



VIRGINIA OPOSSUM

(Didelphis virginiana)

ANIMAL FACTS

WILD LOCALITY:

Throughout North America

HABITAT:

Variable Habitats including Wooded Areas, Fields, and Cities

LIFESTYLE:

Mostly Terrestrial, and Semi-Arboreal

DIET:

Dead Animals, Smaller Live Animals, Fruits, Insects, Plant Matter, etc (opportunistic omnivore)

LIFE EXPECTANCY:

~ 2 TO 3 YEARS IN THE WILD (UP TO 5 YEARS IN HUMAN CARE)

ADULT SIZE:

~ 4 - 7 pounds (female) ~ 7 - 12 pounds (male)

ACTIVITY:

Nocturnal (mostly active at night)

CONSERVATION STATUS:

Least Concern

THREATS:

Habitat Loss, Invasive Species, Pollution, Car Strikes, Domestic Dogs, & General Human Influence

FUN FACTS:

The Virginia Opossum (often incorrectly called "Possum") is not related to rodents, though they are sometimes mistaken for great big rats. Instead, the opossum is closely related to kangaroos, wallabies, and koalas, and is the only marsupial species found in the USA and Canada. Mother opossums can have around 12 tiny gummy bear-sized babies per litter, and those newborn "joeys" must crawl into her pouch for survival right after birth. Inside the pouch, the babies drink lots of milk and grow rapidly larger. When they become too big for her pouch, the babies will take a ride on her back until they can no longer fit. Usually baby opossums are completely on their own by 4 and ½ months old.