

# Raccoon

Many species of wildlife are found in Cook County. They are year round residents of our county and are for the most part are welcome visitors to our properties. Sometimes wildlife end-up in places that, are not safe for them or for the people or pets that may come in contact with them.

The first step in dealing with wildlife is to take steps to prevent many of the most common problems involved with wild animals around our homes. Sometimes a problem will need a solution when it cannot be prevented.

The raccoon has adapted to living easily in an urban environment. They will use barns, chimneys, attics, space under a deck or porch, garage or shed to use as shelter or raise their young. In the Fall of the year, raccoons will move into protected areas such as attics for the winter. That is why it is important to regularly check for holes or openings that the animals might use to access your home. Raccoons are usually active during the twilight hours until dawn.

## Helpful Hints

- Keep garbage stored in secured cans with tightly fastened lids. These garbage cans should be metal or tough plastic. The lids may need to be secured with wire.
- Close garbage dumpster lids each night to prevent wildlife from falling into dumpster. Make sure that no animals are in the dumpster before securing the lid.

- Raccoons are expert climbers. Make sure that tree branches that overhang the roof are removed to prevent access to chimney or attic areas.
- Check the sides of your home to repair any access points. Raccoons use openings under concrete slabs & porches, crawl spaces under a home, garages or sheds as den areas.
- Raccoons are omnivores (eat plant and animal material). They may be attracted to garbage or pet food left outside overnight.
- All chimneys should have a heavy duty, commercial grade chimney cap to prevent entry.
- A strong smelling substance such as ammonia soaked rags may cause raccoons to leave an attic space.
- Using a light or loud radio to discourage raccoons from remaining in an attic may only be a temporary solution.
- If a raccoon makes entry into a home, all doors to other parts of the home should be closed. Windows in the area, which can be opened, should allow the animal access to exit the home.
- Sometimes it may be necessary to trap the animal for removal from an area. In this case you will need the assistance of a nuisance wildlife control operator to trap and remove the animal.

There is usually a fee associated with this service.

- In Illinois, raccoons are protected by law. If an individual wants to trap a raccoon you will need to call the Illinois Department of natural Resources District Wildlife Biologist to request an animal removal permit. This type of permit comes with very specific regulations that you as the permitted trapper must follow.
- For additional information check the website University of Illinois Extension – Living With Wildlife in Illinois (<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife>)



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