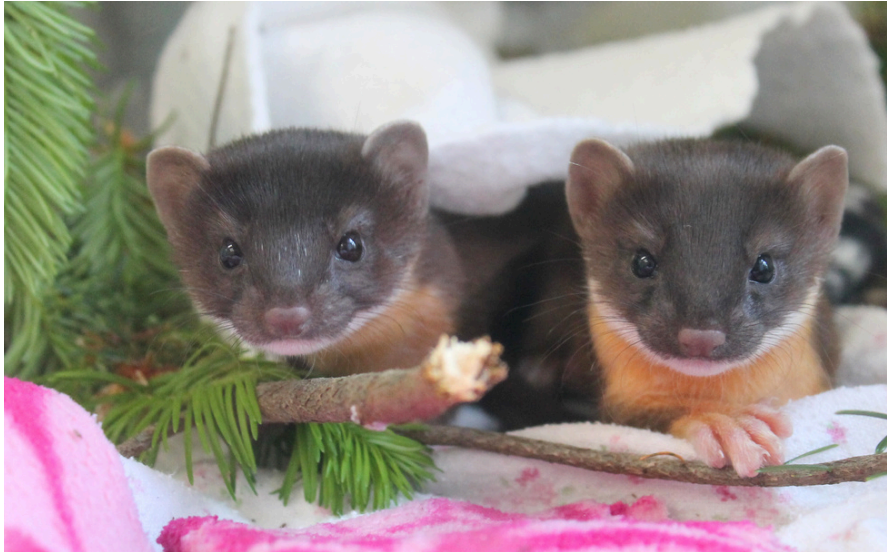


Living With Wildlife: AMERICAN MINK & WEASELS



ISSUE - KILLING CHICKENS

Note: Weasels and mink are flexible and can squeeze through very small holes, allowing them access to chicken coops that have been secured against other animals like raccoons and foxes.

Suggestions:

- Fill any holes larger than 1 inch in diameter in the walls or fencing surrounding the chickens using a heavy material (preferably metal to avoid future holes made by other rodents).
- Secure the area using ¼ inch hardware cloth. Extend it along the bottom of the fence or coop and bury it up to 8 inches underground to deter creatures trying to dig their way in.
- Place paving slabs along the perimeter.
- Avoid building your coop directly on the ground. Instead, install a concrete floor or raise the coop.
- Motion-activated lights or a radio set to a talk radio station are good deterrents during the night.

Weasels and mink occasionally exhibit a trait known as 'surplus killing,' where they kill more than they can eat in one sitting and will place the deceased prey in a pile. Both weasels and mink kill their prey by quickly biting through the skull or back of the neck. Some chickens may be missing their heads and partially plucked but not fully eaten. Normally, this behavior occurs at their den, but it may also occur inside/near your coop.



Avoid approaching weasels and mink. While they rarely attack humans, they are able to emit a foul-smelling spray from their anal glands, similar to that of a skunk.