

## **FOR CITY OF BROOK PARK WEB SITE UNDER "ANIMAL CONTROL ISSUES"**

The Animal Control Department has received many calls in regard to coyotes and skunks in our city. Please be advised that coyote's and skunks have been in our area for some time, however, due to the changes to our community, you will see more in our area and changes need to be made to secure garbage and remove extraneous food sources. Feed the birds and squirrels in your yard only during the cold winter when problem wildlife are less likely to be out. Changes would also include fixing buildings, decks, porches and cleaning up leaves and woodpiles on the ground.

The following information should help with these issues:

**SKUNKS:** Above ground activity resumes in late winter and spring and is probably started with several factors such as temperature, snow cover, available food and the male skunk's sexual drive. Please note that mating season is February through March and gestation is 62 to 66 days. The young are born from April to June. The number of young is 2 to 10 with the average being 5 to 7 and the number of litters is 1. The young become weaned at 2 months and independent by fall. In regard to them spraying, they usually spray as a last resort. Before they spray, they do several other things to rid themselves of a possible predator. They first run away and if that is not possible, they may stamp and stiffen its front legs and shuffle backward or hiss and growl. If this does not work, they will lift the tail, bend its rear around towards the disturbance and spray. To remove odor, wash clothes in detergent and household ammonia. If your dog has been sprayed, you can rid it of skunk odor by washing it in tomato juice, then soap. The most effective chemical for removing skunk odor is the water-soluble form of neutrolem-alpha, which they have available at hospital supply houses. If you find small holes about 1 to 2 inches deep in lawns and grassy areas in late spring and early summer, they are feeding a great deal on the white grubs of June Beetles. In the mid-summer, they eat all kinds of insects, especially grasshoppers and crickets, beetles, moth larvae and cutworms as well as the eggs of birds and turtles. In mid-summer, it's berry time; strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. In the fall, it's apples, grapes and creeper berries. Voles again become important in the fall and early winter. They also prey upon deer mice, shrews and even rabbits. In the suburbs and the city, they feed on garbage and plants.

**COYOTES:** They have a habitat of open plains, brushy areas and woods. They have a home range of 5 to 25 square miles. They feed on mice, voles, rabbits and other small animals, fruits, berries, deer, domestic livestock, carrion and garbage. The mating season is January through April. Gestation is 58 to 63 days. Their young are born between March and May. They have 5 to 7 pups and the number of litters is 1. Their young are independent at 6 to 9 months of age, however they sometimes remain with the parents. A study in Minnesota stated that 70% of pups dispersed during October and November traveled an average distance of 30 miles. They also stated that not all pups disperse and in some cases, the young remain with their parents and formed a pack in the winter.