

tended them almost daily and given them various titbits. All the horror which the name skunk implied had vanished and in its place we found a pretty, attractive animal, surpassed by few in cleanliness. When they were attended to and their house kept thoroughly clean, little, if any, of that odor for which they are famous was discernible.

The mother remained about for some time, but eventually acquired a habit of visiting the poultry house and stealing the chickens. She was trapped by the junior writer, but given her liberty again in the hope that the lesson would prove sufficient. She remained perfectly quiet while being released, and only by persistent chasing could be made to leave the premises, which she did at last without any reminder that would suggest a skunk. Returning a few days later she encountered the dogs, much to their discomfort and ours, but even this did not restrain her from her nightly raids, so eventually necessity obliged us to make away with her. As a parting, she left a by no means desirable legacy, which remained in evidence for at least a couple of months afterwards.

Of the two remaining young little is known, but from the fact that a dog met with a somewhat hasty check near the old home late in the season we have reason for hoping that at least one has survived.

SCARCITY OF BUMBLE-BEE NESTS IN THE VICINITY OF OTTAWA.

Queens of *Bombus terricola*, *ternarius*, *fervidus* and *borealis* were common on the Experimental Farm in the spring, and those of seven other species, *pennsylvanicus*, *perplexus*, *vagans*, *impatiens*, *rufocinctus*, *affinis* (only one) and *separatus* (one only) were observed. During July and early August, however, very few workers were seen and no nests could be discovered. The trial plots of red clover, a plant that never fails to attract large numbers of *Bombi* in Europe, were seldom visited by bumble-bees, though in a red clover field at Danford Lake, Que., numerous workers of *B. borealis*, an uncommon species in the United States, were noticed. Why are bumble-bee colonies so rare around Ottawa? Is it because the queens cannot find suitable nests? Or are they destroyed by parasites or larger enemies, such as skunks? Observations on the nests that have survived might reveal the main cause of the scarcity, and the writer would be very pleased to hear of any nests that may be found in the district or elsewhere, in order that he may make a careful investigation.

F. W. L. SLADEN, Asst. Entomologist for Apiculture, Division of Entomology, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.