

Trapping

Strathcona County provides skunk traps on a rental basis for a two week period.

Please follow the trap instructions carefully.



Setting the trap

- Set the trap close to the opening of the den or near the skunk's normal line of travel.
- Push in on the springs on the door and lift at the same time. The trap's trigger mechanism is located at the top of the door and hooks onto the bar connected to the pan in the bottom of the trap.
- Do not make any adjustments to the trap. If the trap does not work properly, please contact Transportation and Agriculture Services for assistance.

When to set the trap

- Set the trap in the evening before dusk. Skunks are more active at night.
- Set the trap Sunday through Thursday nights. Be sure to close the trap on Friday morning and do not reset until Sunday night.
- Staff are available to pick up captured skunks Monday to Friday (8:30 am - 4:30 pm).

Baiting the trap

- Place the bait through the inspection port located on the top rear of the trap. Bread, raw wieners and raw bacon work well for attracting skunks. Pet food and sardines are not recommended as they attract cats.
- If the bait disappears and the trap has not closed, another animal may be present. If this is the case, suspend the bait by attaching a string around it and securing it through the inspection port.

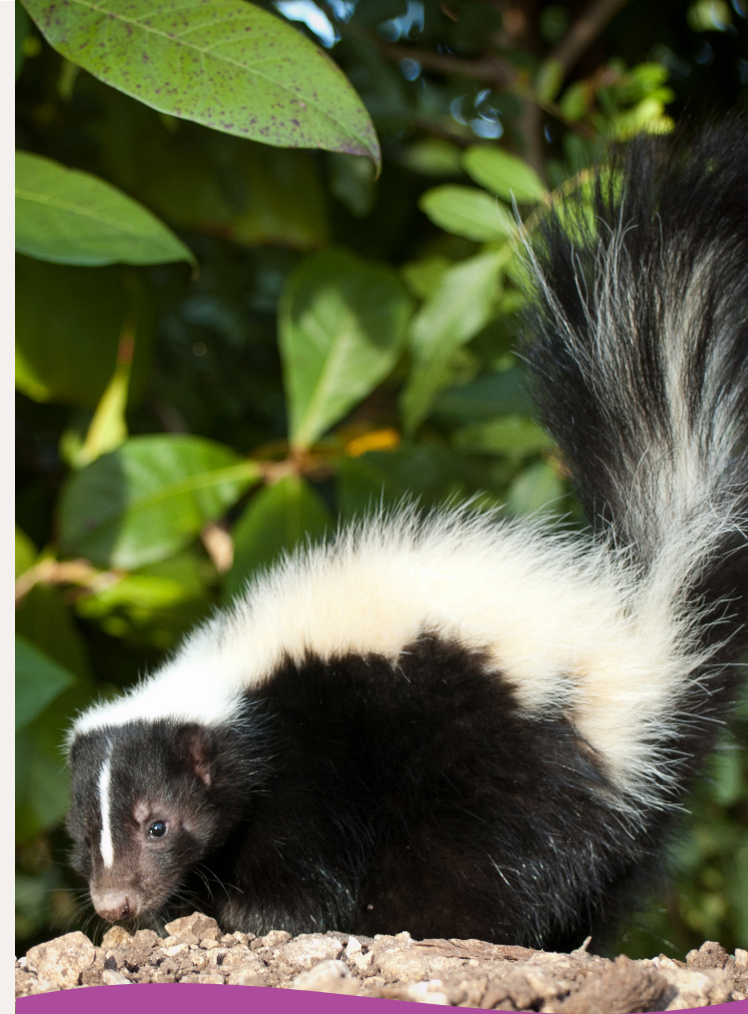
Catching a skunk

- Check the trap each morning. If the trap is closed, look in the inspection port or through the door. If a skunk has been captured, contact Transportation and Agriculture Services to pick up the skunk and the trap.

Further Information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/pests

Office hours:
Monday to Friday
8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Closed from 12 noon to 1 pm
and on statutory holidays



Skunks

Living with wildlife
in Strathcona County





Appearance

Alberta's only species of skunk - the striped skunk - varies in length from 50 - 95 cm. They can weigh from three to eight kg and are similar in size to a house cat.

Striped skunks have a triangular head, long stout body, short legs and a bushy tail. A white stripe runs down a black body. Skunks have sharp claws that are used to dig through soil.

Behaviour

The skunk is not a social animal. For the most part, it is docile and not aggressive.

Skunks try to avoid spraying by warning the intruder. It will fluff its fur, shake its tail, stomp its feet and snarl. If the intruder does not react, the skunk can spray up to 4.5 metres.

Skunks eat a varied diet of plants and animals. They are attracted to insects, rodents, frogs, eggs, grass and fungi.

Skunks breed in February and March, with four to seven kits born in May.

Management

Skunks adapt well to urban and rural areas, living under decks, buildings and brush piles.

To prevent skunks from moving in, keep yards neat. Remove fallen fruit from trees. Brush and debris should be neatly piled. Sheds, decks and other structures that may attract skunks should be sealed off or raised to discourage denning activity.

Do not feed skunks as they may become dependent on humans. Avoid leaving pet food or garbage out overnight.

While skunks are usually unwanted, they do play an important role by eating insects, rodents and other unwanted pests.

Under the Wildlife Act, keeping a skunk as a pet is illegal.

Rabies

Rabies, an infectious disease caused by a virus organism, is found in the saliva of infected animals (skunks are rabies carriers). It affects only mammals and is transmitted most commonly by a bite. The disease is almost always fatal for animals. People can survive the bite of a rabid animal, but only if medical attention is received in time. **A physician should attend to all skunk bites, no matter how minor.**

There have been no reports of rabies in Strathcona County.

Skunks that seem tame or listless and wander about during daylight hours should be treated with great caution; this behaviour is symptomatic of rabies. Also, if they exhibit no fear of people or pets, and show some aggressive behaviour, chances are quite high that they are rabid.

If you notice any of these signs, please contact Transportation and Agriculture Services immediately.

Odour removal

Skunk musk is strong, even in small amounts, and may be noticeable for up to a year. Some useful tips for removing the odour are:

- Washing with diluted vinegar or tomato juice, or
- A mixture of:
 - 1 quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide
 - 1/4 cup baking soda
 - 1 teaspoon liquid soap

Once the hydrogen peroxide is mixed with the baking soda, the mixture is unstable and generates oxygen, and should not be bottled or stored. When the fresh mixture is applied to items contaminated by skunk odour, the smell diminishes quickly. Leftover mixture should be diluted with water and disposed of.