



raccoon

Procyon lotor

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata - vertebrates
Class: Mammalia
Order: Carnivora
Family: Procyonidae

FEATURES

The raccoon has a head-body length of 16 to 28 inches, and a tail that is eight to 12 inches long. It weighs 15 to 40 pounds. The long, gray-black hair on the back looks grizzled. There is a black line down the middle of its back. It has a broad head with black hair on the face in the shape of a mask. There are five to seven alternating light and dark bands on its long fluffy tail.

BEHAVIORS

The raccoon lives in a variety of habitats as long as water, den sites and food are available. It commonly lives in urban areas. It eats berries, carrion, corn, cottontails, crayfish, fishes, garbage, fruits, insects, mice, nuts, turtles and other items. The front feet are used for finding, gathering and holding food items. A raccoon can climb extremely well and is also a good swimmer. The raccoon makes sounds - growling, trilling and wailing. Tree cavities are most often used for den sites but barns, attics and brush piles are also used. Breeding occurs between December and May. Young are born March through June after a gestation period of about two months. Litter size averages two to four.

HABITATS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bottomland forests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rivers & streams |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> lakes, ponds & reservoirs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> swamps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> temp water supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> marshes | <input type="checkbox"/> wet prairies & fens |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> peatlands | |

ILLINOIS STATUS

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> common | <input type="checkbox"/> endangered | <input type="checkbox"/> threatened |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> native | <input type="checkbox"/> exotic | |

ILLINOIS RANGE

statewide

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume I: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.