



# OPOSSUMS

## TIPS FOR REDUCING HUMAN-OPOSSUM CONFLICTS:

- **Stash your trash.** Secure trash and compost in closed bins to prevent midnight raids.
- **Do not trap opossums.** Opossums are normally transient animals, staying only 2-3 days in an area before moving on. If opossums are eliminated, the population of pests will increase.
- **Don't let them mooch from the pooch.** Opossums love eating pet food and are attracted to easy water sources. To prevent them from staying near your home, lock up pet food and water in the evening.
- **Seal potential denning locations.** Make the area you live less desirable by keeping doors and garage doors closed, and close windows that are located next to tree limbs and fences. Check your subfloor and exterior vents for access into your walls and attics. Secure any holes with wire mesh or spray foam.

## BENEFITS OF OPOSSUMS

Opossums keep neighborhoods clear of unwanted pests like cockroaches, ticks rats, and mice.

Opossums have resistance to snake venom and eat venomous species. They are beneficial to gardens by eating snails, slugs and fallen, overripe fruit.

## NATURAL HISTORY

- Opossums are from the Didelphidae family and are among the oldest, most primitive mammals of the New World. They are the only marsupial found north of Mexico. The Virginia opossum is the only species found in the United States and Canada.
- The opossum is active only at night, and is a solitary animal.
- They have an eclectic diet and will eat both plants and animals, including rodents, young rabbits, birds, insects, crustaceans, frogs, fruits and berries, and vegetables.
- Females usually have two litters a year. The babies are born after just 11-12 days, and are about the size of a honeybee. They are blind, furless, and do not look anything like adult opossums.
- Many opossums die during the first year of their life, and adults usually live only about two years in the wild.