

THE STRAITS TIMES

Use of rat poison could harm other species

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Birdwatchers had gathered in Sin Ming Drive to take pictures of two juvenile goshawks with their parents.

Many images of the adult goshawks feeding rats to their young have circulated online.

One of the juvenile goshawks was found dead last Friday, and speculation among bird and wildlife enthusiasts was that the death could have been caused by rat poison.

It is unclear whether the bird's body was recovered for a proper evaluation, though rat poison had been used in the vicinity to control a rat problem.

It is a major public health concern when rats are found close to human dwellings.

While we are extremely concerned with Covid-19 (and rightly so), we should not forget to ensure proper hygiene standards and avoid rat infestations.

It is exceedingly difficult to control rats using chemicals, without causing some collateral damage to other species, like pet cats.

The use of such poisonous chemicals needs to be followed up with several important codes of practice, including the collection and proper disposal of dead rats.

The death of the juvenile goshawk should not be taken lightly.

The authorities should review how the rat infestation in Sin Ming Drive is managed.

The National Environment Agency should review how pest control companies deploy rodenticides and deal with rat carcasses, as there can be collateral damage to other species.

It is exceedingly difficult to control rats using chemicals, without causing some collateral damage to other species, like pet cats.

Finally, we must not forget such chemicals can escape into the environment and indirectly cause us harm.

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