

**ZooPro Adventure Program**  
**Environmental Encroachment**

**Main Program Topics:**

Natural habitats and niches of native species.

Impact of habitat loss on population numbers and the makeup and balance of living natural communities.

Adaptations which allow some native species to exploit habitats that are disturbed or radically altered by human activity.

Perception of native species as ‘nuisance’ species inside or around human dwellings and other buildings as a result of encroachment by development.

Appropriate responses to wildlife in inappropriate places.

**Relation to Virginia SOLs:**

- 1.5 (life needs – habitat)
- 1.8 (animals as natural resources; land, forest and soil resources)
- 2.5 (change in habitats)
- 3.4 (behavioral and physical adaptations)
- 3.6 (population and community; sharing limited resources)
- 3.10 (effects of human activity on habitat)
- 4.5 (influence of human activity on ecosystems)
- 5.7 (human impact on the Earth’s surface)

**Special Notes Regarding This Program:**

Obviously this topic draws directly on the expertise, professional work, and experience of the presenters to be combined with more general scientific information. It deals as much with changing attitudes and perceptions as with facts of natural history.

**Animal Species Most Frequently Used:**

American Toad	<i>Bufo Americanus</i>	‘Backyard’ wildlife
Ants	formicidal <i>Lasius sp.</i>	‘Home invaders’
Black Rat Snake	<i>Elaphe obsoleta</i>	‘Backyard’ wildlife that elicits overreaction

 <p>Eastern Box Turtle</p>	<p><i>Terrapene carolina</i></p>	<p>'Backyard' wildlife; road casualty</p>
<p>Screech Owl</p>	<p><i>Otus asio</i></p>	<p>Displaced woodland wildlife; road casualty due indirectly to littering</p>
<p>Striped Skunk</p>	<p><i>Mephitis mephitis</i></p>	<p>Garbage scavenger; perceived threat</p>
 <p>Virginia Opossum</p>	<p><i>Didelphis virginiana</i></p>	<p>Garbage scavenger; 'home invader'; road casualty</p>

**Other Materials Typically Used:**

Pictures/graphics of other native species commonly encountered as “nuisance animals”, such as raccoons, gray squirrels, bees, bats, and Canada geese.

Pictures of introduced and feral animals such as starlings, pigeons, nutria, escaped exotic ‘pets’, and feral cats.

Possible display of equipment used for humane removal of wildlife in inappropriate places.

Possibly, maps showing extended ranges of animals that have flourished in disturbed habitats, such as coyotes.