

## Raccoons, Skunks and Opossums – Oh My! How to Stop Wildlife from Moving In

### Prevent Unwanted Wildlife Situations

Avoid unwelcome wildlife encounters by making your home and yard less attractive to wildlife.

- **Trash and Debris** - For many wild creatures, our trash is their culinary treasure. Skunks, raccoons and opossums are natural foragers who take advantage of open or unsecured waste bins. Secure all garbage cans or keep them in a garage or shed until pick-up. Brush/wood piles, clutter and other debris make perfect nesting and denning areas for wild creatures. Regularly clear debris piles and clutter from your yard and garage.
- **Pets** - Our pets' food is another tempting food source for wildlife. Avoid feeding pets outside (or remove food dishes promptly if you do) and lock pet doors nightly. Pet waste is another common pet-related cause of unwanted wildlife encounters. Clear your yard of pet waste on a daily basis.
- **Rodents** - Rats are attracted by many of the same things as other wild creatures. However, as a food source for many wildlife species, a rodent infestation can draw even more hungry creatures to your home. Solve rodent problems as quickly as possible. Secure openings around your home that rats and other wildlife may exploit to gain entrance to your residence.

### Deter Wildlife from Your Home

Already have wildlife visitors? Use the following household items to deter wildlife from your residence.

- **Chili Powder** - Capsaicin is the active ingredient in chili powder that makes it taste “hot” and “spicy.” Capsaicin is a nontoxic irritant that affects all mammals and when used regularly will deter raccoons, skunks and opossums. Sprinkle chili powder anywhere wild animals are frequenting, including in and around trash, around the border of a garden or wherever animals are digging. As capsaicin only affects mammals, it's also safe to mix into birdseed to stop other animals from using it as a food source.
- **Ammonia (for outdoor use only)** - One of the chemicals found in urine, ammonia is offensive to skunks, raccoons, opossums and other “nuisance” creatures. Place ammonia soaked rags or spray ammonia directly onto areas wildlife finds attractive. Reapply daily for best results.
- **Fans, Radios and Balloons** - Strange sounds and moving items can frighten animals into avoiding your residence. Place an oscillating fan (you can attach strings to the outside for extra movement), a helium balloon or a portable radio in the problem area.



**Help - I already have wildlife in my home!** If wildlife becomes entrenched in your home, the above methods may be ineffective (especially during spring and summer when animals seek out places to rear their young). Call Project Wildlife's fee-based Wildlife Extraction service to help humanely remove wildlife from your residence and prevent reoccurrences.

**For more information, or to donate,  
visit [www.projectwildlife.org](http://www.projectwildlife.org)**