

# Raccoons

## Picnic Mischief-Makers

Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) are one of Indiana's most recognizable mammals. They are nocturnal, but you may see them around dawn and dusk. Their favorite foods include crayfish, eggs, insects, small mammals, frogs, snakes, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and more. Raccoons are fascinating animals, and a treat to observe, as long as you respect the animal and keep a suitable distance.



### BE AWARE:

- Raccoon mothers with kits are very protective of their young. If they feel their babies are in danger, they may become aggressive
- Male raccoons are more aggressive during mating season, in the spring



**Raccoons can carry a variety of parasites and viral diseases.** Raccoon roundworm (*Baylisascaris procyonis*) is a parasitic worm transmitted through contact with raccoon feces. Raccoon rabies is spreading from the east coast, and has reached Ohio. Raccoons can also carry distemper, mange, and a variety of parasites such as fleas, ticks, and lice.

### **Please do not feed raccoons.**

Feeding them encourages them to:

- lose their fear of humans
- approach people
- search through garbage
- go into coolers and other food containers
- attempt to get into tents to get food
- eat unnatural food that can make them sick

### **Help Manage Our Raccoons!**

Please keep your trash in containers, and keep your food in places raccoons cannot get to. Please take care of fish remains properly, by either using fish cleaning stations (where available) or throwing the remains away in a sealed bag in a trash receptacle. Hand feeding raccoons is very dangerous; they are wild animals. They may carry disease, transmit parasites, and scratch and bite.

