

Opossum



Although opossums may look odd, they are relatively slow moving, and rarely attack unless cornered. Opossums are nature's garbage disposal, eating fallen fruit before it rots, as well as eating crickets, beetles, mice, and other household pests. Opossums do not dig up yards, although they will eat from your garden, compost or garbage and may raid a chicken coop given the opportunity. They are well-known for their trick of "playing dead" to avoid confrontations with humans and other animals. There are many ways to deter nuisance opossums on your property.

Don't Feed Wildlife

- Remove potential food sources for opossums such as open garbage cans and pet food bowls.
- Spraying your lawn and garden with an insecticide will reduce the number of natural prey items available to an opossum, and may deter them from visiting the area.

Protect Your Pet

- Keep cats indoors and always supervise pets when outdoors. Only leave pets unattended when they are secure in a kennel with a covered top.
- Before letting your dog out at night, turn on a bright light and scan the area for opossums.

Discourage Opossums

- Exclude opossums from buildings on your property by securing holes and other openings, but be sure opossums are out of the building before doing so! Remove potential habitat such as rock or wood piles. These items provide shelter to opossums and encourage them to use an area.
- Tightly lid garbage cans and use a contained or closed compost bin to discourage opossums from accessing garbage and compost.
- Opossums are nocturnal creatures, so the use of bright spotlights in an area frequented by opossums can deter use of that area. Always be mindful of neighbors, and don't shine lights into windows.
- If an opossum takes up residence under your porch or shed, leaving a radio playing continuously may encourage the animal to leave.



Quick Facts

- The opossum is the only native marsupial found in the U.S.
- Opossum young stay in the mother's pouch for the first 2-3 months of life.
- Opossums have opposable "thumbs" on its rear feet and prehensile tails, both of which provide them with advanced climbing skills.
- The opossum has a total of 50 teeth, the most of any North American mammal.
- Opossum trapping and hunting is legal year-round with the appropriate license. However, opossums that are a nuisance or causing damage may be removed by the landowner or occupant without a license. Many municipalities in Wisconsin have specific regulations regarding the discharge of firearms. Please check with your local government to ensure adherence to local ordinances.

For more information, visit our webpage:

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