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### California OKs Strongest Rat Poison Restrictions in Nation

SACRAMENTO, *Calif.*— Gov. Gavin Newsom signed tighter rat poison restrictions into law [today](#), expanding an existing moratorium to include all blood-thinning rat poisons, known as anticoagulant rodenticides. The Poison-Free Wildlife Act, or [Assembly Bill 2552](#), offers the strongest protections in the country against these toxic rat poisons, which unintentionally harm and kill wildlife.

“This important legislation shows why California is an environmental leader. We’re willing to fight for wildlife protections,” said J.P. Rose, Urban Wildlands policy director at the Center for Biological Diversity. “Birds, foxes and pumas shouldn’t be sacrificed every time there’s a pest problem. It’s a relief to know the deadliest rat poisons will soon be off the market here.”

A.B. 2552 builds upon existing legislation that set restrictions on certain kinds of anticoagulant rodenticides. But secondary poisoning is still widespread, with many imperiled species including mountain lions, San Joaquin kit foxes and northern spotted owls needlessly harmed or killed. Wild animals that eat poisoned rodents get poisoned themselves and suffer from internal bleeding, mange or organ failure. Some are so sick they are unable to find food or avoid predators.

A recent California Department of Fish and Wildlife study found that 88% of raptors and 95% of mountain lions tested had exposure to anticoagulant rodenticides.

“If we use these poisons, we poison one of the very best solutions to rodent control,” said Lisa Owens Viani, director of Raptors Are The Solution. “With the passage of A.B. 2552, our birds of prey will be much safer.”

A.B. 2552, which is sponsored by the Center, Raptors Are The Solution and Animal Legal Defense Fund, would restrict the sale and use of first-generation anticoagulant rodenticides chlorophacinone and warfarin. The moratorium would allow for rodenticide use to protect agriculture, water supplies and public health.

“We are thrilled that California wildlife will be given a reprieve from another unnecessary threat to their already difficult co-existence with humans,” said Jennifer Hauge, Animal Legal Defense Fund senior legislative affairs manager. “May this new comprehensive moratorium on all anticoagulant rodenticides in the state lead the way for the same innovation across the country where wildlife are also embattled.”

There are other effective ways to manage a rodent infestation that don’t involve using toxic rat poisons that harm other animals. Among these are exclusion, sanitation, fertility control and a variety of traps. To learn more about these alternatives, visit [this page](#). To learn myths and facts about the Poison-Free Wildlife Act, visit [this page](#).



Northern spotted owl and other wildlife can suffer from secondary poisoning after eating a rodent that has been poisoned. Photo credit: Tom Kogut. [Image is available for media use.](#)

*The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.7 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.*

*Raptors Are The Solution, a Berkeley-based project of Earth Island Institute, educates people about the widespread dangers of anticoagulant rat poisons in the food web and their impacts on birds of prey and other wildlife as well as about safe alternatives to rodenticides.*  
*Raptorsarethesolution.org*

*The Animal Legal Defense Fund was founded in 1979 to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals through the legal system. To accomplish this mission, the Animal Legal Defense Fund files high-impact lawsuits to protect animals from harm; provides free legal assistance and training to prosecutors to assure that animal abusers are held accountable for their crimes; supports tough animal protection legislation and fights harmful legislation; and provides resources and opportunities to law students and professionals to advance the emerging field of animal law. For more information, please visit [aldf.org](http://aldf.org).*

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