LIVING WITH URBAN WILDLIFE:
RACCOONS, OPOSSUMS, AND SQUIRRELS AROUND YOUR HOME



WELCOME TO YOUR NEW, SHARED NEIGHBORHOOD

- Many Wisconsin communities are home to raccoons, opossums, and squirrels. These animals are not newcomers, they have adapted to living alongside people by using trees, green spaces, and sometimes human structures. Most encounters are harmless, and a few simple steps can prevent problems before they start.
- Learning how these animals behave makes it easier to protect your home while allowing wildlife to safely exist in our neighborhoods.

RACCOONS

Raccoons are common in both cities and suburbs and are known for their intelligence and adaptability

WHAT TO EXCPECT

- Most active at night, though daytime activity is normal
- Excellent problem-solvers with strong memory Often follow the same paths through a neighborhood

LIVING PEACEFULLY WITH RACCOONS

- Secure your trash cans and compost bins
- Bring bird feeders in at night
- If animals are inside a structure, allow them to leave on their own before sealing entry points

THEIR HOMES AND FAMILIES

- Raccoons may temporarily use attics, chimneys, or decks as den sites
- Their babies are typically born in spring
- Young raccoons often stay with their mother through summer before moving on





DID YOU KNOW??

Despite the common myth, seeing a raccoon during the day does not usually mean it is sick. Mothers caring for young and juveniles learning independence are often active during daylight hours.

OPOSSUMS

Opossums are quiet, shy animals that provide surprising benefits to homeowners.

HELPFUL NEIGHBORS

- Eat ticks, insects, snails, and carrion
- Rarely aggressive and prefer to avoid people and pets
- Unlikely to damage buildings or landscaping





SHORT-TERM VISITORS

- Often rest under decks, sheds, or porches
- Typically stay only a few days before moving on
- Mothers carry young in a pouch and later on their backs

LIVING PEACEFULLY WITH OPOSSUMS

- Avoid feeding — human food can make them sick
- Motion lights or leaving a light on at night usually encourages them to move along

SQUIRRELS

Squirrels are active, daytime animals commonly seen in trees and parks.

EVERYDAY BEHAVIOR

- Spend most of their time foraging and storing food
- Excellent climbers with strong spatial memory
- Communicate with chattering sounds and tail movements

HOMES & HABITS

- Occasionally enter attics or chimneys, especially in colder months
- Feed on nuts, seeds, fruits, and buds
- Usually live within a small area close to food sources



HOME TIP!!

Squirrels often return to the same nesting areas. Sealing entry points after they leave is the most effective long-term solution.



LIVING PEACEFULLY WITH SQUIRRELS

- Trim tree branches away from roofs
- Use squirrel-resistant bird feeders
- Seal small openings around vents and eaves