



Raccoons: What You Can Do to Be Safe

Raccoons in Philadelphia

Raccoons have become quite common in Philadelphia and other big cities. It is not unusual to see a raccoon near your home. Most raccoons will not cause a danger to you if you leave them alone. But there are some simple things you can do to make raccoons unwelcome.

Most adult raccoons are about two feet long and weigh from 10 to 30 pounds. Unlike most wildlife, raccoons can live in cities like Philadelphia because there is plenty of food and there are many places to nest.

When raccoons destroy your garden, raid your garbage can, or live around your home, they are searching for either food or a place to live. Raccoons are not picky about food—they will eat meat, vegetables and trash.



What About Rabies?

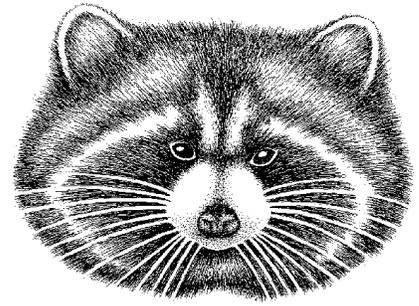
A raccoon that is ill or acts strangely is probably *not* rabid. However, a small number of raccoons may have rabies. If you see a raccoon or any other animal that is injured, agitated or sick, or if you just have questions, call the Animal Care and Control Team (ACCT) at 267-385-3800.

Keep Your Distance

As with any wild animal, a raccoon will defend itself if it feels under attack. Do not approach any animal, especially when it is with its young or appears injured.



Be Safe with Raccoons



Here are some things you can do to convince raccoons that they do not want to be on your property:

 **Do not feed any raccoon (or any wild animal).**



 Use metal or heavy plastic trash containers. Keep the lid tightly fastened to keep odors from escaping. If needed, use bungee cords or ropes, or put a weight on the lid so raccoons can't open it.



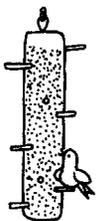
 Keep food away from raccoons. Raccoons tend to feed at night. If raccoons steal food from your pet's dish, feed your pet during the day and bring the bowl inside at night.

 Keep barbecue grills clean or stored in a secure place.

 If you see a raccoon in the yard, turn on the lights, and make noise to scare it off. **Be careful: do not corner a raccoon and force it to defend itself.**



 Use a wildlife repellent to drive raccoons from your property. You can buy a repellent at a home/garden store or discount hardware store.



 Clean up spilled seeds around your birdfeeders, or bring your birdfeeders inside at night.

 Light your yard or alley with floodlights or motion detector lights.

 Don't give raccoons a place to stay. Seal any openings on your property, especially buildings like sheds and garages. Report vacant, unsealed properties to the Department of Licenses and Inspections so they can be made safe, at 311.