

# Percy the opossum ‘living his quiet life’

SJ [sunjournal.com/2019/12/30/percy-the-opossum-living-his-quiet-life](https://www.sunjournal.com/2019/12/30/percy-the-opossum-living-his-quiet-life)

December 30, 2019

AUBURN — Six months after his tail was cut off, Percy the elderly opossum is fat and happy at Misfits Rehab.

Happy-ish anyway.

“He’s a pain to deal with. You know, he’s a very wild animal,” said wildlife rehabilitator Jennifer Marchigiani. “But he’s a good boy. He eats well. He’s actually tolerant of us now. He’s gotten to the point where we’re no longer scary to him.”

Percy had been popular among some residents in Rumford, where he’d roamed the same neighborhood for at least a couple of years. But in June, one of those residents found Percy gravely injured after someone cut off his tail.

The Maine Warden Service investigated Rumford resident Erik Matthews, 32, and summonsed him for animal cruelty, a civil violation. According to the Warden Service, Matthews told the investigator the opossum attacked him, so he stomped on the animal, cut off his tail and left, believing he was dead. Those who know Percy said he’s always been docile and they doubted he attacked.

Matthews died in August after being hit by a car while walking in the dark on a road in Windham.

In the wild, opossums need their tails to help stabilize them as they climb trees, keep their balance along branches and gather food. Because he no longer has a tail, Percy can never be returned to the wild. He will live at Misfits Rehab in Auburn for the rest of his life.

Marchigiani received so many inquiries about Percy over the summer that she gave him his own Facebook page, where people can see a photo of him eating celebratory ice cream or watch a video of him getting a bubble bath. He now has 1,400 followers.



Jennifer Marchigiani holds Percy the opossum at Misfits Rehab in Auburn. *Andree Kehn/Sun Journal*

“I don’t want to stress him out, so I’m not going to be like, ‘Hey, pose for this picture!’ every day,” Marchigiani said. “So I let him do his thing and when I have an opportunity to take a cute picture, I’ll post it.”

Today, Percy spends his time in an indoor enclosure built for his needs. For climbing, he has a cat tree. For walking, he has a cat wheel — which is a lot like a giant hamster wheel for cats. Or, apparently, opossums.

“He actually walks on it, which is as cute as can be,” Marchigiani said. “We haven’t seen him run on it, but I have definitely seen him (walk). He gets on it and it starts to move and he just kind of continues walking, then trots on the wheel like, ‘OK, I’m going nowhere quickly.’”

Percy was too thin when he arrived at Misfits Rehab, but he has since gained weight. Because his teeth are poor — he has dental treatment scheduled with a local vet — he sticks to soft foods, favoring bananas, cat food, cooked vegetables, eggs and string cheese.

“I open the door and he’s like, ‘Hey, where’s my cheese stick?’” Marchigiani said. “He gets his string cheese daily.”

Percy will spend this winter indoors. In the spring, he will be able to spend time in an outdoor enclosure.

“Other than that, he’s just living his quiet life,” Marchigiani said.

Leeds man fires back after Donald Trump calls him an ‘animal’

My Waffle food truck owners served a lot of chicken and learned a lot

© 2024