

Raccoons

Natural History

Raccoons are nocturnal animals, however it is not unusual to see a female with young during the day. Raccoons can weigh 15 – 60lbs, and are easily recognizable with their ringed tails and masked eyes.

Raccoons

have one litter per year between March and June. There can be 1 – 7 young. Raccoons typically den in tree cavities, attics, chimneys, storm sewers, abandoned buildings, crawl spaces, and under decks or sheds.

Raccoon(s) in Chimney

It is important to be sure that the raccoon is nesting in the chimney and not trapped. Look for evidence that the raccoon is coming and going from the chimney. (Soot prints, marks outside chimney or on side of house, observing the animal leaving at night, etc)

When raccoons are nesting in chimneys, especially during summer months, it is almost always a litter.

*Never Attempt to smoke a raccoon out of a chimney. A dead raccoon in a chimney is far worse than a live one!!

If the raccoon is not trapped proceed with the following steps at dusk;

- Inspect the inside and outside of the chimney to find openings.
- Try to locate the presence of babies.
- If no young are present, do one or all of the following: place a bowl of ammonia in the fireplace and open the flue slightly allowing the fumes to rise up, play a radio into the fireplace loudly, shine a bright light up into the chimney. (Use of one deterrent can be effective, use of all three is always effective)
- If young are present, it is best to wait for them to leave on their own – usually 6-8 weeks – however – the above steps can encourage mom to remove her young.
- After all raccoons have left, seal any openings with 1¼" wire mesh and cap the chimney to prevent future problems. Mammal repellent can also be applied to discourage attempts to regain entry. The repellents will stain but they are effective.

Raccoon(s) in Attic

The following should be done at dusk:

- Inspect attic to determine where the animal is getting in.
- If raccoons are present, scare them by playing a radio loudly and using bright lights.
- If young are present, it is best to allow them to leave on their own, 6-8 weeks.
- After all raccoons have left, seal all openings with 1/4" hardware cloth, trim any tree branches that allow access to the roof.

Raccoon(s) in Garden

The following deterrents are effective:

- Electric fencing ‐ Fido Shock brand is safe for dogs, cats, and wildlife (available at Petsmart)
- A wide border of lime
- Cucumbers planted among other plants ‐ they hate cucumbers!
- Mammal repellent recipe