

So you are curious why I would choose perhaps the most unwelcome of animals (should you see one crossing your yard while hosting friends on the patio). A creature known the world over for two things: stinking and an uncanny ability to spray stuff from its rear.

Of course I am talking about the skunk, who else? And lucky for you the answer is obvious....

..... BECAUSE THEY ARE AWESOME !!

Duh..... But with that fact out of the way, maybe I can reveal more. Actually I could write a whole lot more, but I'm not going to bore you. What I will do is answer truthfully.

Some folks will say they are an X,Y, or Z because the markings look cool, or some other aesthetic reason. Which is fine, I totally respect that but in my case the relations always go deeper. The skunk for me is someone I relate with in a personal way. Sure they are cute, have super fluffy tails and a natural set of rally racing stripes.

What's not to love?

But there is much more. The mere name "skunk" conveys a sense of potency... of Presence. Yes with a capital-P. Skunks are one of few animals that don't fall well into a category of predator or prey. Skunk isn't out to get anyone. He goes his own way, meaning harm to none, but he is no pushover. Skunks have a lovable "*devil may care*" attitude in the face of an aggressor and will stand toe-to-toe with others tens or hundreds of times his own size... yet only if required!

A skunk's primary deterrent is his coloration and potent reputation. When threatened a skunk will stomp its feet and make a show before breaking out the juice. It is a jungle out there. With fangs and claws, spikes, venom and nasty quills, other animals are like thugs with knives and guns. What about the skunk? Well he has got his trusty can o' Mace in the face of all that injurious lethality. This method does not kill or injure, and does no lasting harm. Talk about an upstanding citizen and a wonderful example of assertive non-aggression.

Skunks are foragers living off the fat of the land, which I respect. They are affectionate and playful animals so people actually do keep them as pets in the few states where it is legal to do so. Personally I find a lot to like about the skunk's disposition. A self directed, brave pacifist gets my respect. Unfortunately skunks get a bad rap, even from sources inside the fandom. Skunk characters are often used in artwork (mostly by furs who are *not* skunks!) for some of their more raunchy material. This led to a perception that skunks are dirty or into strange kinks.

Let me clear up a matter, skunks much like other mammals are actually quite clean and practice good grooming! I for one appreciate and practice good hygiene myself. Here I will say even more: Yes skunks are musky, just naturally so, and that is not a bad thing! Smells, and our sense of smell are rather taboo but they shouldn't be. Smell is an indispensable part of our big five, and the sense most strongly linked

to our memory ability. Did you know that?

Skunks remind me that not all scent is bad. I for one love the smell of my cat's fur, the smell of my own bed, the smell of the forest in Autumn. These things are part of our experience of the world and add to the richness of it all; to do without them would be like seeing everything in monochrome. How terrible. There is plenty in the wide world that smells downright bad to me, but I am one of several folks I know (the others are not furs) who don't include the distinctive musk of skunk in that list. We just don't perceive it as a bad smell for some reason. Again let me be clear, in no way would I ever want to be *sprayed* by a skunk! As I said, that stuff is Mace and way potent besides. Skunks themselves will not spray each other in a scuffle or spray at all, if they can at all help it, whilst confined.

But I digress. The ultimate answer is that I did *not* choose the skunk, skunk chose me. Much like other modes of self expression, sometimes there is a truth about yourself which you can either repress or express and this is your real choice. Say you hate pickles. There is nothing to say you can't eat 'em anyway and call it yummy. A fursona is the same deal for me: a simple occasion for honesty or fallacy. There is more to say in a future post. I feel inspired to represent myself a certain way without totally understanding why, but any other representation would be a lie.

So skunk I am, and proud to wear the double white stripes!

Have any thoughts to share, or something to say about your own species?

Thanks for reading