To Relocate a Raccoon

In Montana raccoons are classified as non-game and are unprotected, allowing them to be trapped or hunted at any time with no limits or seasons.

Raccoons can be caught and removed using live traps. Your local Fish, Wildlife & Parks office or local animal control office may have a live trap they will loan to you. They can also refer you to persons who trap nuisance animals for a fee.

Traps may be baited with fish-flavored cat food, sardines or chicken. To avoid catching the family cat use bait such as peanut butter on fruit, vanilla extract on bread, or just fruit.

Traps may need to be covered with burlap or tight wire mesh to prevent raccoons from reaching through and stealing the bait. It is recommended that raccoons be transported at least 3 miles from the capture site.

For Further Information

Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage. 1994. Cooperative Extension Division. Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE.

Raccoons (WEC-34). 1999. Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department. Florida Cooperative Extension Service. Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. University of Florida. Gainesville, FL.

Wildlife Damage Management Series. 1993. Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. Utah State University, Logan, UT.

Wild Neighbors The Humane Approach to Living with Wildlife. 1997. John Hadidian, Guy Hodge and John Grandy, eds. The Humane Society of the United States. Washington, D.C.



Living With Raccoons

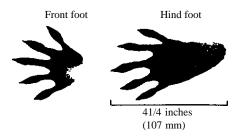


Raccoons – the ring-tailed, masked bandits of the night – are found across Montana. Raccoons can be interesting and compatible neighbors, unless food sources associated with a home or agricultural operation bring them into conflict with people. By limiting access to your home and garden, the damage caused by raccoons can usually be avoided.



www.fwp.state.mt.us

Raccoons are intelligent, inquisitive, and excellent climbers and will adapt and take advantage of their surrounds. They will seek out the easiest meal – which could be in your garden or pet's food dish. They are most active at night. You may not see them but you can identify raccoon activity by their distinctive footprints. Raccoons eat fish, insects, small mammals, fruit, berries and corn. They will also eat eggs and birds.



It is often more practical to keep a raccoon away than it is to remove it. The best long-term way of coping with troublesome raccoons is to exclude them from areas where they are unwanted. Removing the attraction for nuisance raccoons, such as garbage, pet food, etc., and excluding them from attics, chimneys, and sheds should be among your first options. Removal of offending individual raccoons by trapping or shooting should be used only as a last resort.

Around The Home

Raccoons will make a meal of your pet's food if given the opportunity. Feed your pets indoors or bring their food and water dishes inside at night. Raccoons may try to get into garbage. Secure trash cans so they can't be tipped over and lids can't be removed.

Raccoons can remove shingles and fascia boards to take up residence in the attic or wall space.

They like to build nests in chimneys where they

can raise their young. You can eliminate access to your roof by cutting back tree branches. Another way to prevent access is to nail 3-foot square sheets of slick metal around the corners of buildings.



Raccoons are unable to get a toehold and can't climb to the roof. This option is good for outbuildings but may be too unsightly for homes. Chimneys should be covered with a heavy metal screen or a sheet metal chimney cap, which can be purchased at your local hardware store.

Repellents have not been found effective to ward off raccoons. However, mothballs and PDB crystals used in enclosed spaces, like the attic or chimney, will cause raccoons to leave, allowing you time to put in place measures to prevent access.

In The Garden

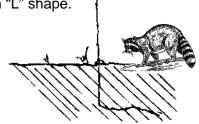




Raccoons may leave evidence of invading your garden such as partially eaten fruit under or hanging from the tree. Corn stalks may be pulled over and the ears partially husked. They will dig small holes in melons and scrape out the fruit.

A woven wire fence may prevent access to gardens. The fence should be 6 feet high with the top foot bent outward to discourage raccoons from climbing into the garden.

Or, an electric wire can be added to the top. The bottom 2 feet of the fence should be buried beneath the ground in an "L" shape.



If the raccoon learns to get through the fence by climbing over, breaking through or burrowing under it, you can install a single strand of electric wire 8 inches from the fence and 8 inches above the ground.

If you don't have a woven wire fence, use two strands of electric wire around the perimeter of the garden — one strand 6 inches and one strand 12 inches above ground.

Electric fences need only be turned on at dusk and can be shut off in the morning. Use care when installing electric wire and take precautions if it's accessible by children or neighbors. Electric fences work well for chicken yards, too, if the birds don't have access to a coop with securely closed windows and doors.

Use of scare tactics such as scarecrows, lights, and streamers, is effective for only a short time. Raccoon quickly learn they are not a threat and will ignore them.

Raccoons are not pets!
It is illegal to possess a raccoon.
They can carry rabies and other diseases that are harmful to humans and pets.