
TALES FROM THE TREE

The Quarterly Newsletter of Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center



Website: www.ziggystree.org

E-mail: ziggystreewildlife@gmail.com

STRIPED SKUNK (*Mephitis mephitis*)

Most of us immediately recognize the striped skunk. They are known for their signature black fur with thick white stripe and their ability to emit a pungent odor when upset. They are native to the U.S. and Canada.

The size varies greatly depending on the time of year and location, with weights fluctuating between 1.5 and 13 lbs. And length varying from 18 to 32 inches long. They have a dramatic reduction of body weight during the winter when they can lose up to 50% of their body weight. Males are typically larger than the females.



They are solitary and typically very docile animals. They often live in abandoned dens of other mammals during the day, or take up residence in hollow logs, brush piles or underneath buildings. They prefer underground dens in the colder winter months. While not true hibernators, skunks experience extended periods of inactivity during winter.



Striped skunks are omnivorous feeders. Their diet is primarily insectivorous during the spring and summer when grasshoppers, beetles, crickets, bees and other bugs are abundant. They switch to a carnivorous diet during the colder months. Throughout winter, they have been found eating mice, voles, and ground nesting birds. They enjoy eggs and will hunt amphibians, reptiles and fish. Corn and nightshade fruits round out their diet.

Spraying is their only defense, but only deploying after a warning display which involves the skunk stomping their feet, scratching the ground and hissing. If that doesn't get your attention, they will turn, and launch their smelly weapon. They can "fire" up to 15 feet accurately! So beware! They can effectively squirt 6 times before they run out of smell. It takes them 10 to 14 days to generate the chemicals and refill their glands with the yellow oily substance that sticks to everything. Meanwhile they are defenseless against any and all predators for two weeks. Needless to say, they don't want to spray unless they have to.

Male striped skunks breed with multiple females and are rejected by the female after mating. Females typically give birth once a year, with breeding occurring between February and April.

In some cases, a secondary breeding period will occur in May in the event the first litter was lost. After a gestation period of 59 to 77 days, a litter of two to ten skunks are born. The young are called kits or kittens. They are born helpless with eyes opening at about 3 weeks and weaning occurring at 6 to 7 weeks. Once weaned, skunks will follow their mother in single file and learn to forage and hunt. There is a high mortality rate among skunks, many do not survive past their first year. Young striped skunks reach maturity at about 10 months.

They are nocturnal, but mothers may be seen out on an overcast day foraging with their young.

The average lifespan is 7 years in the wild and can live up to 10 years in captivity.

Their major predators are hawks and owls



We've admitted our first skunks of the year after completing construction of caging specifically for the little stinkers. We're very grateful to our friends at Harmon Wildlife for providing neonatal (newborn) care for the group we currently have on-site as well as another litter that will be on their way to us soon while construction was underway. We'll have these youngsters in care for a couple of months while they grow and mature.

Photo credit:

*Juniper Russo (page 1)
Angela Hensley (page 2)*

For assistance with orphaned or injured mammals or general questions about mammals, text Angela at 615-631-2205.

For assistance with orphaned or injured birds or general questions about birds, text LouAnn at 931-841-9781.

For assistance with injured turtles, text Rachel at 615-587-2977.

Looking for a project for your scout troop, church, school or civic group? We'd love to have more squirrel nest boxes, and could also use small bluebird or woodpecker boxes to use with our young cavity nesting birds. Contact us for more information.

KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS

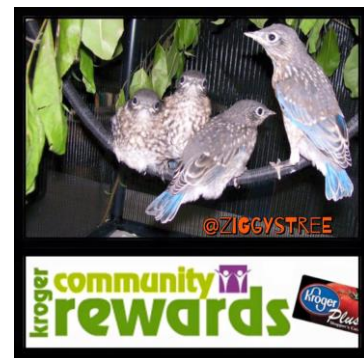
Thanks to our 81 participating families in the Kroger Community Rewards program, we've received our 1st quarter check for \$347.68 The funds we receive annually through this program are now covering approximately 5 weeks of our operating costs.

If you shop at Kroger and would like to support us through this program, just go on-line to www.kroger.com/community_rewards, and enroll your rewards card, selecting Ziggy's Tree as your charity. You still get gas points and discounts – and Kroger donates money to us!

Don't have an e-mail address or computer access? You can still sign up. Just call 1(800) KROGERS, OPTION 3 or 1(800)576-4377, OPTION 3.

For privacy reasons, Kroger does not provide names of those who have signed up to support us. So even though we can't thank you personally, please know that we are extremely grateful for your support.

