



# Weekender

February 25, 2010

## LENDING LIBRARY AND COMPUTER AVAILABLE

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There is a lending library located in the Community/Board Room. There are a wide ranging variety of books available. Donations of good paperbacks of all genres are gladly accepted.

Come by and look for a good book to fill a rainy day.

Wi Fi is also available for your use. If you do not have a laptop with you there is a computer available. The Wi Fi can be accessed from the parking lot anytime, or when the Community/Board Room is not occupied with a committee meeting feel free to come in and use the area. There is no password required to get online.



## REQUEST TO CONTRACTORS AND DELIVERY VEHICLES

When working or making deliveries in Surfside, please be mindful of members driveways. It has come to our attention that at times driveways have been blocked for extended periods. Your attention to this concern will be greatly appreciated!

## 100 DAYS OF COLOR PROGRESS



January 7, 2010 peeking thru.



February 18, 2010



February 23, 2010

## COMING SOON TO A CABANA NEAR YOU!

Spring planting demonstration and gardening information event is scheduled for early May. We are looking forward to this event with enthusiasm! More information to come!



## Bunco Group

### Surfside Bunco Group

#### Meets the second Tuesday of Every

#### Month at 6:30

- Every month beginners are welcome
- This will be held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Surfside Board/Community Room at 6:30 pm
- One table snack will be provided. Bring you own drinks.
- This is a perfect chance for you to join a group and not have to host in your home.
- To get in on the FUN, call Valerie at 665-0804.
- This group is both men and women
- Cost is five dollars a month
- Come have fun!
- **Everyone is welcome. You do not have to be a member of Surfside to play!**



## CLAM DIGGING CONFIRMED!

Clam diggers got the go-ahead to proceed with an evening razor-clam dig when marine toxin levels were found to be well within the limits with two additional days added to the previous announced dates. Digging will be allowed Friday February 26, Saturday February 27, Sunday February 28 and Monday March 1st. These are all evening digs. The times are Friday 4:49 pm, Saturday 5:34 pm, Sunday 6:16 pm and Monday 6:57 pm.

Dan Ayres WDFW coastal shellfish manager, noted that additional openings will be announced after biologists have reviewed the harvest data for the February dig.



## NOMINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED

**This year Surfside Homeowners Association has four board positions up for election. Three with three year terms and a one year position.**

**We are in need of members for the nomination committee. If you would be interested in serving on the nomination committee and or serving as the chairperson for this committee, please contact the Surfside Homeowners Association as soon as possible.**

**Candidates need to be recruited for these board positions and the application completed and submitted before Saturday, May 1, 2010.**

**You as members of the homeowners association have the responsibility to seek the best candidates possible for these positions, to assure that Surfside Homeowners Association is served by the best possible Board.**



## Raccoon

The **raccoon** (*Procyon lotor*) is a native mammal, measuring about 3 feet long, including its 12-inch, bushy, ringed tail. Because their hind legs are longer than the front legs, raccoons have a hunched appearance when they walk or run. Each of their front feet has five dexterous toes, allowing raccoons to grasp and manipulate food and other items (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Because Raccoons manipulate and moisten food items in water, there is a misconception that raccoons “wash” their food before eating it. However, when water is not available, raccoons use many of the same motions in handling food.

(photo by Ginger Holser)

Raccoons prefer forest areas near a stream or water source, but have adapted to various environments throughout Washington. Raccoon populations can get quite large in urban areas, owing to hunting and trapping restrictions, few predators, and human-supplied food.

Adult raccoons weigh 15 to 40 pounds, their weight being a result of genetics, age, available food, and habitat location. Males have weighed in at over 60 pounds. A raccoon in the wild will probably weigh less than the urbanized raccoon that has learned to live on handouts, pet food, and garbage-can leftovers.

As long as raccoons are kept out of human homes, not cornered, and not treated as pets, they are not dangerous.

### Facts about Washington Raccoons

**Food and Feeding Habitats** Raccoons will eat almost anything, but are particularly fond of creatures found in water—clams, crayfish, frogs, fish, and snails. Raccoons also eat insects, slugs, dead animals, birds and bird eggs, as well as fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds. Around humans, raccoons often eat garbage and pet food. Although not great hunters, raccoons can catch young gophers, squirrels, mice, and rats. Except during the breeding season and for females with young, raccoons are solitary. Individuals will eat together if a large amount of food is available in an area.

