

video.nationalgeographic.com/video/TIL/160531-sciex-ti-john-hadidian-city-raccoons

COMMON NAME: Raccoon

SCIENTIFIC NAME: Procyon lotor

TYPE: Mammals

DIET: Omnivores

GROUP NAME: Nursery

AVERAGE LIFE SPAN IN THE WILD: 2 to 3 years

SIZE: 23.75 to 37.5 in

WEIGHT: 4 to 23 lbs

ABOUT THE RACCOON

Bandit-masked raccoons are a familiar sight just about everywhere, because they will eat just about anything. These ubiquitous mammals are found in forests, marshes, prairies, and even in cities. They are adaptable and use their dexterous front paws and long fingers to find and feast on a wide variety of fare.

Diet

In the natural world, raccoons snare a lot of their meals in the water. These nocturnal foragers use lightning-quick paws to grab crayfish, frogs, and other aquatic creatures. On land, they pluck mice and insects from their hiding places and raid nests for tasty eggs.

Raccoons also eat fruit and plants—including those grown in human gardens and farms. They will even open garbage cans to dine on the contents.

Den Behavior

These ring-tailed animals are equally opportunistic when it comes to choosing a denning site. They may inhabit a tree hole, fallen log, or a house's attic. Females have

one to seven cubs in early summer. The young raccoons often spend the first two months or so of their lives high in a tree hole. Later, mother and children move to the ground when the cubs begin to explore on their own.

Raccoons in the northern parts of their range gorge themselves in spring and summer to store up body fat. They then spend much of the winter asleep in a den. There are several other species of raccoons, in addition to the familiar northern (North American) raccoon. Most other species live on tropical islands.