



# Northern raccoon

(*Procyon lotor*)

Originated in North and Central America, introduced in continental France to be bred for its fur in the 1920s and as a mascot of U.S. NATO troops. Introduced to Guadeloupe in the early 1800s and was considered a native species until recently.

## Description

- Round, squat silhouette, raised hind quarters
- Up to 90 centimetres long (without the tail), average weight 5 to 6 kilogrammes
- Wide head, short snout, with a mask stretching from the eyes to the muzzle, large, clearly visible ears
- Bushy tail 20 to 40 cm long, with 5 to 7 brown to black rings, interspersed with lighter coloured fur
- Grey brown dorsal fur, less dark ventral fur
- They may be confused with the raccoon dog (*Nyctereutes procyonides*), however the mask of the latter does not cover the muzzle and there are no rings on the tail
- They can live from 6 to 16 years

## Ecology and reproduction in its original environment

- The preferred habitat is a wooded region with slow-moving rivers, ponds and pools
- Raccoons often occupy hollow trees or the burrows of other mammals (foxes, badgers)
- They are sexually mature at 10 to 15 months and bear 3 to 5 young after a gestation period of 63 days
- Activity is essentially nocturnal or at dusk, often solitary
- Omnivorous, including fish, amphibians, birds, eggs, insects, fruit, seeds, etc.

## Documentation

- Sarat E. (ed.), 2012. Vertébrés exotiques envahissants du bassin de la Loire (hors poissons) : connaissances et expériences de gestion. National agency for hunting and wildlife (ONCFS), *Loire Grandeur Nature* plan (PLGN). 128 pp.
- Lamand F. (ed.), 2015. Espèces exotiques envahissantes des milieux aquatiques et associés en France métropolitaine. Recueil de fiches d'identification. Onema North-East. 168 pp.
- Léger F. and Ruet S., 2014. Raton laveur et Chien viverrin : le point sur leur répartition en France. *Faune Sauvage*. 302 : 9-16.

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### Classification

Order	<i>Carnivora</i>
Family	<i>Procyonidae</i>
Genus	<i>Procyon</i>
Species	<i>P. lotor</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)