**Den Sites and Resting Sites** Dens are used for shelter and raising young. They include abandoned burrows dug by other mammals, areas in or under large rock piles and brush piles, hollow logs, and holes in trees. Den sites also include wood duck nest-boxes, attics, crawl spaces, chimneys, and abandoned vehicles. In urban areas, raccoons normally use den sites as daytime rest sites. In wooded areas, they often rest in trees. Raccoons generally move to different den or daytime rest site every few days and do not follow a predictable pattern. Only a female with young or an animal “holed up” during a cold spell will use the same den for any length of time. Several raccoons may den together during winter storms.

**Reproduction and Home Range** Raccoons pair up only during the breeding season, and mating occurs as early as January to as late as June. The peak mating period is March to April. After a 65-day gestation period, two to three kits are born. The kits remain in the den until they are about seven weeks old, at which time they can walk, run, climb, and begin to occupy alternate dens. At eight to ten weeks of age, the young regularly accompany their mother outside the den and forage for themselves. By 12 weeks, the kits roam on their own for several nights before returning to their mother. The kits remain with their mother in her home range through winter, and in early spring seek out their own territories. The size of a raccoon’s home range as well as its nightly hunting area varies greatly depending on the habitat and food supply.

### Viewing Raccoons

Raccoons can be seen throughout the year, except during extremely cold periods. Usually observed at night, they are occasionally seen during the day eating or napping in a tree or searching elsewhere for food.

Coastal raccoons take advantage of low tides and are seen foraging on shellfish and other food by day.

### Trails

Raccoons use trails made by other wildlife or humans next to creeks, ravines, ponds, and other water sources. Raccoons often use culverts as a safe way to cross under roads. With a marsh on one side of the road and woods on the other, a culvert becomes their chief route back and forth. Look for raccoon tracks in sand, mud, or soft soil at either end of the culvert.

In developed areas, raccoon travel along fences, next to buildings, and near food sources.

### Tracks, Scratch Marks, and Similar Signs

Figure 2.



The rear foot of a raccoon shows the “heel” and looks like a small human footprint. Both front and back feet have five toes. The front prints have shorter heel marks and are 2 to 3 inches long; the hind tracks are 3 to 4 inches long. (From Pandell and Stall, *Animal Tracks of the Pacific Northwest*.)

Look for tracks in sand, mud, or soft soil, also on deck railings, fire escapes, and other surfaces that raccoons use to gain access to structures (Fig. 2). Tracks may appear as smudge marks on the side of a house where a raccoon shimmies up and down a downspout or utility pipe.

Sharp, nonretractable claws and long digits make raccoons good climbers. Like squirrels, raccoons can rotate their hind feet 180 degrees and descend trees headfirst. (Cats’



## Raccoon

claws don't rotate and they have to back down trees.) Look for scratch marks on trees and other structures that raccoons climb.

Look for wear marks, body oil, and hairs on wood and other rough surfaces, particularly around the edges of den entrances. The den's entrance hole is usually at least 4 inches high and 6 inches wide.

### Droppings

Raccoon droppings are crumbly, flat-ended, and can contain a variety of food items. The length is 3 to 5 inches, but this is usually broken into segments. The diameter is about the size of the end of your little finger.

Raccoons leave droppings on logs, at the base of trees, and on roofs (raccoons defecate before climbing trees and entering structures). Raccoons create toilet areas—inside and outside structures—away from the nesting area. House cats have similar habits.

**Note:** Raccoon droppings may carry a parasite that can be fatal to humans. Do not handle or smell raccoon droppings and wash your hands if you touch any. (See "[Public Health Concerns](#)")

### Calls

Raccoons make several types of noises, including a purr, a chattering sound, and various growls, snarls, and snorts.

