

# Learn About Raccoons



by





Raccoons, with their bandit masks and sweet faces, are often thought of as pests. They dig through the garbage, eat the dog's food, and cause a general ruckus if you leave food out at a campsite. However, that's just a human opinion. Raccoons are so much more than garbage raiders.

Native to North America, raccoons are found in forests, prairies, marshes, and cities. In the natural world, they use their long fingers to gather food. They live and hunt near rivers, streams, and ponds, and often hunt the water, snatching crayfish, fish, and frogs for their dinner. They also eat mice, insects, birds, and snakes, as well as fruit, berries, nuts, and plants. That means they're omnivores—animals that eat both meat and plants. In fact, raccoons will eat just about anything they can get their cute little hands on.

Raccoons nest in various sites like tree holes, fallen logs, and even the attics of houses. They are nocturnal creatures, which means they do all they're hunting and foraging at night. They are very intelligent and curious animals capable of opening doors, jars, and latches to get at something yummy. They can travel up to 18 miles from their den in their hunt for food.

An adult raccoon is an average of 24-38 inches in length and weighs between 14 and 23 pounds. The male is slightly larger than the female and is called a boar. The female is called a sow. Baby raccoons are called kits and are born in litters of 3-5. The mother usually separates from other raccoons in order to raise her young. The kits stay with their mother until they are 13-14



months old.

A group of raccoons is known as a nursery. Once thought to be solitary animals, it is now believed that they congregate in gender-specific groups, meaning females hang out together and males hang out together.

Raccoons live for 2-3 years in the wild, but in captivity they can live for up to 20 years. The difference is that in the wild, raccoons have a lot of predators. Coyotes, cougars, and bobcats have been known to prey on raccoons. Diseases and automobiles are also deadly to raccoons.

Raccoons are excellent swimmers and can stay in water for several hours. They can also run up to 15 miles per hour. They communicate with a variety of sounds including whistles, screams, growls, hisses, and snarls. They are even known to purr. They have great memories and can remember for up to 3 years the solutions to problems they have solved. Their masks are believed to reduce glare, giving them better nighttime vision. Raccoons don't hibernate, but they can be found sleeping in their dens for several weeks at a time during winter.





Label the Raccoon

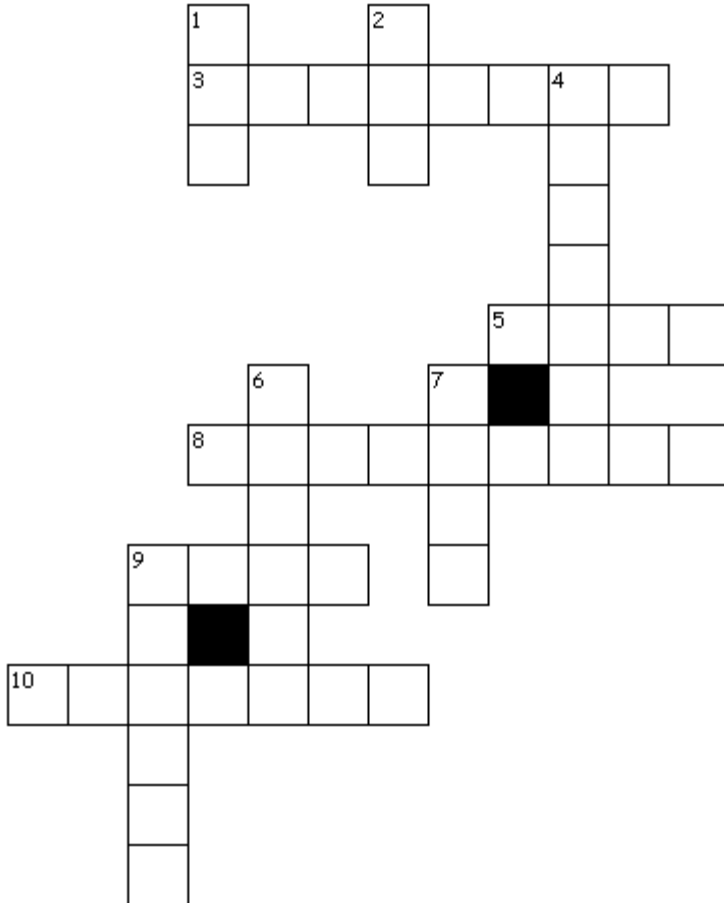


Kit	Clawed feet	Ringed Tail
	Black Mask	Grey Fur

Answer these questions:

1. Raccoons are native to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Raccoons eat \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
That means they are \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Raccoons make their dens in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A male raccoon is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A group of raccoons is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Some of the predators of raccoons are \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Raccoons can stay in \_\_\_\_\_ for several hours.
8. One sound raccoons make is a \_\_\_\_\_.

# Raccoon Crossword



## Across

- 3. animal that eats both meat and plants
- 5. male raccoon
- 8. animal that hunts at night
- 9. prey raccoons find in water
- 10. group of raccoons

## Down

- 1. female raccoon
- 2. baby raccoon
- 4. nocturnal animal with a mask
- 6. predator of raccoons
- 7. sound raccoons make, similar to cats
- 9. habitat where raccoons can be found

# Raccoon Word Search

T M O W N D Y E D J P N O C D  
I A C O Y O T E E E S Q O R Y  
I R T S J N C I N O O C C A R  
P S E I E G R T K Q R J O Y E  
V H C D B Q N I U P E M A F S  
X B E Z G A M X Q R N B U I R  
S G O R F T H B H I N X O S U  
J E B B S Q T R V Z Y A V H N  
J B H E C G D O E E G Q L M D  
V L R O O A R Z B F V D E C G  
G O D J Z E T O F W Q X S Z T  
F P V B J I A A O U S M U Q X  
R B J C F R M M A W K I Y Z Q  
B S A Q V G J D E C K R W I X  
V T T M L Z H Q A K N O R L R

BOAR  
CRAYFISH  
FROG  
MARSH  
OMNIVORE

BOBCAT  
DEN  
HABITAT  
NOCTURNAL  
RACCOON

COYOTE  
FOREST  
KIT  
NURSERY  
SOW