

Raccoon



Raccoons are a common and well-known furbearer in Wisconsin. They have distinctive black masks and ringed tails that are easily recognizable. They can live almost anywhere and will eat almost anything. As such, they do very well in urban areas where they have access to human-supplied sources of food, such as pet food and trash. Raccoons carry many diseases that can affect human and/or pet health. There are a variety of ways to control nuisance raccoons.

Don't Feed Wildlife

- Do not store pet food outdoors and keep bowls inside when not in use.
- Hang bird feeders where raccoons can't access them and clean up the spilt bird seed below feeders.
- Keep garbage indoors and make sure garbage cans have tight, secure lids.
- Raccoons have also been known to access residences through unlocked pet doors, so keep pet doors locked at night.
- If you have a raccoon problem, remove all food items, including collecting fruit that drops from fruit trees, and discard off-site to deter continued use.

Protect Your Pet

- Turn on a bright flood light to scare off raccoons and other species and scan the area for raccoons before letting your pets outside.
- Raccoons carry many diseases, some of which can be transferred to pets, so make sure your pets have all their vaccinations.
- Always supervise pets when outdoors and only leave pets unattended when they are secure in a kennel with a covered top. Keep cats inside.

Discourage Raccoons

- Keep buildings raccoon-proof by securing access to holes and broken windows, and keep chimneys closed with appropriate materials (hardware cloth, commercial cap, etc.). Access to attics, chimneys, and sheds provide denning and sleeping sites with less predator potential for raccoons. Make sure all animals (including young) are out before sealing.
- Single wire electric fence set at 6 inches or a double wire electric fence set at 5 and 12 inches can help to repel raccoons that are raiding your garden at night. Please check with your local government to ensure adherence to local ordinances involving electric fencing.
- Trim trees so they don't overhang your roof and allow raccoons access, prune overgrown bushes to reduce cover, and remove or elevate woodpiles that could be denning sites, if possible.



Quick Facts

- Raccoons have very dexterous fingers that allow them to get into containers most wildlife cannot, and even open doors and latches.
- Some raccoons like to "wash" their food (dunk it in water), and raccoons can often be found near water.
- Raccoons don't hibernate, but will spend really cold periods inactive in dens.
- Raccoon hunting and trapping is legal year-round on your own property without a DNR license. Please check with your local government to ensure adherence to local ordinances.
- Relocated animals can spread disease, move problem animals to other areas, and lower animal survival rate from lack of food and habitat. As such, the DNR suggests humane euthanasia. If live-trapping and relocating captured raccoons please keep in mind that you need landowner permission to release raccoons and animals may not be released onto any public land.

For more information, visit our webpage:

dnr.wi.gov

WM-571 2014

