

- Lock pet doors at night to keep raccoons from coming into the house.
- Fasten garbage can lids tightly, or keep your garbage can in the garage to keep raccoons from toppling the can and spreading garbage around the yard.
- To protect fish in a pond, submerge a wire mesh horizontally around the edge, leaving the center open. The raccoon can't reach past the wire and won't stand on it because it is unstable. Provide rocks for fish to hide in.
- Keep ripe fruit picked; don't leave fruit lying on the ground.

### IF YOU FIND A YOUNG RACCOON ALONE

If it is under the house or in a nest area, leave it alone so the mother will return. If it is in the open, wait until evening to see if the mother returns. Do not handle the raccoon with your bare hands. If the mother doesn't return, bring it to Lindsay Wildlife Museum for care.

### IF YOU FIND AN INJURED RACCOON

If it can safely be placed in a secure container without touching it, bring it to Lindsay Wildlife Museum. Otherwise, call your county animal services department.



Lindsay Wildlife Museum

*Lindsay Wildlife Museum exhibits live, non-releasable native wildlife. Founded in 1955, the museum is the oldest and one of the largest wildlife rehabilitation centers in the United States, treating more than 6,000 injured or orphaned animals each year.*

*At our natural history center, visitors can watch a bald eagle eat lunch and listen to the cry of a red-tailed hawk. Children learn about wildlife that may be found in their backyards and listen to storytellers weave their tales. Rotating exhibits, daily programs and hands-on activities focus on living with nature.*

**1931 First Avenue  
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[www.wildlife-museum.org](http://www.wildlife-museum.org)**

# LIVING WITH RACCOONS



Lindsay Wildlife Museum

# LIVING *with* RACCOONS

Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) are very common in Bay Area cities and suburbs. They are easily identified by their black-masked face and ringed tail. They are excellent climbers and are very dexterous. Raccoons are active mostly at night and need a quiet and dark place during the day to sleep. They are intelligent, curious and have adapted well to living in suburbs and cities.

Raccoons are omnivorous, eating fruits, nuts, insects, frogs, crayfish, bird eggs and nestlings and just about anything else available. They sometimes dunk their food in water. Raccoons can become unpopular with home owners when they nest under the home or in the attic, roll back sod to look for grubs in the lawn, eat fish out of ponds, raid the garbage can or even come into the home

through a pet door.

A raccoon usually has one litter per year, between February and October, with two to seven babies. Their home range is normally less than one mile, but the young can disperse up to 30 miles. Adult raccoons are often solitary, but young raccoons stay with their mother during the winter, either in the same den or nearby.

## *TO DISCOURAGE RACCOONS FROM VISITING YOUR YARD*

- Close entrances to attics and crawl spaces so raccoons cannot use those areas to sleep. Make sure the animals are out of the space before sealing the entrance. If there are no babies, wait until the raccoon leaves for the night. If there are babies, wait until the babies are old enough to join their mother on her nightly forays before closing the entrance or you can put lights and a loud radio in the attic or crawl space to encourage the mother to find another den site for her young. This may take several days. Be sure to check for babies before closing entrance.
- Wrap metal guards, 18 inches or wider, around tree trunks five or six feet above the ground to keep raccoons from climbing trees to get to roof tops.
- Treat your lawn for grubs (insect larvae that eat grass roots) at the beginning of the summer so there will be no food available in late summer and fall when raccoons are most likely to dig in lawns. Beneficial nematodes are a good non-toxic way to kill the grubs; see your nursery for advice. Use black or cayenne pepper on the lawn to discourage raccoons from even trying to find grubs. Dog and cat repellent may work to keep raccoons away.
- Don't leave pet food outside at night. Feed pets indoors or outside only during the daytime. Pet food can attract large numbers of raccoons and is not good for the raccoons. Raccoons should not be given food of any kind.



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