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You may send donations to:
1560 N. Ontare Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

For further information you may call:

Santa Barbara County
Animal Services
(805)681-5285 (SB)
(805)737-7755 (Lom)
(805)934-6119 (SM)

SB City Animal Control
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<http://www.co.santa-barbara.ca.us/agcomm/index.htm>

A NOTE:

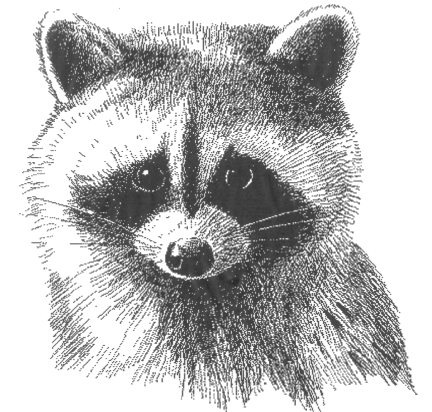
Live trapping is not a recommended solution to ridding your property and yard of **raccoons**. Because they are around in such numbers, trapping is only a temporary solution and not necessarily humane. It won't be long before another one **or more** is attracted to your home especially if you haven't dealt with those issues that attracted them in the first place! For valid reasons, governmental animal related agencies do not recommend relocation as a solution and will euthanize all trapped animals if called for problem management

Assume there are babies present in the spring and summer. Be careful you do not accidentally separate parents from their young. To do so could result in unnecessary property damage as they frantically try to reunite with their young. In cases where a **raccoon** mother is unsuccessful, the babies will die a slow death from starvation and you will be stuck with a noxious odor in or under the house.

Though not rare or endangered, the **raccoon** is classified by California State Fish & Game as a furbearer and is, under certain circumstances, protected by law.

Easily distinguishable by their black face masks and ringed tails, **Raccoons** have a husky build and usually weigh between 15 and 40 pounds. It's coat is full and shaggy and it's coloring is brownish gray with a shading of tan on it's flanks. The heavily furred tail is also usually tan and gray with black rings. Their long slender toes on the front feet give **raccoons** great dexterity in grasping food. The larger surfaces on the back feet give it superb agility in climbing.

Living Peacefully With Raccoons



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Sharing the neighborhood with wildlife is one of the privileges we enjoy. Catching sight of a family of **raccoons** at night enriches our lives.

Raccoons are found in all types of environments. With advancing human urbanization and development we have taken the nocturnal romping grounds away from the **raccoon**. Rather than diminish, however, these hardy critters have adapted and flourished. Since Santa Barbara County **raccoons** have become quite comfortable living in or near human communities, we encounter problems with them as they try to claim back “our” space for their own. It is incumbent upon us to do all that we can to protect them as each of these animals plays a vital part in the delicate system of nature’s checks and balances.

Because of their adaptability, **raccoons** have easily blended in with the urban environment, unfortunately, not without creating problems for their human neighbors. They do not fear people like most wildlife. In fact, they can become pretty bold.

Thanks to popular cartoon characters and movies that have made these animals irresistible, it has often led people to entice the animal with food in order to observe them as you would zoo animals. Consequently, and much to the general neighborhood’s irritation, **raccoons** become pests by toppling garbage cans, nesting in attics, rolling back lawns for food, preying upon pond life, and even becoming intrepid enough to come into our

homes. Like most wild animals, **raccoons** are opportunistic, looking for convenient food and water sources. Nocturnal animals by nature, **raccoons** in their normal rural setting scavenge at night looking for insects, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, fish, small mammals and birds. However, in an urban setting, those items are not readily available. To compensate, they have been able to find a steady supply of garbage in open containers, food and water left out for domestic pets, fallen or overripe fruit, and many other tempting enticements. With the passing of each generation, the young are taught these unsavory skills that escalate the conflict between themselves and their human neighbors.



The most important rule to remember when trying to discourage unwanted wildlife visitors is:

If there is no food and shelter to support them, most wild animals will go away!

Some time tested methods you can try for protecting yourselves and your property that promote harmony with our fellow creatures are:

A Fasten garbage can lids tightly. A **raccoon’s** nimble front feet can make this a difficult task, but in extreme cases, some rope, chain or a bungee cord should do the trick.

A Keep sheds and garage doors closed when not in use.

A Cut back tree limbs approximately 3’ from roof lines.

A Harvest all ripe fruit from trees, shrubs and off the ground.

A Remove brush piles and trash accumulation.

A Pick up family pet food and water dishes by dusk. Secure pet doors at night to keep **raccoons** out of the house.

A Sprinkle your lawn or planters with liberal amounts of cayenne pepper to discourage **raccoons** from grub hunting. (Grubs are tiny worm-like bugs that live in your lawn).

A Install metal guards 18” or wider, wrapped around trees five or six feet above ground to deprive **raccoons** access to roof tops and other buildings.

A For pond protection, horizontally submerge wire mesh around the circumference. Stretch the mesh leaving the inside free. Fish have the center of the pool open and the **raccoons** can’t reach over the wire because it is unstable and they prefer to stand on solid surfaces.

A Place ammonia soaked rags around the yard, and under the house. **Raccoons** are repelled by the harsh odor.

A Use motion sensor devices for lights or sprinkler systems.

Play a radio near the entrance to a suspected den site.

A **To secure your house:**

A Close off openings where roof lines overlap.

A Replace and reinforce damaged screen vents.

A Keep crawl spaces tightly covered.

A Keep a spark arrester on the chimney.

