

Can you relocate wildlife in Texas?

If you'd prefer to capture and relocate the animal instead of killing it, you can do so. To capture and relocate, you need to get authorization from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and the owner of the property where the release will occur. Oct 3, 2022

Texas Parks and Wildlife

## Nuisance Fur-bearing Animals

**Nuisance fur-bearing animals may be captured and relocated if the person has received authorization from the department and the owner of the property where the release will occur. A monthly report is required and must be submitted to the department on number and kind of fur-bearers captured, location of release site, name and address of person authorized to release.**

### Statewide Wild Animal Transport Restrictions

Rabies in Texas is an ongoing state health emergency. Therefore, according to the Rabies Control and

Eradication Administrative Code\*, **it is illegal for a person to transport certain animals that are high risk**

**for transmitting rabies, including any live species of fox, skunk, coyote, or raccoon indigenous or**

**naturalized to North America.** A violation of this law is a Class C misdemeanor. The following

individuals are exempt from this restriction and can transport animals included in the statewide rabies

quarantine only when such transport is part of their official duty:

- peace officers;
- individuals hired or contracted by state or federal agencies or local governments;
- employees of zoos or other institutions accredited by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums;
- educators permitted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for educational display;
- rehabilitators permitted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department;
- an entity issued authorization for nuisance fur-bearing animal relocation from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; and
- pest management professionals licensed by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

If an exempt individual transports such animals for release, the animals must be released within a ten-mile radius or within ten miles of the city limits of where they were originally captured and the release must be within the county in which they were originally captured.

A skunk is one of the most peace-loving, non-aggressive animals you could ever meet. Skunks are also extremely nearsighted. They will only “shoot” their defensive spray when frightened, and they give you plenty of time to back off by stamping their front feet as a warning. Only as a last resort will a skunk turn and fire the foul-smelling spray from his or her anal glands. This spray is the only defense that skunks have. They can bite, but that isn’t much of a defense against a large predator.

### **Solving Conflicts Compassionately**

Skunks do most of their foraging at night. However, it is not uncommon for healthy skunks to appear during the day.

If you see an injured skunk, contact a state-licensed [wildlife rehabilitator](#). (Keep the name and telephone number of a rehabilitator in your wallet or programmed into your phone. Your local humane society, animal control department, or parks department can usually provide this information.)

A skunk who appears ill is far more likely to have distemper than rabies, and distemper is not contagious to humans. If you see a skunk who is obviously sick, do not call a “nuisance wildlife” trapper or “pest control” service. (They usually drown skunks to avoid getting sprayed!) Call your local animal control department or humane society and ask the officers if, should they find it necessary to euthanize the skunk, they will use an injection of sodium pentobarbital so that the death will be painless. If they do not use this method, please ask your local animal control department or humane society representatives if they can pick up the animal or if they can recommend a facility to which the animal can be transported. Please also notify PETA’s Cruelty Investigations Department (CID) immediately so that we can contact the agency and offer to work with it to develop a protocol for euthanizing animals via lethal injections. Do not leave the scene or lose sight of the skunk until the animal has received help.

To keep skunks from frequenting your property, target the parts of your property that attract them.

A skunk’s diet consists mainly of insects. Skunks—along with raccoons, squirrels, moles, starlings, grackles, and crows—dig holes in lawns and gardens in search of insect grubs. This digging leaves small, cone-shaped holes and patches of upturned earth. Many gardeners welcome the services of skunks and other grub-eaters, since it saves them from having to kill the grubs themselves.

You can also prevent skunks and other animals from frequenting your property by keeping garbage containers tightly sealed at all times. Discourage the feeding of wildlife in your area. Such artificial food sources attract all kinds of wildlife, not just the ones who are targeted.

Skunks look for places to make dens, so seal off sheds and openings under porches and buildings. Like raccoons, they make dens when they are preparing to have babies. If skunks have already taken up residence, tolerance is the first and best approach. Once the young are big enough, the family will vacate the area. However, if absolutely

necessary, the family can be evicted easily by making the area inhospitable by putting lights, radios, and ammonia-soaked clothes inside the den area. This will prompt “Mom” to move her brood to another location. Or, *if (and only if) there are no babies in the den*, you can install a one-way door. For information on sales of one-way doors and good illustrations of how they work, go to [tomahawklivetrap.com](http://tomahawklivetrap.com).

Once the skunks have been evicted, you should not attempt to trap and remove skunks from the property. Trapping and removing them will do nothing for long-term control, as the newly vacant niche will quickly be filled by skunks and other animals from surrounding areas. Trapping can also be cruel because when adults are removed, young and vulnerable family members are left to starve. Relocating skunks—even to wild or wooded areas—is illegal in most states and will likely result in their death because they will have trouble finding adequate food, water, and shelter and won’t have a natural immunity to foreign parasites and diseases.