



Yes we can!
Live in Harmony With Wildlife





This brochure was created to promote public awareness of the need to protect our furred and feathered friends. With growing concern and increased public awareness of local wildlife issues, we hope foster an appreciation and respect for the workings of the natural world in which we live and the responsibilities we all share as custodians of our environment.



Many different wildlife species reside in the parks, fields and neighbourhoods within our communities. As we pave new roads for our many new subdivisions and shopping malls, we destroy more natural areas. This forces many mammals and birds to migrate across busy, unfamiliar roadways.

As wildlife species lose their homes and food sources they must resort to finding food in our neighbourhoods and raising their litters in our backyards. As a result, we may be suddenly surprised to find that we are sharing our backyard with a litter of baby bunnies or that a bird has made an unwanted nest in



the flowerpot on our porch. Many of these struggling species are trapped or killed in a very cruel manner for the sake of or out of

convenience, fear or ignorance.

Preventing Wildlife Conflicts

Conflicts with wildlife do arise and the first step in learning to live in harmony with wildlife is to learn to understand nature itself.

There is a tendency on the part of some home-owners to adopt a band-aid approach to wildlife intrusion problems - dealing only with short-term solutions to the existing problem and neglecting other potential problem areas. Preventive measures have proven to be less costly and less stressful for both the homeowner and wildlife. Take a minute before acting to:



STOP - Learn about the species that has you concerned.



LOOK and LISTEN - Assess the situation and watch the mammal's or bird's routine, habits, and needs.

EVALUATE your property to see if you have some repairs to be done, an area that could be made less inviting, or a food source that should be eliminated.

But most of all, don't think you are the only one sharing your property with an unfamiliar guest. With a little knowledge you can reduce or eliminate conflicts and live in harmony with urban wildlife.





But Where Do I Start? 1. If an animal has nested in or under your house place a light and radio near the nesting place and keep the radio on loud during the day.

Remember, wildlife prefer quiet, dark and warm spots. Locate all entrances and exits, and then seal these spots with strong, durable materials such as wire mesh after making sure all animals have left. **BE SURE NO ANIMALS WILL BE TRAPPED.**

TIP: A good way to make sure everyone is out before sealing is to sprinkle a layer of flour on the area outside the opening(s). Once you see footprints in the flour that face away from the opening you know your tenant is out and about. **BUT BEWARE**-you should avoid sealing holes during the spring and summer when animals are raising their young. The trapped babies will die a slow and painful death and their mother will cause damage trying to retrieve them.

TIP: If an adult mammal returns to a sealed area and won't leave, she most likely has babies in that nest or den. Remove the seal and give her a few hours to remove the babies. It takes time for her to move all her babies out and relocate them. Please be patient. Mom and babies should never be separated.



2. Raccoons, skunks and opossums like dry, dark, and quiet places. Just before dusk, turn a hose on **low** and slip it under the porch or shed to allow the area to become soggy. **Don't allow the area to flood!**

Watch the animal or animal family to see if they leave. Repeat this for three nights in a row (keeping the den damp), and then close up the empty area. Many people have tried this and say it works, but please call an expert if you have any questions. Do not leave a hose unattended - flooding the area could cause serious damage to your property.



3. If your lawn appears to be dug up you most likely you have grubs. Grubs attract wildlife. Contact your local lawn company for advice.

4. Make sure all garbage is placed in sturdy plastic or metal containers with secure lids to deter animals from making a mess on your property. Don't place garbage outside until 6:am on the morning of pick-up and **ONLY** on your scheduled collection day. For information on Herby Curby carts, please call 519-948-5854 or visit www.herbycurby.com.

TIP: Freeze foods more susceptible to odours (meat, fish scraps, fruits and vegetables) until garbage is put out for collection, or wrap food waste in a news-paper/paper bag to absorb moisture and reduce odors.





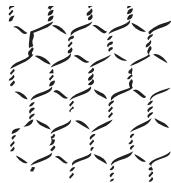
5. Thoroughly rinse all cans and bottles of food deposits before putting them out for recycling.

Many animals have a good sense of smell, and will be attracted to the food residue. This not only draws wildlife to your yard, but also poses a serious danger to wildlife who can become trapped when they try to reach the remaining morsels at the bottom.

6. Remove attractants such as garbage, dog or cat food, and open compost piles. Plant fruit trees and vegetable gardens away from your house or at the rear of your property.

7. Place chicken wire fence or nylon netting on a frame around vegetable gardens and flower beds.

8. Securely close off the areas around decks, hot tubs and sheds with chicken wire or hardware cloth. It is important to sink it down 8 inches into the ground, and bend it at a 45° angle in a reverse “L” shape to create a false bottom at least 12 inches away from the building.



