

Post-Its

TIPS, TACTICS, AND TRENDS — WHAT'S NEW AND NOTEWORTHY NOW!



YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD OPOSSUM

In the early 17th century, Captain John Smith of the Jamestown colony described North America's only marsupial as a cross between a pig, a rat, and a cat. With its pointed nose, beady eyes, and hairless tail, the Virginia opossum isn't winning any cuteness awards, but you should think twice before shooing these nocturnal creatures from your yard. Here's what they can do for your neighborhood: **They limit pathogens.** As omnivores, they will eat almost anything, including other dead animals (bones and all). **They clear pests.** They can make a meal out of snails, slugs, and other garden pests, as well as any ticks that try to make a meal out of them. **They don't cause damage.** Opossums don't burrow, and they're less dexterous than raccoons, so they're easier to keep out of trash bins. **They aren't aggressive.** Though they might hiss and bare their 50 teeth (the most of any North American mammal) when cornered, they would rather retreat or play dead when faced with danger. And because of their low body temperature, they're practically immune to rabies.

SHUTTERSTOCK