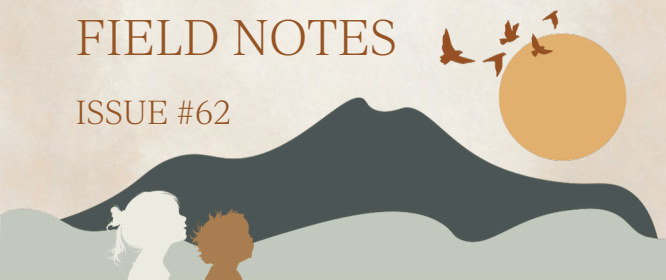


Nat Theo Club

FIELD NOTES

ISSUE #62



Opossum

MAMMAL

HABITAT

Opossums are found in North, Central and South America. They can live in neighborhoods and forests. They are omnivores and eat a variety of plants, eggs, insects, and small animals.

FUN FACT

The opossum has a prehensile tail that allows it to hang from a branch like a monkey. Opossums play dead when they are afraid even though they are immune to snake venom and rabies.



WHAT MAMMALS LIVE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

I have seen opossums along highways, crossing roads, on the lakeshore, and even in downtown Nashville. They can make their home nearly anywhere. One day, I saw an opossum scurry away while it was searching for farmer's market leftovers. Typically, opossums are active at night and regularly visit my deck to eat birdseed or other morsels we've left behind.

When it rains, the ground in my backyard becomes muddy. As I fill my bird feeders in the morning, I often look for the muddy footprints of my nocturnal deck visitors. The outward "thumb" of the back foot is an easy way to identify the opossum track.

Front
foot



Back
foot

Though opossums are marsupials, they do not show their pouch like a kangaroo. I have never seen opossum joeys because they are well hidden from sight. When joeys are born, they are the size of a bee. They climb into their mother's pouch to drink milk and stay warm. They are protected from harm for 2-3 months before climbing to see the world.

Marsupial mothers protect their precious joeys (babies) by hiding them in their pouch. This reminds me of Psalms 119:11, which says, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." By memorizing God's Word, you keep it far safer than any marsupial joey. No one can steal God's Word from your heart. When you wonder what is right and wrong, or true or false, you can recall the scriptures you have safely hidden in your heart.

