



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

### CAPTIVE RABIES VECTOR SPECIES INFORMATION

- **Rabies is a fatal disease caused by a virus that attacks the Central Nervous System.** The rabies virus is transmitted through the saliva of infected mammals. It cannot be spread through blood, urine, or feces. Most rabies infections are caused by a bite from a rabid animal. Though a less common mode of transmission, the virus can also be spread through the contamination of mucous membranes (such as the eyes, nose, and mouth).
- **Rabies Vector Species (RVS) are the raccoon, skunk, woodchuck, fox, and bat.** These are the most common carriers of the rabies virus and can carry the virus for several months without showing any symptoms.
- **THERE IS NO APPROVED RABIES VACCINE FOR THESE SPECIES.** If your vet has administered a rabies vaccine to your RVS, please be aware that it was used in an extralabel manner and will not legally protect your RVS should it scratch or bite someone. Unlike a domestic dog or cat, a RVS cannot be quarantined for 10 days to ensure that it is free of rabies.
- **It is impossible to certify that a live RVS is free of rabies.** A veterinarian may certify that the animal has been examined and did not display any clinical signs of disease at that time, but as a RVS, the animal can still be infected without showing those signs.
- **There is no live test for rabies.** Any incidents of bites, scratches, or other exposures will require the RVS to be euthanized.
- **RVS must remain caged when not in the residence of the permittee.** You may not carry, walk, or otherwise handle a RVS in public. The public MAY NOT come into contact with the RVS. Prohibited activities include walking the RVS on a leash or in a pet stroller.
- **Please take extra precautions to prevent any possible RVS contact with visitors to your home and with members of the public.**