



## ***Not a Creature Was Stirring*** **The Dangers of Rodenticide**

As we shutter our homes up to stave off the cold, other creatures find refuge in the warm environments we create. So what do we do when we see that cute field mouse scamper across the kitchen floor, we go to the closet and place poison where we know this mouse will venture. Problem solved, right?

Some may have some guilt thinking about what happened to that poor mouse, but just like the nursery rhyme, *There Once Was a Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*, that may not be the end of the story. Once the mouse has feasted, he ventures back to his nest, where perhaps an owl sees an easy midnight snack. The owl gets more than he bargained for with a belly full of rodenticide.

*There once was an owl, who swallowed a mouse;  
Swallowed the mouse, that came out of the house.*

*He swallowed the mouse, who swallowed some  
bait*

*Swallowed the bait, put down in hate*

*I don't know why he swallowed the bait...but now,  
what is their fate?*

This nursery rhyme rings true for far too many of our avian friends, and continues up the food chain. And who can stop at just one mouse?

In the worst of cases, rodenticides which are anticoagulants, can cause animals to bleed to death internally. Sub-lethal impacts include suppression of the immune system, reduced overall health, and changes in behavior that can negatively impact their survivability.

Ok I get it, the mouse must go, but how can you protect to home without causing harm others? Firstly, prevent easy access to your house by sealing entrances or holes in your foundation. Seal all potential entrances with wire mesh, steel wool, or expanding foam. Secondly, eliminate the food source. Clean up after yourselves, don't leave those dirty dishes in the sink till morning. Also clean up after your pets or make sure the left over bird seed in the closet is sealed. Thirdly, let the food chain work for you. Install an owl box in your yard to naturally keep your rodent population in check. If you find trapping is still necessary, use other forms of traps, such as snap or glue traps.

As humans, we are uniquely capable of problem solving. Have a heart...Out smart!