9. Keep your yard free of debris. Raise wood-piles off the ground to prevent the creation of nesting spots.

10. To deter wildlife from staying, place rags soaked in ammonia around nest openings. Do not do this if babies are in the nest.

11. Don't leave your shed or garage door open for a long period of time or you may have an unexpected guest wander in.

12. Replace worn shingles and ripped screens. Secure vents (bathroom, kitchen, dryer, roof) with wire mesh and ensure that chimneys have a guard.

TIP: If an animal is trapped in your chimney, hang a 3/4 inch rope down into your chimney to allow a means to escape. This doesn't work for young, phaned wildlife.



13. Trim back trees and bushes 15 feet from your roof's edge to prevent animals from having access to your roof. Always check for nests **before** trimming any trees or bushes.


14. Cover planters with chicken wire to prevent animals from digging in them.

15. Screen over window wells to prevent animals from falling in and getting trapped.

TIP: If an animal falls into an un-screened window well place a 2x4 in the well on an incline to allow escape.





 16. If a squirrel is trapped in your house, confine the squirrel to one room and open a window or door. If this doesn't work, make a fake wall using a sheet, hold the sheet up in front of two people, and walk the squirrel outside

17. On balconies, hang items that will blow and make noise in the wind. These can include pie plates, "scary eyes", balloons, kites, pinwheels, or plastic bags. You can also spread a Slinky toy on the railing to block access. Another option is to use flexible nylon netting to block access to the balcony.


18. Place a plastic owl or hawk decoy in a problem area - these are natural predators of most birds. Move the decoy to a different spot from time to time for it to remain effective.



19 Do you have a duckling in your pool? Ducklings will drown if left too long in the water because young ducks lack the natural oils needed in their feathers to stay afloat.

You can scoop ducklings out of the water with a skimmer or net, or place a board at least four-inches wide or a floatie on the edge of the pool to give the duckling a ramp to exit the water.



 20. Cover ponds with netting or string wires across them. Erect 4-5 foot poles around the outside of your pond to prevent birds such as herons from landing in the area. To make this even more effective, tie plastic bags, balloons or pie plates to the poles. Leave poles up for several days.

21. Birds are territorial and may attack your window upon seeing their reflection. Birds seeing their reflection try to fight or mate with their image. Hang items in your window or tape newspaper or garbage bags to the glass for a few days to prevent birds from flying into them. Soon they will become discouraged and move on. Items hung in front of your window will also reduce the chances of a bird crashing into it.



22. Spread human hair, cayenne pepper, or bone meal around your plants and don't plant all your plants together in one spot. Mix plants between roses or marigolds, which taste bad to most wildlife species.

23. Eliminate water sources such as leaky taps and standing water.





24. When cutting your grass, watch out for rabbit nests. If you find one in your grass, play it safe by placing a box or a recycle bin over the nest and leaving a three-inch area of lawn uncut around the bin. Remove the bin when you are done cutting to allow the mother rabbit access to her waiting young. In three weeks the bunnies should have moved on.



25. Not all birds nest in trees. The Killdeer will lay her eggs in stones and raise her young on the ground. If you come too close, she may pretend to have a broken wing to lead you away from her young.

NOTE: Most tips and deterrents in this brochure will work on one or more of the species listed. If you would like more detail about what tips work best for a specific species, please seek assistance from one of the organizations listed on the last page of this brochure.

Important!

Wild animals who are injured do not understand your concern and won't want your help even if they need it. Always make your own safety a priority, and be sure to call for assistance if you are unsure of what to do. Wildlife rehabilitators and other experts are available to help and provide answers to your questions.



STRIPED SKUNK

Size: 22-32 inches.
Weight: 8-12 lbs. A stocky, short-legged, black mammal with a bushy tail.

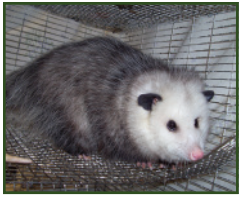
The tail has a white stripe, which divides in two on its body and joins as one on its head. The skunk is near-sighted and has long, sharp claws that are used to dig for food.

Skunks have scent glands that are located underneath their tail on both sides of their rectum. These scent glands fill with musky oil that is very strong smelling. When threatened, they spray to defend themselves. The adult skunk usually gives warning before spraying this strong fragrance by: 1: Arching its back. 2: Stamping its front feet 3: Growling and turning around (at this point watch out!). The spray can reach 10-12 feet and be smelled for miles.

