



**New Mexico
Wildlife Center**

Raccoons in the Chimney

Raccoons are members of the Procyonid family. This is a diverse group ranging from the lesser pandas to the olingo of Central and South America. Most species appear in tropical climates of the New World. Three species are found in the U.S. and Canada: common raccoon, ringtails and white-nosed coati. Common raccoons walk flat on their feet like bears and humans. They are omnivorous, nocturnal and good climbers. They often remain together as family groups.

Preventing conflicts

The most effective way to prevent raccoons from settling in on your property is to eliminate attractive habitat.

- No access to garbage
- No food left out
- Lock pet doors at night
- Clean up grill areas
- Cap chimneys
- Cut tree limbs away from roofs
- Cover compost with heavy wire
- Close up all entrance options to crawl spaces and attics.

If a raccoon is found in a chimney or window well give it an escape option by placing a limb or board in the space so it can climb out.

If a raccoon family has set up shop in your attic or chimney or some like spot, the easiest solution is to wait eight to ten weeks and they will move on. If you must evict them use bright lights, a loud radio with music or a talk station. You may also try coyote urine or a special raccoon eviction fluid available at hunting and farm stores. Check the area during the day with a powerful flashlight to make sure that all raccoons are gone.

If a raccoon acts aggressively or appears ill, call New Mexico Game and Fish at 505-827-7376.