

## RACCOON PREVENTION

- Ensure garbage cans are sealed tightly. Use bungee cords to keep raccoon from opening the lid.
- Secure compost bins to prevent access to raccoons and other wildlife.
- Seal cracks or openings to attics, chimneys, and crawl spaces under your deck or shed.
- Remove brush piles and debris that could serve as shelter to raccoons and other small animals.
- Eliminate access to food sources such as pet food left outdoors, birdseed, fallen fruit from trees, or over filled trash cans.

### • Scent repellents

1. **Vinegar:** 50% vinegar, 50% water in a spray bottle.
2. **Ammonia:** Soak rags in ammonia and place them around where raccoons tend to linger or 50% Ammonia, 50% water in a spray bottle.
3. **Peppermint Oil:** Essential oil with water to create a solution to use in a spray bottle.
4. **Epsom salt:** Generously sprinkle Epsom salt around your property.
5. **Coyote Urine:** May deter raccoons and other wildlife when used appropriately. Can be purchased on Amazon, Fleet Farm, etc.



**Request Service:** (515) 222-3321  
**General Questions:** (515) 222-3364  
**Pet Licenses:** (515) 222-3600

# RACCOONS



**IOWA'S MASKED NEIGHBORS**



## Raccoon Biology

Raccoons are a medium size, stocky animal and are easy to recognize due to their black “mask” around their eyes. They also have thick greyish brown fur, and a striped tail. They can weigh as much as 50 pounds!

Raccoons have babies between April and May but can vary depending on weather, and food availability. A mother raccoon can have 3 to 5 babies at one time. These babies are called *kits*. A mother raccoon stays with her babies for about a year. After that, the young kits go off on their own.

## Raccoon Fact

The name "raccoon" comes from the Algonquian word "aroughcun", meaning "he who scratches with his hands".

## DID YOU KNOW?

US President Calvin Coolidge had a pet raccoon in the White House named Rebecca.

She was a regular at White House events and even had an engraved collar that said, "White House Raccoon".

## Daytime Sightings

Raccoon activity observed during the day can cause panic as most people assume raccoons to be nocturnal. However, raccoons can be seen during the day with the availability of food and water, especially in neighborhoods. This does not always mean they are sick or rabid.



## Raccoon Diseases

Wildlife diseases are readily transmissible to a wide range of species, including humans and their pets. Different diseases may exhibit similar symptoms; it is usually not possible to diagnose a disease simply by observing an animal's condition or behavior. Common symptoms of disease may include:

- *Lack of coordination*
- *Lack of aggressiveness*
- *Secretions from eyes, nose, or mouth*
- *Weak, rapid, or uneven respiration*
- *Malnourishment*
- *Loss of hair*
- *Loss of muscle control*

If you discover a sick animal, contact:

**Neighborhood Services (515)-222-3321**

## What Do Raccoons Eat?

Raccoons are omnivores with a varied diet that includes fruit, nuts, insects, small animals, and carrion in the wild. In urban areas, they often eat garbage, pet food left outside from fallen from trees, and garden crops. Their diet changes seasonally, more protein in the spring and summer, and nuts and fruit in the spring to prepare for the winter. Though they don't hibernate, they become less active in the winter and rely on fat reserves.



## Relocating Wildlife

Relocating wildlife causes extreme stress, injury, or death to the animal as it struggles to survive in an unfamiliar territory. It can also spread disease and disrupt the balance of the area's ecosystem. Relocation of wildlife is not permitted by the DNR.

## Raccoon Fact

Raccoons have a very sensitive touch and identify many items through touch before using other senses. They can be seen "washing" items to increase their sense of touch. Though it's most commonly seen in captive raccoons.

