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## **USDA Study finds Motion-Activated ScareCrow Effective for Dispersing Vultures**

**Victoria, Canada (April 03, 2006)** As part of an ongoing environmental study, scientists at the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) — a division of the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service — have identified the motion-activated sprinkler as an effective tool for dispersing black vultures and turkey vultures from homes and businesses. The study notes that in recent years, reports of vulture-related problems such as property damage and livestock predation have noticeably increased, due in part to major increases in the populations of these birds across North America.

Comparing traditional measures such as vulture effigies with newer technologies including laser and water-based deterrents, the NWRC study found the motion-activated ScareCrow® animal deterrent from Contech Electronics to be particularly effective at dispersing the vultures, and keeping them away. Designed to repel troublesome animals with a harmless yet startling spray of water, the ScareCrow is commonly used by gardeners to protect plants and decorative ponds from hungry deer, pets and birds such as heron and geese. Now in areas where vulture populations routinely damage homes and businesses, threaten livestock and even pose a danger to aircraft, the motion-activated sprinkler has proven useful for dispersing the birds from rooftops.

Through a series of experiments at its Gainesville, Florida field station and field sites throughout the region — the NWRC set out to better understand the ecology and behavior of these birds, and evaluate their responses to management efforts. Dr. Michael L. Avery, supervisory research wildlife biologist in charge of the project, reports the preliminary results were significant. Before the ScareCrow devices were installed, vultures perched on test roofs 72% of the time, but after the devices had been in place for three days, this number dropped to just 1.6%. Avery also noted that if the ScareCrow was deactivated, birds resumed using the roof within several hours, concluding that to keep vultures from returning, the device should remain activated.

To confirm these findings in a real-world setting, a field trial was conducted at a residence with a history of vulture problems, near St. Petersburg, Florida. The results once again confirmed the motion-activated sprinkler as an efficient and effective vulture deterrent, noting that the installation of just two of the units eliminated vulture-perching on the roof of the house. For more on this study, see the NWRC's web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/nwrc/research/vultures/>.

The ScareCrow motion-activated animal deterrent is available now from Contech Electronics. For more information, visit [www.scarecrowinfo.com](http://www.scarecrowinfo.com), call 1-800-767-8658 or e-mail [info@contech-inc.com](mailto:info@contech-inc.com).

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**About Contech Electronics** *Established in 1987, Contech Electronics is a designer and provider of advanced animal training, control and wellness products for pet owners and gardeners all over the world. From its headquarters in Victoria, Canada, Contech oversees the development, manufacture and distribution of a growing range of products designed to promote harmony between animals and humans. Safe and effective solutions such as the ScatMat pet training mat and the ScareCrow outdoor animal deterrent have made Contech a favourite among pet owners and gardeners alike, and continue to reinforce the company's reputation as a leading innovator. Contech products are available online at [www.contech-inc.com](http://www.contech-inc.com), through pet and garden stores, and from large retailers including Home Depot, Target and Costco. For more information, visit [www.contech-inc.com](http://www.contech-inc.com).*