

Opossums



Opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*)

Getting rid of opossums (also referred to as possums) is best undertaken by professionals. While neither as destructive nor as dangerous as other common wild animal pests, they are still a nuisance, and removing them from your home will grant you peace of mind.

Opossums are the only marsupial native to North America, and are becoming a much more common sight in Southern Ontario, including the Greater Toronto Area. In Ontario, cold winters can be a limiting factor to expanding opossum populations but some have linked global warming with their northern expansion.

They are nocturnal creatures, approximately the size of a house cat, with long, pointed noses and pink, bald tails and ears. They most commonly have grey fur, but can also be white or black in colour.

Opossums are excellent climbers, at home in trees and other high places, and their prehensile tails give them greater mobility and balance while climbing.

Opossum gestation lasts between eleven and thirteen days, at which point the female gives live birth to the infant opossums. These young climb into their mother's pouch, where they remain until they are between two and three months old. After this point, the young opossums will ride on the mother's back for several more months whenever they are away from their den.

While opossums are not typically aggressive, they can look rather threatening; when frightened or cornered, they may hiss or growl, and bare their extremely sharp teeth in warning. When threatened, opossums will sometimes fall over and play dead; this is the origin of the term 'playing possum'.

Opossums are extremely adaptable, and can live wherever they have access to food, water, and shelter. They are omnivores, existing on a diet of insects, snails, rodents, berries, fruit, grasses, leaves, carrion, snakes, and vegetables. Opossums do not dig holes, destroy gardens, or overturn garbage cans; if this is happening on your property, the problem animal is more likely to be either a skunk or a raccoon.

Opossums can make their homes in attics and garages, under sheds and buildings, and inside of rock piles. Though they are not particularly destructive, they can cause some damage, though they are more likely to be a nuisance than a serious problem.

Opossums in your place?

If you have unwanted opossums in your home or elsewhere on your property, call The Animal Movers at (416)-410-6323 or 1-800-322-0019. We will humanely remove both adult and young animals, repair any structural damage they've caused, and install measures that will keep them from returning.

See information on Opossum Tracks [here](#).