP® (Thermal Acoustic Pest Control) insulation. As explained on Patriot Pest's website, "TAP® is a natural fiber insulation treated with boric acid to produce fire-retardant, thermally superior, sound deadening insulation with permanent pest control properties."

Safe Tools to Keep Insects at Bay

Although wildlife removal is an essential aspect of Patriot Pest's work, pest control remains the backbone of the company. Its technicians address everything from ants, mosquitoes, bed bugs, and termites to mice and rats in both residential and commercial settings.

To keep customers as well as their pets safe, Patriot Pest uses an assortment of low odor, low toxicity tools to eradicate insects and other pests. These include baits and traps placed around a property's interior and exterior. Technicians put out only a small amount of bait in tamper-proof containers and place the containers in hard-to-reach locations. Should a family pet manage to access and eat the bait, it would not be in serious danger. According to Denice, the worst side effect would be an upset stomach.

Another extermination tool that has a little to no impact on humans and their furry companions is the aforementioned TAP® blown insulation. Registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), TAP® is made from ground up newspaper treated with boric acid. The cellulose fiber insulation provides permanent pest prevention. Note that, unless consumed or inhaled in large quantities, boric acid is acceptable for use around humans and animals. However, for insects such as ants, cockroaches, silverfish, stinkbugs, and termites, the chemical compound is fatal.

Patriot Pest technicians use TAP® to cap off or replace existing insulation. In the latter scenario, the technicians will remove and dispose of the old insulation, sanitize and repair the targeted area, and then blow in Energy Star-approved, UL-classified TAP®. By employing this environmentally sound product, Patriot Pest protects its customers from bothersome insects, keeps them cool in the summer and warm in the winter, and saves them money on energy bills.

Making Pest Control Fast and Simple

To help clients combat pests with a click of their keyboard, Patriot Pest offers an internet-based customer portal. Using this secure, online service, customers can access information about their service history, payments, and appointments at any time of day. They can schedule or update service calls and reach out with questions through the customer portal. They can also pay bills online through secure, online credit card processing.



At the 2024 Wildlife Expo in Houston, Texas. Wildlife Expo provides educational programming on wildlife techniques and control practices.



Licensed entomologist, James Harrison, holds weekly meetings to discuss cases and train his technicians on the latest techniques in pest management.



For people who feel more comfortable speaking with a live person about a suspected pest problem, Patriot has “real people answering phones, even during off hours,” Harrison said. Patriot Pest Solutions’ office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday.

The company also makes pest control easy through its service plans. Although one-time extermination visits are an option for all clients, Patriot does advise long-term service. No matter how effective a single treatment is, it will eventually wear off, allowing pests to return to a property. A customized, repeat service plan enables customers to keep their homes and offices pest-free.

For ongoing pest control, homeowners select from two different plans. With Home Pest Protection, a licensed technician first assesses the interior of a home to determine what issues exist. After inspecting the property, the technician carries out the initial service call. He will then make two additional service calls to ensure that the exterior of the property remains free from insects and wildlife. Should pests return before the next regularly scheduled visit, technicians are available for free emergency treatments.

Commercial properties may experience additional pervasive or persistent problems, such as infestation of bed bugs or cockroaches. To ensure that hotels, apartments, theaters, restaurants and retail spaces stay bug-free, Patriot Pest eliminates these bugs and trains business owners and employees on how to avoid future infestations. Patriot’s technicians work discreetly and quickly to resolve complaints without disrupting day-to-day business operations.

Helping Communities with More Than Pests

In addition to aiding homes and businesses with pest control in Montgomery, Berks, Chester, Delaware, Bucks, and Philadelphia counties, Patriot Pest Solutions helps out local charities. It supports the Southeastern Veterans’ Center’s annual golf outing, which raises funds for the veterans’ center in Spring City. It is also a sponsor of the Mid-Atlantic Air Museums’ 33rd annual WWII Weekend — A Gathering of Warbirds. The event, which runs from June 7-9, 2024, honors WW II and other military veterans.

Furthermore, Patriot Pest gives back to the region by donating its services to such local nonprofits as Phoenixville Women’s Outreach’s “The House” and Philadelphia veterans services. As it is highly invested in the community, Patriot Pest works with other local businesses whenever possible.

Denice belongs to the Perkiomen Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Phoenixville Regional Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, Ryan Ritchey is a member of the local chapter of BNI (Business Network International). BNI is a global business networking organization with over 300,000 members in 75 countries.

New, Expanded Facility in Limerick

To meet the demands of its growing business, in 2023, Patriot Pest moved from its Collegeville location, where it had been for the previous 10 years, to 156 West Ridge Pike in Limerick. The new location consists of two buildings,

one of which houses James’ office on the ground floor and conference space on the second floor. This is where James, a licensed entomologist, holds weekly meetings to discuss cases and train his technicians on the latest techniques in pest management. The other building houses the office and field staff. The site possesses parking for more trucks — over 20 spaces — and more technicians.

“My family is in the area, and we have been in Limerick for 26 years, so we knew that we wanted to stay local. We simply outgrew our old space,” Harrison said.

For additional information about Patriot Pest Solutions or to schedule an appointment, visit the company’s website at <https://www.patriotpestsolutions.net/>. You can also email info@patriotpestsolutions.net or call 610.854.8941.

