

Living With Opossum

Opossum Facts

Opossums are among the most primitive mammals. Fossil ancestry goes back 70 Million years. They have survived by adapting to human habitat and being able to eat just about anything. They are beneficial in that they help to keep the balance of nature.

Opossums are often mistaken for rats. They are not rodents, they are marsupials. They are not aggressive toward humans or pets but they will attempt to defend themselves if cornered. They are relatively disease free. They do not carry Parvo virus, distemper or rabies. They are actually an excellent animal to have around your property because they eat rats, mice, snails, slugs and insects. They also eat over ripe fruit that has fallen to the ground. They are called "omnivores" because they eat meat as well as vegetables and fruit.

Opossums are nest builders. They are also nocturnal. They spend much of the day in their dens. At night, they forage for food. They are excellent climbers using all their hands, feet and tail to grasp.

If you don't want opossums around your house:

- * Pick up all pet food
- * Keep a tight lid on all garbage cans
- * Pick fruit as soon as it is ripe or pick it up soon after it falls to the ground
- * Block holes in fences and buildings with wire or wood
- * Soak rags in ammonia and strategically place them around the area you are trying to keep opossums from entering. The smell of ammonia is annoying to opossum and will usually drive them away.

Adult Opossum Containment

- * Put a box or laundry basket over the opossum and weigh down the box with a brick or rock.
- * Call Project Wildlife or page the opossum team at 858-347-0015.

Baby Opossum Containment

- * Put the baby (or babies) in box with air holes
- * Place a heating pad set on "low" beneath the box
- * Place an old t-shirt in the box to give the babies something to snuggle under
- * Do not give anything by mouth, this can cause death
- * Call Project Wildlife or page the opossum team at 858-347-0015

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