LIVING WITH URBAN WILDLIFE

Skunk Characteristics

**Appearance**
- Thick black fur with white stripe down the back.
- Bushy tail, short legs and visible claws.
- Approximately the size of a cat.
- Paw prints are very similar to a cat’s.

**Behaviour & Habitat**
- Generally active from dusk to dawn; however, can be seen during the day especially in the fall and winter.
- Often den under sheds, decks and porches.
- Release an oil that produces a pungent odor. Before spraying, they give warnings such as stamping their feet, vocalizing and raising their tail.
- Can carry and transmit rabies.

**Diet**
- Skunks are omnivores that eat a variety of food including pet food, insects, eggs, small rodents, plants and bird seed.

Co-existing with Skunks

**Advice for Residents**
Skunks are well adapted to urban areas and are commonly found in Saskatoon. To prevent skunks from entering your property, remove sources of food and shelter and consider these tips:
- Ensure garbage, compost, birdseed and pet food are not accessible.
- Prevent access underneath sheds or other structures that can provide shelter by creating a L-shaped barrier (refer to picture below).
- Remove wood or other construction material that can create shelter.
- Fix open gates or broken fences to prevent easy access to the property.

What to do if a skunk is found on your property
- If a skunk is found on your property, contact Urban Biological Services at 306-975-3300. A technician will inspect the area to determine the appropriate course of action.
- If a trap is issued, it is your responsibility to check the trap in the morning and evening each day.
- Checking the trap is especially important on hot days. When unable to check the trap, keep it closed.
- If a skunk has been trapped, keep pets away from the trap to avoid creating additional stress for the animal and do not feed the skunk.