

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS...

- As a last resort, trapping can be an effective method of dealing with troublesome wildlife. The most commonly used device is a live-trap which captures the animal physically unharmed. Traps should be checked twice a day (morning and evening) to replenish bait or to humanely deal with captured animals. Raccoons, opossums, and skunks cannot be released off-site, they must be euthanized or released on the same property. Contact the ODNR Division of Wildlife (1-800-Wildlife) for additional trapping regulations.
- Do not use poisons. Poisons are illegal, inhumane and may result in secondary poisoning of raptors, wild scavengers and neighborhood pets.
- Native wildlife are legally protected. It is illegal for anyone to possess a native wild animal unless permitted by the ODNR Division of Wildlife. Wildlife rehabilitators have a permit to care for orphaned or injured wildlife.

PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS

Raccoons may become aggressive if they feel threatened by humans or other animals such as cats and dogs. Never attempt direct contact with a wild animal, and keep your pet's vaccinations current. Canine distemper is a common disease among raccoons. Many also harbor transmittable parasites and carry round worm. Although harmless to raccoons, these parasites can be very dangerous and even fatal to other animals, including humans. Transmission occurs through the parasite's microscopic eggs found in raccoon feces. Raccoons also are carriers of rabies, a fatal disease to humans.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you find a wild animal and are concerned, leave it alone and call Brukner Nature Center at 937-698-6493, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.



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Brukner Nature Center is a non-profit, privately funded organization promoting the appreciation and understanding of wildlife conservation through preservation, education, and rehabilitation.

The purpose of our wildlife rehabilitation program is to educate people regarding the natural history of Ohio's wildlife, to offer help and advice when wildlife and people conflict, and to care for, rehabilitate, and release native Ohio wildlife expected to survive in their natural environment.

Living with RACCOONS

in Miami County



Brukner Nature Center

Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) are found in all 88 counties of Ohio, often in abundance. Identified by their unmistakable “masked” faces, raccoons will live in any environment that supports them with a food source and a form of shelter. During the daytime, raccoons sleep in hollow trees or logs and other animals’ abandoned dens. They are nocturnal and are up and about during the dark hours of the night. Even though the raccoon does not really hibernate, it can sleep for days, and even weeks at a time during the cold winter months.

Raccoons mate from February through March in Ohio. Typically only one litter is produced each year, but there can be exceptions to the rule. Newborn raccoons are well-furred with their eyes opening around 19 days. By the sixth or seventh week, the young are weaned and weigh about 1.5 pounds.

LIVING WITH RACCOONS

By nature raccoons are shy, but they often become bolder when living in close proximity to humans. They are very dexterous and intelligent, which often leads to what people perceive as mischief. Raccoons are valuable scavengers and help maintain ecological balance. Communal denning is common. Up to 23 raccoons have been reported in a single den with usually only one adult male present. Most raccoons only use homes temporarily during March through August to raise their young. If at all possible,



consider “living with them” until the young leave the nest at 8 to 10 weeks of age.

PREVENTING PROBLEMS

- Do not encourage raccoons by feeding them.
- Keep pet food and water dishes inside, especially at night.
- Do not allow spillage to accumulate outside of bird feeders.
- Keep grills and barbecues clean. Even small food scraps may attract raccoons.
- If possible, do not keep garbage cans outside. Or bungee cord them shut.
- Trim tree limbs that provide access to your roof. Repair broken, weak or rotted areas on your roof, soffit and fascia.
- Install and maintain chimney caps before animals move into your chimney.
- Use welded wire to prevent animals from accessing openings under decks, elevated sheds, concrete slabs and porches.
- Use welded wire on the inside of attic vents to deny access to the attic if the covers are removed.

RECOMMENDED DETERRENTS

Wrap a 4’ to 6’ wide piece of aluminum flashing around tree trunks to prevent raccoons from climbing. Make sure the aluminum flashing is a minimum of 4 feet off the ground. This will deny raccoons access to the tree and your roof. This technique provides an immediate solution; however, it is recommended that you leave the flashing up for five to seven days.

Grease downspouts with a mixture of petroleum jelly and crushed pepper. Raccoons will

be unable to climb the surface. This provides an immediate solution, but it is recommended that you keep the downspouts greased for five to seven days.

Place lighting, such as bright flashlights, flood lamps or blinking strands of holiday lights, in the den. It is best to leave the lights on 24 hours a day. If this is not possible, the lights must be on during the daytime to disturb the animal’s sleep.

Play a radio, portable alarm clock, noisy children’s toy, or anything that makes noise repeatedly; have the sound on for 24 hours a day. If this is not possible, the sound must be on during the daytime to disturb the animal’s sleep.

Place rags soaked in ammonia in the den for one week. Ammonia has an irritating smell; over time, the ammonia will dissipate so it is important to re-soak the rags daily.

If a den site has been established in a chimney, usually on the smoke shelf in the fireplace flue, use the same techniques listed above. Lower a light down into the chimney, place a bowl of ammonia on the fireplace grate, and place a radio inside the fireplace as well. Do not try to “smoke out” the animals. They can be overcome with smoke, and then you will be faced with physically removing them yourself.

It is important to use all the techniques at the same time in order for the deterrents to be successful. To determine if the animal has left a den site, wad up newspaper, and pack it into the den entrance. (This also helps to hold in ammonia fumes). If the raccoon is still using the den, the newspaper will be pulled out. If, after a few days, the newspaper has not been disturbed, securely repair any access opening. Failure to do so may result in the raccoon or another animals moving in.