

Raccoons

For many years, the raccoon has been one of North Carolina's most economically important furbearers. Their great adaptability has allowed them to flourish throughout history and in almost all environments. Interactions between people and raccoons are uncommon unless raccoons become habituated.

What kind of damage is caused by raccoons? Raccoons can cause damage by getting into homes and outbuildings. They can also cause lawn damage while digging for grubs and are known to take small livestock.

Can a WCA write a depredation permit? Yes, if property damage has occurred a depredation permit can be issued by a WCA.

Can raccoons be relocated? No, raccoons cannot be relocated. They must be released on site, euthanized at the capture site, or taken to a facility designed to humanely handle the euthanasia.

What can I do with a sick or injured raccoon? Raccoons can be rehabilitated. There are licensed rehabilitators across the state that can take in injured or orphaned wildlife. If the injury is not significant, advise individual to leave the animal alone. A raccoon with a life-threatening injury or illness should be humanely euthanized and disposed of in a safe and sanitary manner.

Are there safety concerns? Yes, raccoons are a potential vector species for rabies. If someone or his/her pet has been bitten or scratched by a raccoon, refer individual to their county health department. It's good practice to wear gloves while handling any animal.

Non-lethal Options:

- Education
 - See the [General Considerations for Handling Wildlife](#) document for general ways to prevent damage from wildlife.
- Exclusion
 - Fencing can be effective at excluding raccoons. Livestock needs to be placed in a completely enclosed pen with 1-inch chicken wire over a sturdy wooden framework. Electric wire can be added to the enclosure for additional protection.

Lethal Options:

- Raccoons may be trapped during the regulated trapping season with a trapping license. A landowner does not need to purchase a trapping license to trap on his/her own property.
- Raccoons may be taken during the established hunting season with a state hunting license. A landowner does not need to purchase a hunting license to hunt on his/her own property.
- Raccoon caught in the act of causing property damage may be shot by the landowner without a depredation permit (where permitted by local ordinance).
- Outside of the trapping season, individuals can trap raccoon under a depredation permit if property damage has occurred.