And please ask your friends and family to enroll and support us!



2022 RELEASES

FEBRUARY

1 American Robin
1 Eastern Screech Owl

MARCH

1 American Robin
1 Northern Cardinal

APRIL

1 Canada Goose
1 Northern Cardinal
1 Killdeer (reunited with family)
14 Eastern Gray Squirrels

SUPPORT ZIGGY'S TREE

- Become a member – just complete the application on the back of this newsletter, or visit our website to download and print an application.
- Give a gift membership to a friend!
- Purchase items from our wish list.
- Donate newspapers (we use those to line cages and cover the tables under the cages)
- Contact us about volunteer opportunities, such as transport, animal releases, administrative/office work, fundraising, board membership or contributing to our newsletter
- Like us on Facebook and stay updated on releases, admissions and other news.
- Invite us to speak to your church or civic group – we love to tell people about the work we do!

Check our website at www.ziggystree.org for other ways you can support us!

WISH LIST

- Gift cards (grocery store, Lowe's, Home Depot, Tractor Supply)
- Canned or frozen mixed vegetables
- Heating Pads (without automatic shut-off)
- Nuts (pecans, walnuts, acorns)
- Fresh Vegetables (broccoli, carrots, kale, sweet potatoes, zucchini, apples)
- Paper Towels, Facial Tissues, Toilet Paper
- Unscented laundry detergent
- 24, 36 or 48 inch Bungee cords

Text us at 615-631-2205 or 931-841-9781 to arrange to drop off any of the above items.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!

(February 2022 through April 2022)

WILDLIFE CHAMPION

ADVOCATE

Banjo Baby Squirrel Fund

SUSTAINING

Sharon Butcher
Karen Dean
Deborah Trimble
Lisa Stetar

SUPPORTING

Amy York * Debbie Bomar * Julie Wotruba
Angela Bechtel * Ann Gildemeister
Bob & Star Eaker * Ashley Vaughns
Robin Mitchell * Catherine Hayward
Chrisanthi Zotos

FAMILY

Daniel Pleasant * Jacqueline Goldberg * Samantha Schultz
Terri Templeman * Cheryl Powell * Linda Foster
Renee & Tony Halterlein * Callie Malphnus * Susan Shawl

INDIVIDUAL

Donna Edwards * Vera Micklash

VETERINARIANS

Pet Medical Center * Airport Animal Clinic
Creekwood Veterinary Hospital

IN-KIND & CASH DONATIONS

Charles Parish * Xavier Johnson * Lisa Seals
Cari Boles * Crystal Dunn * Mindy Quick
Hannah Tritschler * Debbie Wallace

IN MEMORY

Rachel Harwell by Ruth Ann Henry
Ann & Jerry Savage by Ruth Ann Henry
Ron Lee by Ruth Ann Henry

Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center
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Tullahoma, TN 37388



NOTICE: YOUR MAILING LABEL CONTAINS YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE.

To avoid any interruption with delivering your newsletter, we ask that you renew at least one month before the date shown. Use the Membership Form provided below.

PLEASE RENEW, STAY INFORMED, WE NEED YOU!!!

YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT ZIGGY'S TREE, I AM ...

- A NEW MEMBER**
 RENEWING MY MEMBERSHIP

Memberships are for one year
Gift Memberships are also available.

Please Mail This Form To:

**Ziggy's Tree WRC
PO Box 713
Tullahoma, TN 37388**

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

___ Individual	\$25.00
___ Family	\$40.00
___ Supporting	\$100.00
___ Sustaining	\$250.00
___ Advocate	\$500.00
___ Wildlife Champion	\$1000.00

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Home Phone (____) _____ Zip _____ -- _____
Work Phone (____) _____
e-mail _____

I would like to receive my newsletter by email.

I am interested in volunteering in the following areas:

- ___ Environmental Education
___ Wildlife Rehabilitation
___ Fundraising/Administration

Checks should be made payable to Ziggy's Tree WRC. You can also renew/donate by credit card at [Paypal.me/ziggystree](https://www.paypal.com/merchot/cgi-bin/?cmd=_express-checkout&context=express).

Not sure what to get that special someone for birthdays, anniversaries or just because? Consider giving them a one year membership to Ziggy's Tree!

Members receive our newsletter.

Ziggy's Tree strives to be environmentally conscious. If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of our newsletter, please check the box above or e-mail ziggystreewildlife@gmail.com to be placed on our mailing list.