

# Skunks 101

## *Skunk Facts That Don't Stink*



- Skunks are nocturnal, meaning they are most active at night
- Their diet primarily consists of insects and small rodents, such as mice
- Skunks will also eat farm eggs and pet food, including dog food, if available
- They are known to raid beehives in search of food
- Skunks do not fully hibernate but become less active during the winter months
- A typical litter includes 4 to 7 kits
- Young skunks usually disperse 5–10 km, though some may travel up to 50 km
- Most skunks live about one year, but they can survive up to seven years in the wild
- Skunks are not protected wildlife in Alberta
- They have an excellent sense of smell but poor eyesight



## Preventing Skunks from Taking Up Residence

- Block off access points where skunks may seek shelter, such as under decks, sheds, or homes
- Clear brush piles and remove unused vehicles, as these provide attractive denning sites
- Eliminate easily accessible food sources, including pet food and fallen eggs.
- Skunks dislike strong odours; placing mothballs under buildings may help deter them

## What to Do If You Encounter a Skunk

- If a skunk enters a home or other building, open a door and allow it to leave on its own. Avoid cornering or agitating the animal, as this may cause it to spray
- It is illegal to use poison to kill nuisance skunks
- Skunks typically den during the winter months, making this the safest and most effective time to remove them and dismantle any shelters they have created on your property

