

SKUNKS

BENEFITS OF SKUNKS

Farmers, gardeners, and landowners view skunks as a valuable species since they prey on a vast array of agricultural and garden nuisances such as mice, voles, beetles, larvae, wasps, and crickets.

Additionally, skunks play a role as scavengers by seeking out animal remains, thereby aiding in the maintenance of a clean ecosystem. Scavengers are essential for the environment's well-being.

NATURAL HISTORY

- Skunks belong to the Mustelidae family and there are five species in Texas. They typically live in ground burrows or crawl spaces, but spotted skunks may climb and live in attics or trees.
- Skunks are omnivores and eat insects, small vertebrates, eggs, and vegetables. They prefer insects in the summer and mice in the winter.
- Skunks are solitary, except during breeding season. After mating, the male leaves and the female raises the litter of 4 to 6 kits alone. Breeding usually occurs in February or March and kits are born from the end of April to early June.
- Skunks are nocturnal and move slowly, but they are confident in their ability to defend themselves.

TIPS FOR REDUCING HUMAN-SKUNK CONFLICTS:

- **Avoid feeding wildlife**, as it can make animals lose their natural fear of humans.
- **Seal foundation openings** and bury fencing up to 2 feet deep to prevent skunks from taking up residence under houses.
- **Do not approach skunks**, as they can transmit rabies. However, if a skunk is alert and walking normally, there is no need for concern.
- **Keep pets leashed** while on walks to reduce the chance of negative wildlife encounters.
- **Securely enclose livestock** at night and extend fencing around the coop 8 inches underground.
- **Use commercial grub treatments** to keep grubs out of your yard and prevent damage that can attract skunks.



City of

Saginaw