



Porcupine



For more information on urban wildlife in Saskatoon, visit saskatoon.ca/wildlifemanagement or contact Urban Biological Services at 306-975-3300.



Porcupine Characteristics

Appearance

- Coat of sharp spines called quills (up to 30,000 quills).
- No quills on the face, legs or underparts of the body.
- Various shades of brown, gray, yellow and white.
- Heavy body, short legs and slow moving.

Behaviour & Habitat

- Nocturnal but occasionally active during the day.
- Occupy a variety of habitats including coniferous and mixed-forest, treed river banks, poplar bluffs, grasslands and urban areas.
- Den in crevices in rocks or trees.
- Good climbers and will climb trees for food and to rest.
- Porcupines will flee predators if possible, but erect their quills as defence if they're cornered.
- Quills are lightly attached to the porcupine's skin and come off easily when a predator encounters them. Porcupines cannot throw their quills.
- Quills are barbed and swell when they're embedded in flesh, which causes them to work further in.
- Predators include coyotes, cougars, fishers, martins and owls.

Diet

- Porcupines are herbivores and their diet changes seasonally. In the spring and summer they eat berries, seeds, grasses, leaves, roots and stems. In the winter they eat evergreen needles and the inner bark of trees.

Co-existing with Porcupines

Advice for Residents

Porcupines can potentially be encountered in off-leash dog parks and other treed areas. It's important that dogs be under their owner's control at all times when in off-leash areas.

Porcupine feeding can result in significant damage. Fencing trees and gardens is an effective way to prevent feeding damage. To protect individual trees, the trunks can be wrapped with aluminum flashing.

If a porcupine is injured, trapped or diseased, call Urban Biological Services at 306-975-3300.

