



raccoon

Procyon lotor

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata
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 may be found statewide in Illinois. It lives in a variety of habitats as long as water, den sites and food are available. It commonly lives in urban areas. The raccoon 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

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: statewide

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.