



Tracks

Raccoon

SHARE THE WILD

Human/raccoon conflicts can occur in urban areas throughout the state. Raccoons will prey on poultry, small pets and get into trash and gardens. They have also been known to inhabit attics, chimneys, basements and garages. They can enter through holes already present in a structure. Raccoons in a home can sometimes be heard scurrying about, whining or growling. Raccoons can pose a risk to humans and pets with some of the diseases they carry, such as distemper, mange, rabies, and canine and feline parovirus and roundworm.

Determining that raccoons are causing problems is the first step; removing attractants and exclusion are the next steps in avoiding conflict. Involving neighbors in these efforts is the key to success.

- Do not approach or try to feed raccoons.
- Do not leave pet food and water bowls outside.
- Keep bushes trimmed and woodpiles stacked neatly.
- Trim tree branches that extend over buildings to eliminate climbing structures.
- Trash should be kept indoors at night and put out the morning of pick-up. If this cannot be done, trash cans should be secured to avoid being overturned and the lids should be weighed or locked.
- Keep fallen fruit and vegetables picked up.
- Cover openings under porches and sheds.
- Cover window wells with a commercial grate.
- Install chimney caps and cover attic exhaust pipes with hardware cloth.
- While covering holes, be sure to avoid sealing animals inside. Sprinkle flour around the area. If you do not find tracks for several days it is okay to proceed with covering.
- Use woven wire fencing around poultry yards and gardens. Approximately 8 inches should be buried in the ground to prevent a raccoon from digging under.
- Keep poultry, rabbits and other hobby livestock secured in a building/barn at night.
- Install electric fencing.
- Install motion sensor lighting, and if possible use in conjunction with noise makers such as a radio.
- Keep housecats and dogs indoors at night.
- Lock dog/cat doors at night to prevent raccoons from entering your home.
- Vaccinate your pets.
- Always observe raccoons from a safe distance.

Raccoon on porch or in yard:

Use noise makers to scare the raccoon away. Use a hose or water gun to deter the animal from approaching. Keep a good distance from the animal and do not corner it.

Raccoon in a home:

Close off access to other areas of the home, open doors and windows and go outside and watch for the raccoon to leave. Do not use food as bait. If it still won't leave, contact a professional pest control company. Do not attempt to remove the animal yourself.

wildawareutah.org

Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) are found throughout the United States, but are not native to Utah. They live in forests, marshes, near lakes and rivers and even in urban areas. Raccoons are gray in color, with bushy, black, ringed tails and black masks across their faces. Tracks are about 4 ½ inches long. The hind print is longer than the front print and five toes can be clearly visible in the tracks of both feet. Adults may weigh 10-30 pounds. Vocalizations include high-pitched squeals and chatter. Their scientific name means "washer" because they sometimes dunk their food in water before eating it.

Raccoons are active mainly at night and are solitary, except when raising young. The breeding season usually occurs from January to March. Typically three to five young are born in April or May. The young will disperse later in the fall.

Raccoons are opportunistic omnivores. They eat plants, fish, insects, small mammals, reptiles, birds and eggs. In urban areas they may seek pet food, gardens and trash.

Legal status: Raccoons are not protected in Utah. No hunting or trapping license is required to take them. Utah state law prohibits possessing a live raccoon without a permit.

