

Ontario Wildlife:

Source: Ontario SPCA

Squirrels

- Squirrels play an important role in nature by spreading seeds. Some of the nuts and seeds squirrels hide are never collected and later grow into plants and trees.
- Squirrels eat nuts and seeds, such as acorns, walnuts, sunflower seeds, corn, flowers and millet.
- Squirrels breed twice a year. A first litter is born in February or March, the second in June or July.
- Squirrels' predators include: birds, fox, weasels, raccoons, snakes, owls and domestic cats and dogs

Canada Goose

- The Canada goose finds a mate during its second year and remains paired together for life.
- Usually five to seven eggs are laid, with older birds producing more eggs than birds nesting for the first time.
- The female incubates the eggs for 25 to 28 days while the male stands guard nearby.
- Unlike many waterfowl species that feed mainly in the water, Canada geese feed mostly on land. In spring and summer, they graze on the leaves of grassy plants and also eat a wide variety of flowers, stems, roots, seeds and berries.
- The Canada Geese predators include: red foxes, coyotes, wolves and bald eagles.

Skunk

- A skunk is not an aggressive animal and will always try to retreat from a human. An angry skunk will growl or hiss, stamp its front feet rapidly or even walk a short distance on its front feet with its tail high in the air. Before spraying, it usually humps its back and turns in a U-shaped position so that both the head and tail face the enemy.
- Skunks eat a wide variety of foods: insects, mice, shrews, squirrels, young rabbits, birds' eggs, and various plants.
- During the autumn and winter they eat about equal amounts of plant and animal foods, but eat mainly insects in the summer.
- The scent of the skunk is an effective defense against most natural enemies.
- Skunks are still preyed upon by many large birds.

Raccoons

- Raccoons in the wild, live about three to five years. The annual life cycle of raccoons consists of a breeding period during late winter and early spring, a growth and fattening period during the summer and fall, and a winter denning period.
- Raccoons will consume practically any food item, plant or animal.
- Predators include coyotes, foxes, wolves, owls and fishers. However, malnutrition and harsh winter weather play a greater role in limiting raccoon populations, especially young animals.

Rabbits

- Typically, female rabbits will find a small depression or hollow in the ground and will line the area with fur to use as a nest.
- Often these nests are found in the middle of open areas such as lawns or playing fields.
- If you find a group of baby rabbits lying in such a space, they are in their natural nest and do not necessarily need assistance.
- A nest of younger rabbits (i.e. not fully furred, do not have eyes open) should be left alone if there is any chance that the mother might return.
- Mother rabbits return to the nest site at dusk and dawn to feed young, therefore you may never actually see the mother at the nest site.

Coyotes

- In protected areas coyotes can live eight to 12 years, but in areas where they are hunted or in populated areas like southern Ontario where vehicle collisions are common, the average life expectancy is less than five years.
- The coyote's basic social unit is a mated pair, and coyote pairs will often mate for life.
- Coyotes will consume a variety of foods, including meat, carrion (dead animals), fruits and vegetable matter.
- Coyotes are highly adaptable. They are most commonly associated with open, agricultural landscapes interspersed with woodlots and other brushy terrain.

Foxes

- Foxes usually have a lifespan of three to six years.
- Although "red fox" is the accepted name for the fox species, not all foxes are actually red. There are several common colour variations, including brown, black and silver.
- Foxes generally live on the edges of wooded areas, prairies and farmlands.
- They have exceptional sight, smell and hearing abilities which makes them excellent hunters.
- Foxes eat a wide variety of food including fish, reptiles, fruits of all sorts and garbage.

Bats

- Bats hibernate from November to March.
- The big brown bat is the most likely species to hibernate in buildings like houses and barns.
- In the summer, bats may select attics for raising their young
- Bats can squeeze through very tiny spaces (as narrow as six millimeters). Which is how they access many roosting areas.
- Bats eat insects. One bat can consume hundreds of flying insects each night during the summer. They locate food by using echolocation – bats send out signals and when the echo of that signal bounces back to them, they can identify where objects are located.
- Owls prey on bats at night. During the day, snakes or raccoons may prey on bats while they are roosting.

Possums

- Just one possum can eat up to 5000 ticks in one season yet I cannot get LYME disease
- They also eat snails, insects, small rodents and dead stuff ... Nature's clean up crew 😊
- 95% of possums are naturally immune to rabies
- They hiss when they're scared and will not attack humans

Snakes

- 17 different types of snakes call Ontario home
- Ontario's snakes — even the venomous ones — are timid creatures
- **Snakes aren't slimy**
- Snakes mostly fly solo (including baby snakes)
- Snakes are carnivores
- **Snakes don't chew their food**
- Milksnakes don't drink milk
- **Rattlesnakes have heat vision**
- **Snakes need our help**

Remember: Most of the wild animals that are injured or orphaned that are brought to the Ontario SPCA or other Wildlife Rehabilitators are due to human involvement, not other causes.

Ontario.ca is the official Government of Ontario website that provides important information about what to do if you find a sick, injured or abandoned wild animal.

Here are some important things to know:

General tips

- don't remove an animal from its natural habitat (the animal may not need assistance, and you could do more harm than good)
- check the animal periodically for 24-48 hours
- keep your distance

Young animals/babies

If you find an abandoned young animal, separated from adults or left on its own — keep cats and dogs away and limit noise.

An adult may not return if it is noisy or if predators or people are close by.

Get help for a wild animal

In Ontario, wildlife rehabilitators are authorized by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry to provide temporary care to sick, injured and abandoned wildlife so it can be returned to the wild. Rehabilitators commit significant time and resources, and many solicit donations to assist with their work.

Every effort is made by wildlife rehabilitators to ensure wildlife in their care do not become tame.

Find a wildlife rehabilitator

To get help for a sick, injured or abandoned animal, you can contact:

- an [authorized wildlife rehabilitator](#)
- your local [Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry district office](#)

For more detailed information, click here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rescue-sick-injured-or-abandoned-wild-animal#:~:text=Find%20a%20wildlife%20rehabilitator,Resources%20and%20Forestry%20district%20office>