

## Skunks

Most commonly known for their ability to produce a foul odor, skunks are considered a nuisance in Alberta. Skunks are also a concern because they are a major carrier of rabies in North America. They are nocturnal and any found acting abnormally such as being tame or active during the daytime should be avoided and reported.



It can be problematic when they occasionally prey on your poultry and eggs. Skunks will often establish their dens under an old building, wood pile, or similar structures. If these are left undisturbed, they will be used year upon year. Skunks can also prey on bees directly from the hive.

The best way to control and minimize any skunk problems would be to remove any easily accessible food and nesting areas. If skunks have already made home in or under one of your structures they can be persuaded to leave by closing all but the main entrance and installing a mesh wire flap that can be pushed from behind so they can exit but not enter. Once the skunks have left, seal the opening tightly to the ground to discourage digging. Keep a clean uncluttered yard as skunks make their homes under a variety of objects (i.e. abandoned cars, lumber piles etc.). Properly fenced in poultry will keep them safe from attack. Skunks may also rest outside beehives and eat any exiting bees. Fencing in any beehives or standing them far off the ground may be a good idea.



Repellants such as lights, sounds, and chemicals including moth balls and ammonia soaked rags will discourage these particular mammals from entering an enclosed area however, other methods of prevention are necessary for long term detainment.

For a more permanent fix, skunks may be trapped or shot year round.

For more information about skunks and skunk control, or to inquire about traps for rental, please contact the Brazeau Agricultural Department at 542-7777.

