



## VIRGINIA OPOSSUMS

### KEY FACTS

- Opossums are born from February through June. Gestation is 13 days. They can have up to 3 litters a year.
- Mothers can have 13 babies in one litter but 7-12 is average. Babies climb into the pouch and nurse from teats.
- At birth- the babies are the size of beans and have more developed forearms.
- At 2 weeks- they have pink skin, and eyes and ears are closed. The hind legs start to develop.
- At 3 weeks- the ears begin to open, and their hind legs are more developed.
- At 4 weeks- fur starts to grow, eyes and ears are still closed
- At 9 weeks- babies have fur, the eyes are open, are starting to move around on their own, and mouth is closed at the corners.
- At about 16 weeks- the mouth is open, they are well furred, and they will leave and re-enter the pouch.



### NESTS

Opossum nests are on the ground, usually in tree hollows and under buildings.

### If babies are found alone and abandoned

Any opossum baby found that is less than 7 inches long from nose to the base of the tail needs to be taken to a rehabilitator.

Mother opossums do not have a strong maternal instinct and will not return for lost babies. These babies will need to be tube fed by an experienced rehabber.

If an adult opossum is killed, she may have babies in the pouch that can be saved if removed in time and taken to a rehabber.



about 1 month old



about 15 weeks old

Call a licensed rehabber in your area, do not feed it anything. Place it in a box with a towel, heat source, and keep it in a quiet dark place.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/find-a-wildlife-rehabilitator>