

Skunks

Skunk sightings in the area have increased over the past month. This may be due to young skunks beginning to leave the den, which typically occurs late June or early July, or, due to increased activity to find food in preparation of the upcoming winter.

Skunks can be found in many areas of our region as the animals have adapted well to urban areas. With limited natural predators and opportunities for shelter and food, skunks can thrive in populated areas.

There is no City program to remove a skunk or skunks but there are precautions residents can take, such as:

- **Remain calm when encountering a skunk.** Should you encounter a skunk, speak softly and move away in order to give it room to leave.
- **Secure any garbage.** Skunks will raid open trash materials and compost piles. Secure your garbage in tough secure containers with tight fitting lids and keep in secure buildings when possible.
- **Feed pets indoors.** Pet food outdoors can attract skunks.
- **Close off crawl spaces under porches and sheds.** Skunks will use such areas for resting and raising young. Close shed and garage doors at night, and use chicken wire to keep skunks from digging under porches, decks or sheds.
- **Keep bird feeder areas clean.** Use feeders designed to keep seed off the ground as the seeds can attract skunks. Remove feeders if skunks are seen regularly around your yard.
- **Educate your neighbors.** Let your neighbors know, as they could be unintentionally providing food or shelter for skunks.

If you wish to have a skunk removed from your property, you can contact a wildlife control or nuisance animal company.

For more information on skunks visit:

http://www.dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildlife/furbearers/striped_skunk.htm

http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife/directory_show.cfm?species=skunk