

Many residents throughout the Chesapeake Bay find evidence of raccoons either through rummaged trashcans, footprints, or even on security cameras throughout the night!



## Raccoon

### *Procyon lotor*

**Common Names:** Raccoon

**Lifespan:** About 5 years in the wild

**Size:** About 3 ft from head to tail (1/3 of which is their tail), weighing up to 35 lbs.

**Habitat:** Lives along the edges of streams, rivers, swamps, and marshes. They can also be found in urban and suburban areas when searching for food beside homes. Mostly nocturnal and will stay in their dens during the day. Raccoons have great night vision.

**Range:** Found all over North America from Canada down to Panama. There are also introduced populations all over the world including Italy, Russia, Japan, and England.

**Diet:** Raccoons are omnivorous and will eat almost anything. They will eat small animals such as mice, snakes, lizards, eggs and have also been known to eat carrion (or already dead animals) if they come across it. When traveling from their dens to feeding areas they will travel in straight paths to make it easier to find their way back.

**Appearance:** Raccoons are most recognizable by their black eye-mask and ringed-tail. They have very fluffy gray bodies. They also have very dexterous front paws that look like little human hands.

**Voice:** Raccoons are surprisingly very vocal animals and are known to make about 200 different sounds to communicate with each other. This includes whistling, chattering, hissing, and purring.

**Predators:** Because raccoons spend most of the day in their dens they are safe from most predators. However, they are preyed on by coyotes, wolves, large hawks, owls, and snakes.

**What can you do?** Pick up and properly dispose of trash. Make sure trashcans are secured and don't leave your pet's food outside.

### On-Line Resources

<https://www.chesapeakebay.net/S=0/fieldguide/critter/raccoon>

[https://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Procyon\\_lotor/](https://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Procyon_lotor/)

<https://averageoutdoorsman.com/wild-game-downloads/raccoon/>



[www.elizabethriver.org](http://www.elizabethriver.org)