

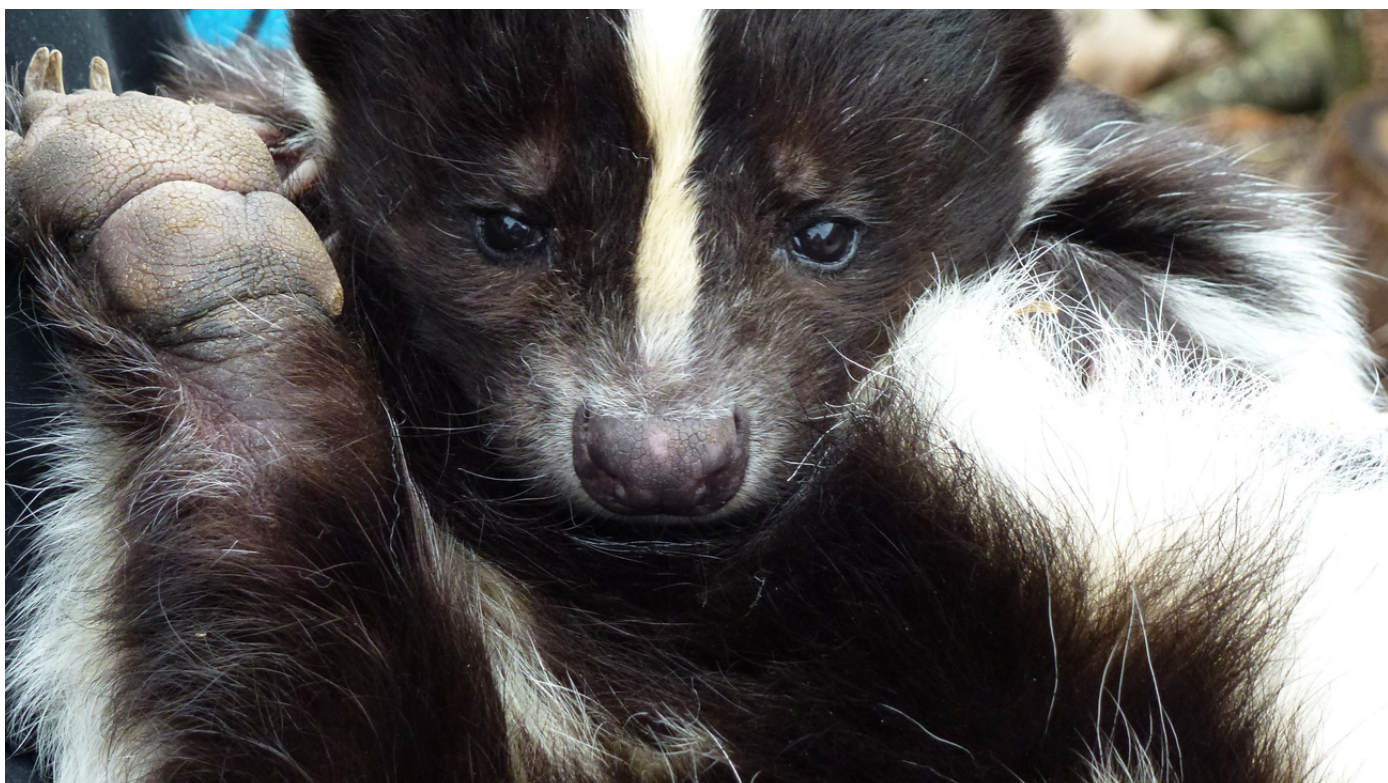
STRIPED SKUNK

Mephitis mephitis



Striped skunks are an animal in Charlottetown that almost anyone can identify. They were introduced to PEI around 1915 by fur farmers and have fully adapted to the island's natural and urban areas.

Skunks are easily identified by its black and white fur and the musky smell they produce. Skunks are nocturnal, spending most of the day in their dens and being active at night.



HABITAT

In the wild, skunks prefer open areas, near forests or grasslands. They look for abandoned dens of other animals, such as a fox.

In the city, skunks can live in hollowed tree stumps, woodpiles, under porches and sheds.

DIET

Skunks are omnivores, eating plants, insects and even small animals. Favourite foods are insects and insect larvae but they also eat items such as fruits, berries, seeds and eggs.

In cities, skunks can scavenge to find meals in people's vegetable gardens and take food scraps from compost bins. To avoid having issues with skunks on your property, it is important to keep your waste in a well-sealed container.

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BEHAVIOUR



Skunks are more active in warmer months of the year.



Fall is a busy season for skunks, as they eat as much as they can to gain fat for the winter.



During the winter in their dens, skunks can slow down their metabolic rate to save energy. This is known as "torpor" and is different than hibernation, with skunks waking up during the winter.



During active months, skunks are fairly solitary animals living and finding food on their own.



For more information visit:
www.charlottetown.ca

SKUNK FACTS

Skunks are not good climbers but can dig about one foot into the soil to build a den.

Small marks on lawns can often be from skunks digging to uncover worms and insect larvae.

Skunk spray is a thick, oily fluid. It contains sulfur-based organic compounds called "thiols", which smell similar to rotten eggs.

For extra warmth, more than one skunk can live in a single den during the winter months.

Skunks usually have four to six babies, which are born in spring.

