

Living With Wildlife

As much as you may want to enjoy the wildlife on your property it is likely that at some point you will encounter an animal who seems determined to make your enjoyment as difficult as possible. Whether it's a skunk living under the porch, a woodpecker destroying your siding or a gopher digging up your lawn chances are that you may encounter difficulties living with wildlife.

Skunks:

- ✓ remove garbage and food attractants
- ✓ secure openings underneath porches, crawl spaces and outside buildings



Deer:

- ✓ use exclusion fencing on gardens
- ✓ use foreign scents to discourage deer such as blood meal or cayenne pepper. Use a substance such as a hot pepper wax that will stick to the plant's leaves.
- ✓ plant less-palatable plants in landscaping

Ground Squirrels (Gophers):

- ✓ plant tall grass and shrubs (ground squirrels like short grass and clear-sight lines)
- ✓ use a buried mesh fence, buried 6" deep and 18" above ground
- ✓ use a "live trap" to trap and remove animals. Be sure to release animals several kilometers from your home.
- ✓ remember ground squirrels are an important food source for many of our wild birds and mammals, including the rare badger

Woodpeckers

- ✓ muffling their drumming will discourage behaviour
- ✓ dangling strips of cloth or ribbon will startle birds away
- ✓ repair holes quickly
- ✓ check and treat your home for insect problems

Be Aware of Bears!

One thing you may not have considered in managing your household garbage is the presence of bears in your backyard. Bears may live in any region of British Columbia. Here are some tips to prevent your yard from becoming a bear magnet:

- ✓ Keep garbage inside your garage or other site until it can be disposed of.
- ✓ Compost responsibly. Never include meat or other tempting items in your compost. Secure your compost bins to reduce access. (Remember, bears are much stronger than people.)
- ✓ If you have fruit trees in your yard, pick the fruit and pick up any windfalls.
- ✓ If you don't have the time or energy to remove unused fruit, consider removing unwanted fruit trees and replacing them with ornamental varieties.
- ✓ Store pet food indoors.
- ✓ Keep your barbecue clean or in a secured location.

For more information about living with bears, call Bear Aware BC at (250) 828-2551.