

EASTERN STRIPED SKUNK



Mephitis mephitis

Skunks are small, nocturnal mammals known for their bold black-and-white stripes and powerful defense—they spray a strong-smelling scent when threatened. They're omnivores and help control pests like insects and rodents.



STATS

Range: throughout southern Canada and all of the United States, except for arid areas in the Southwest, and in extreme northern Mexico.

Habitat: Fields, fencerows, wooded ravines and rocky outcrops.

Average Size: 6 to 14 pounds. 21 to 26 inches.

Lifespan in the wild: 2 - 3 years

Lifespan in human care: Up to 14 years

Diet: Omnivore

Activity: Nocturnal

Conservation Status: Least concern

FUN FACTS

- The skunk is a member of the Mustelid family, which includes weasel, mink, fisher and otter.
- *Mephitis mephitis*, the skunk's Latin name, translates appropriately into "bad odor."
- A skunk's smelly spray can reach up to ten feet, and be detected for up to 1.5 miles.
- Immune to snake venom, these animals will eat poisonous snakes such as rattlesnakes.