



Raccoon

Procyon lotor



RANGE: across all of Louisiana, most of the US, Mexico, and southern Canada, excluding portions of the Rocky Mountains and the arid southwest

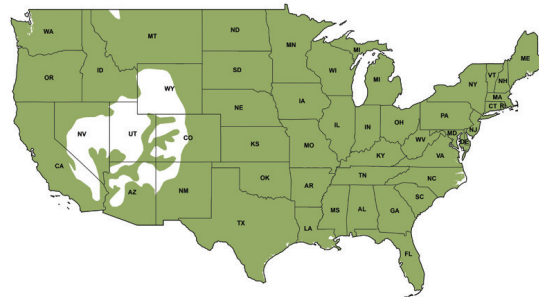


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Diet, Habitat & Behavior

Raccoons are omnivorous, relishing crayfish, crabs, snails, clams, small fish, frogs, earthworms, insects, fruits, berries, and shoots of trees. They can cause extensive damage to sweet corn. Raccoons are good swimmers and tree climbers. Their front paws are dexterous. They do not hibernate but store layers of fat during the fall to prepare for winter. Raccoons live in all habitats types in Louisiana, with highest densities in marshes and swamps. They den in trees often 30-40 feet above the ground. Raccoons thrive in both wilderness and urban areas. They do not compete severely with other species in demand for habitat.

Anatomy

Raccoons are the size of a large beagle dog. Adults average 8 pounds. They are grayish to blackish in color, five to six black and gray to yellowish rings on the tail (the tip of the tail is black), with prominent black mask across the face bordered by white above and below the black. They have 40 teeth (including four sharp canine teeth). Raccoons are prey to coyotes, bobcats and cougars; juveniles are prey to large owls, eagles and fishers. They are prone to distemper, rabies, leptospirosis (which can be passed to man), and carry parasites including roundworms, flatworms, tapeworms, mites, lice and fleas.

Reproduction

Raccoon mating occurs from early January to early April (occasionally as late as August). Gestation is 63 days, and there are usually three per litter. Newborns are 2-3 oz. and blind (eyes open at 2 weeks).



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Resources: *place new website link here*

www.wlf.louisiana.gov