





Raccoon

Information for Wildlife Rehabilitators

Age	newborn-2wks	2-4 wks	4-6 wks	6-8 wks	8-10 weeks
Photo					
Weight	60-230 grams 4-7 inches long	230-350 grams 7-12 inches long	350-500 grams	500-900 grams	850-1000 grams (2+ lbs)
Appearance	naked, underfur develops at 1 week fully furred at 2 weeks eyes closed, ears closed crawling at 1 week	facial mask 2 weeks tail rings at 3 weeks teeth 3-4 weeks eyes closed/ eyes open 18-24 days ears open 18-24 days eyes clear 4-5 weeks	walking & crawling	adult fur at 7 weeks juvenile molt starts at 7 weeks, ends at 12	
Feeding	nursing 5-6 feedings, 3-12 cc one night feeding	nursing 4 feedings, 12-20 cc, no night feedings if healthy	nursing/lap formula 4-3 feedings	nursing/lap formula introduce solids	formula soaked kibble in dish, mice, mealworms, birds fish & fruit off formula by 10-12 weeks
Caging	incubator at 80-85 first week, then 80 or cardboard box or pet carrier on heating pad set to low, towel or flannel with no loose threads	72 incubator or cardboard box on heating pad set to low, towel or flannel with no loose threads, place twigs, dirt & leaves in cage	larger indoor cage, no heating pad	acclimatize by placing cage outside during the day and bring inside at night	outdoors at 8-10 weeks, min. 3'X3'X3' predator proof cage with dirt for digging, branches and nest box, water for washing food

Feeding

Natural Foods: fruits, nuts, grains, mice, rabbits, muskrat, birds, eggs, insects, crayfish, frogs, worms, acorns, corn, grapes

Formula: First three feedings rehydrating formula (8 oz water, 1/3 tsp salt, 1 tsp sugar), pedalyte or lactated ringers solution. Baby & formula must be warm before feeding. Gradually introduce formula (Esbilac, KMR or Fox Valley raccoon formula). Feed belly down with warmed formula until belly is full & round. Do not overfeed. Feed with a syringe and catnip nipple or baby bottle and orthodontic nipple. Feed slowly to avoid aspiration (drawing formula into lungs). Stimulate after every feeding by rubbing genitals with a damp Q-tip until raccoons eliminate on their own (about when eyes open)

Weaning: Begin at 5 weeks, end at 9-14 weeks. Baby rice cereal & puppy or kitten chow soaked in water, gradually introduce apples, bananas, grapes, melons, veggies, nuts, fish and mice. Supply water in a dish or water bottle. Prior to release, offer live mice, crayfish & minnows.

Maintenance diet for adults: Dry puppy chow supplemented with fruit, nuts and other natural foods.

Vaccinations

Vaccinate for canine distemper, feline panleukopenia & raccoon parvo at 6, 9, & 12 weeks, Rabies at 4 months.

Raccoons

Information for Wildlife Rehabilitators (continued)

Breeding, Habitat & Lifespan

Mating in Jan & Feb, Males at 2 years of age, Females, 1 year, weaned in the wild at 4 months, eating solid food at 2 months.

First litter in March or April, Second, July or August, 1-8 kits, 63 day gestation, males do not care for young

Molt in Spring begins early March & ends at the end of May, winter coat comes in October & early November

Habitat - wooded or wetland habitat, 1-2 mile home range, nocturnal

Average lifespan up to 14 years in captivity, adult weight - male 15-18 lbs, female 12-15 lbs, temp 100-103 F

Release Criteria

4-6 months (4-10 pounds), by 2nd or third week in August or Sept or Oct for late babies, acclimatized, good balance & climbing skills, fear of predators (including humans), good weather expected for several days, appropriate habitat.

Notes

- ! Do not raise alone if possible to unite with other orphans.
- ! When using a heating pad put it under half of the box or cage so the baby can move off if it gets too warm.
- ! Do not allow raccoons to make contact with family pets or be exposed to humans any more than necessary. If they have no fear of humans or dogs and cats their chances of survival in the wild are greatly reduced.
- ! A high percentage of raccoons harbor the nematode *Baylisascaris Procyonis*, which is deadly to many mammals. Do not put any other animals in cages that have housed raccoons. Use gloves and sanitary procedures when handling raccoons.
- ! Treat cat bites and pneumonia (often caused by aspiration) with amoxicillin, head trauma with dexamethasone.
- ! Give mother raccoon up to two days to reclaim babies if they are found out of the nest. Place in a protected area, bring in at night and feed if not claimed the first night.
- ! Raccoons should never be kept as pets. Do not keep a healthy raccoons beyond 20 weeks of age.

This information compiled from various wildlife rehabilitation manuals and is meant for use by licensed wildlife rehabilitators.