Gestation period: 62 to 68 days, late May and early June. **Litter:** 3-8 young. Young are born blind and hairless. The babies show their distinctive black and white pattern on their skin. Eyes open at three weeks. They become active at six weeks, leaving the nest to hunt with mom.

Diet: insects, grubs, small mammals, earthworms, snails, nuts, fruit, birds, eggs, vegetation, garbage. **Habitat:** fields, fence rows, culverts, under buildings, woodpiles.





OPOSSUM

Size: 31-33 inches. Weight: 4-8 lbs. A stocky, short-legged, clumsy and slow mammal.

Fur is coarse and blondish-gray.

The opossum has a long, pointed, pinkish snout; large, hairless ears and tail, and small, beady eyes. The adult opossum plays dead when frightened, and when nervous will drool in an attempt to look fierce. Opossums roam more freely at night.

Gestation period: 13 days, spring, summer, and fall. Litter: 16-20 young. Newborns weigh 1/15 of an ounce and are the size of a grain of rice. Hairless and blind, they crawl up to their mother's pouch where they must connect to one of her thirteen nipples. Babies who don't connect to a nipple don't survive. The young grow up to ten times their size each week, but stay attached for several months. At two months, they start leaving the pouch to ride on their mother's back. By three months they forage for food with their mom.

Diet: carrion, fruit, vegetables, insects, frogs, eggs, earthworms. They have been known to eat cat and dog food or garbage. Habitat: favour dens on the ground and woodlands but adapt to all lifestyles; seem not to fear people.



EASTERN GREY SQUIRREL

Size: 17-20 inches Weight: 1 - 1 1/2 lbs. A small, bushy mammal; colour varies from reddish brown to black to gray tones with light undersides. They are known to be very verbal and great

climbers. Their bushy tails are used to communicate with other squirrels, as a blanket or umbrella, or for balance.

Gestation period: 44 days, early spring and late summer. They produce 2 litters a year.



Litter: 2-6 young.

They are born naked and blind with ears folded up flat against their head. At 1 week

they are haired. At 4 weeks they are fully-furred with ears open, although they are completely helpless until their eyes open at 5 weeks. They are weaned at about 6 to 8 weeks and go out to forage with mom when they are about 3 months old.

Diet: buds, fruit, nuts, seeds, insects, vegetables, small birds, eggs, and twigs. Habitat: wood lots, parks and trees.





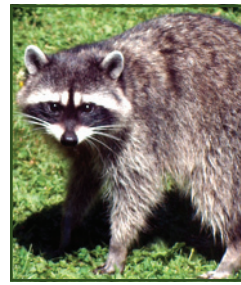
COTTONTAIL RABBIT

Size: 14-18 inches. Weight: 2-3 lbs. A small, grayish-brown mammal mottled with white and beige. They

have shorter front legs than rear and a puffy pom-pom tail. Cottontails have long ears and a twitchy nose. They are jumpy and very high-strung and are not easily confined. They die of stress easily.

Gestation period: 28 days, spring, summer and fall. Nest is shallow, dinner plate sized, 3-4 inches deep and lined with mom's fur. Mom will dig her nest on lawns in full view. Litter: 1-8 young. Babies are born with their eyes closed and no fur. Mom leaves them to snuggle while she grazes on vegetation. She only returns at night and early morning to feed them to avoid alerting predators to her young. The babies's eyes open by seven days and they begin to nibble the grass. By two weeks they start to venture from the nest and by three weeks they are 3-4 inches long with the white mark fading on their forehead and they cautiously leave to be on their own. **IF LEFT UNDISTURBED MOM WILL CARE FOR HER YOUNG** and the fastest maturing mammal will disperse within 3 weeks.

Diet: shoots, roots and vegetation. Habitat: neighbourhoods, woodlots, and grasslands.



RACCOON

Size: 26- 40 inches Weight: 15-25 lbs. A chunky, bushy, striped, ring-tailed mammal with a pointed nose. Grayish brown and black with white guard hairs. Black mask

edged in white around the eyes. They are very smart and versatile, expert climbers, and adaptable to many situations. Raccoons are primarily nocturnal and use their paws like human hands.

Gestation period: 9 weeks, born early spring. Litter: 3-6 young (kits). At birth the kits have soft, fuzzy, brownish-coloured coats and their eyes are closed. Mother raccoons are very dedicated to their young and do not like to be disturbed. The kits' eyes open at 3 weeks. Mom only leaves to eat; the kits nurse for 6-8 weeks. After that, mom trains them to climb and hunt.

Mother and babies should not be separated during these stages as mom stays with her young for their whole first year. The babies rely on their mom and do not mature until their second year.

