

Lizards and Chemicals

Can I use Goo Gone to remove the sticky trap glue from a lizard?

By Margaret A. Wissman, DVM, DABVP

We live in Phoenix, Ariz. One of our scorpion traps trapped a lizard, actually a very big lizard, which almost looks like a monitor. Anyway, the traps are so sticky, and the only way I could think to get him off was to use Goo Gone, which worked. We rinsed him off as well as we could because I didn't know how the Goo Gone would affect the lizard. He still has some of the sticky stuff underneath his jaw, and his right front leg and claws seem to be slightly injured. The back end of his tail is broken as well, a result of trying to get out of the trap himself. Anyway, I want to set him back out into the wild, but I'm worried about the additional sticky stuff on him. Can I use more Goo Gone to remove the sticky stuff or let him be?

It is admirable of your family to attempt to clean off the sticky stuff from the trapped lizard, and I'm sure in his own scaly way, he really appreciated the help.

I, too, have used Goo Gone in the past to remove that horribly tenacious glue found on mouse traps, bug traps and fly traps. It is made from petroleum distillates, so it is quite toxic, and it was not designed to be used on skin, scaled or otherwise. After application, wash the skin thoroughly with soapy water to remove any residue.

I have recently found another and much less toxic way to remove trap glue. Peanut butter, it turns out, is a wonderful solvent for this type of glue. You can apply it without fear of toxic absorption through the skin. Just smear some peanut butter (smooth and creamy would be kinder than chunky, I assume) and rub it around until the glue is removed.

Once you have accomplished that, you may want to soak the lizard in some tepid water to allow him to drink. Keep the water shallow enough so he cannot drown if he is weakened, and watch him. Remove him after about 20 minutes. Once he is hydrated, you can send him on his way.

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