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TORONTO'S NEWS

Friday, February 5, 2010

News » Local

Wildlife Crew Finds Rare Albino Raccoon At Construction Site

2009/05/11 | CityNews.ca Staff

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It's not exactly one in a million - more like one in 500,000. But it's still a pretty rare sight. A Toronto wildlife company responding to a request for help has found a rare white albino raccoon at a construction site at Yonge and Eglinton.

The animal was one of a litter of five babies, and looks almost like a pig instead of one of the traditional "black masked bandits." It also lacked a striped tail.

How rare are the creatures? Brad Gates of Gates Wildlife Control, whose company was behind the discovery, says over the past 25 years, his people have only ever come across the phenomenon twice - the other time was in Mississauga. He estimates it's a 1-in-500,000 shot.

He tells **CityNews.ca** it's "a busy construction site" that's about to be sealed off and they needed to finally get rid of the raccoons. What happens to it now? It will be given back to its mother - arrangements are being made to trap her sometime on Monday night.

The entire family will then be "relocated" elsewhere in the area.

When asked if they won't just cause more problems for some other resident, Gates admits it's possible. But he says once a raccoon gets used to living in a city environment, it can't be sent back to the wild. He notes the mother will "teach the babies everything they need to know" to survive in the urban jungle.

Photo courtesy: Gates Wildlife Control

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