Diet: grubs, insects, crayfish, frogs, small mammals, bird eggs and garbage. Habitat: trees, wood lots, and ravines. They favour dens up and away but easily adopt to many situations.





BIRDS Passerines are small to medium-sized perching birds. This category includes pigeons, doves, jays, blackbirds, finches, warblers and sparrows. Nestling birds are naked and helpless. Fledgling birds have down and some feathers and may coast-fly, but are still being fed by their parents. They leave the nest within three weeks. Size: 4-12 inches. Eggs: 2-7. Incubation: 10-18 days.

Both parents feed passerine bird babies.

If a baby bird falls out the nest can you put it back in? Birds can't pick up or carry their young, but you can try by putting on a glove and returning the baby at once. Make sure you put it in the right nest! If you can't reach the nest, you can place the bird inside a hanging basket, shallow pail, or an 8-inch plant pot filled with dry grass clippings. Place it as close to the nest as possible (only a few feet away at most is best), being sure to keep it away from predators. This won't work for fallen eggs because they don't make any noise to attract the parents to the new location.



IMPORTANT: If you return fallen young birds to their nest you must watch the nest for several hours to ensure that an adult bird returns to feed the babies. If not, **SEEK ASSISTANCE from a wildlife rehabilitator immediately.** Nestling birds eat ten times their body weight a day and must be fed every fifteen minutes.



Birds do not carry rabies, but they may have small bugs on them such as lice and flat flies. These bugs do not live on humans.

Water Birds-This category includes ducks and geese. Size: 24-45 inches. Eggs: 8-10. Incubation: 26-30 days.



Although geese and ducks prefer natural settings to nest, it is very common for waterfowl (especially mallards) to nest in yards under shrubbery (although wood duck actually nest in trees). With Canada geese, both parents will incubate and raise the young. However, female mallard ducks incubate and rear their babies alone. Once the ducklings or goslings hatch, the parent(s) will try to lead the young to water. This can be a very hazardous trip if no water is nearby. The babies risk being hit by cars or falling into sewers or swimming pools. Please call a wildlife rehabilitator for advice if you have any concerns.



DEER live in the city limits and typically get along quite well. They adapt to many city areas without getting into trouble although during rutting season in the fall they travel more, which can put them at risk. Be cautious while driving, especially where "Deer Crossing" signs are posted.





Mother deer leave their fawns unattended for many hours while they graze nearby. This is their way of avoiding attracting predators to their young. It is common for deer to have twins and sometimes triplets. If you see a fawn on its own and you are unsure if it is an orphan, please call a wildlife rehabilitator before taking any action.

FOXES AND COYOTES can also be found in urban areas. They have their young in the spring and are very shy mammals that prefer to stay away from humans. Fox babies are called kits, while coyote babies are called pups. Both species will have litters 4 to 6. It is normal for a fox or coyote to walk around in the daytime, especially if a food source is more available during the day. Although they sometimes live on their own, coyotes and foxes typically live in packs. It is not normal for a fox or coyote to come right into your yard near your house; this behaviour should be discouraged. Try banging on a pot or pan with a spoon, turning a hose on the animal, or using some of the other tips mentioned in this brochure. If the same fox or coyote keeps coming back, it could be a young of the year who hasn't matured enough to support itself. Please call a wildlife rehabilitator immediately if the animal in question has large scabs and fur missing, or appears to be weak and in poor condition.



Should I trap and relocate the animal?

Trapping is not an effective method of wildlife control because it doesn't address the availability of food and shelter. Trapped wildlife can suffer severe self-injury in their attempts to escape and this is more probable the longer they are in a trap. Furthermore, relocation of the captured animals adds to the stress of being in an unfamiliar territory, increases the potential for transmission of infectious diseases and increases conflict between animals (especially during the spring and summer).



In many instances, it separates mother from babies and will result in the death of the dependant offspring. Studies done by the Ministry of Natural Resources show that 60 percent of relocated raccoons die in the first year. If you decide to set a trap for an animal it is your responsibility to check it frequently and ensure the safe and humane relocation of the animal.

IT IS THE LAW Under the provisions of Ontario's **Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act**, members of the public who find a wild animal in distress are legally required to deliver it within 24 hours to a wildlife custodian or a veterinarian, or they must contact the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Still Need Help

Wings Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre 519-736-8172 www.wingsrehab.ca
Ojibway Nature Centre 519-966-5852 www.ojibway.ca
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources 519-354-7340 www.mnr.gov.on.ca

Ontario Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Network: www.owren-online.org
City Of Windsor Information Line: 311 www.citywindsor.ca
Windsor Essex County Humane Society 519-966-5751 www.windsorhumane.org