### Preventing Conflicts

A raccoon's search for food may lead it to a vegetable garden, fish pond, garbage can, or chicken coop. Its search for a den site may lead it to an attic, chimney, or crawl space. The most effective way to prevent conflicts is to modify the habitat around your home so as not to attract raccoons. Recommendations on how to do this are given below:

#### Don't feed raccoons.

Feeding raccoons may create undesirable situations for you, your children, neighbors, pets, and the raccoons themselves. Raccoons that are fed by people often lose their fear of humans and may become aggressive when not fed as ex-

pected. Artificial feeding also tends to concentrate raccoons in a small area; overcrowding can spread diseases and parasites. Finally, these hungry visitors might approach a neighbor who doesn't share your appreciation of the animals. The neighbor might choose to remove these raccoons, or have them removed.

#### Don't give raccoons access to garbage.

Keep your garbage can lid on tight by securing it with rope, chain, bungee cords, or weights. Better yet, buy garbage cans with clamps or other mechanisms that hold lids on. To prevent tipping, secure side handles to metal or wooden stakes driven into the ground. Or keep your cans in tight-fitting bins, a shed, or a garage. Put garbage cans out for pickup in the morning, after raccoons have returned to their resting areas.

#### Feed dogs and cats indoors and keep them in at night.

If you must feed your pets outside, do so in late morning or at midday, and pick up food, water bowls, leftovers, and spilled food well before dark every day.

#### Keep pets indoors at night.

If cornered, raccoons may attack dogs and cats. Bite wounds from raccoons can result in fractures and disease transmission.

#### Prevent raccoons from entering pet doors.

Keep indoor pet food and any other food away from a pet door. Lock the pet door at night. If it is necessary to have it remain open, put an electronically activated opener on your pet's collar. **Note:** Floodlights or motion detector lights placed above the pet door to scare raccoons are not long-term solutions.

#### Put food in secure compost containers and clean up barbecue areas.

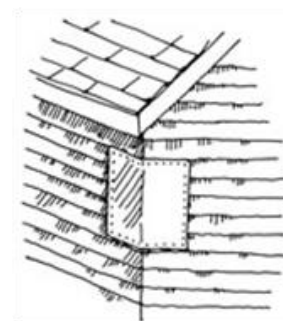
Don't put food of any kind in open compost piles; instead, use a securely covered compost structure or a commercially available raccoon-proof composter to prevent attracting raccoons and getting exposed to their droppings. A covered worm box is another alternative. If burying food scraps, cover them with at least 8 inches of soil and don't leave any garbage above ground in the area—including the

stinky shovel. Placing a wire mesh barrier that is held in place with a heavy object over the in-ground compost will prevent problems.

#### Clean barbecue grills and grease traps thoroughly following each use.

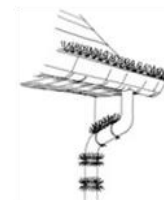
#### Eliminate access to denning sites.

Raccoons commonly use chimneys, attics, and spaces under houses, porches, and sheds as den sites. Close any potential entries with ¼-inch mesh hardware cloth, boards, or metal flashing. Make all connections flush and secure to keep mice, rats, and other mammals out. Make sure you don't trap an animal inside when you seal off a potential entry.



**Figure 3.** Raccoon access to rooftops can be eliminated by installing sheets of aluminum flashing, at least 3 feet square, around the corners of buildings.

**Figure 4.** Commercially available metal or plastic spikes can help keep raccoons off of buildings.



(Drawings by Jenifer Rees.) Prevent raccoons from accessing rooftops by trimming tree limbs away from structures and by attaching sheets of metal flashing

## Raccoon continued:

around corners of buildings (Fig. 3). Commercial products that prevent climbing are available from farm supply centers and bird-control supply companies on the Internet (Fig. 4).

Remove vegetation on buildings, such as English ivy, which provide raccoons a way to climb structures and hide their access point inside.

### Too Close for Comfort

If a raccoon ever approaches too closely, make yourself appear larger: stand up if sitting, shout, and wave your arms. If necessary, throw stones or send the raccoon off with a dousing of water from a hose or bucket.

If a raccoon continues to act aggressively or strangely (circling, staggering as if drunk or disoriented, or shows unnatural tameness) it may be sick or injured. In such a case, call a wildlife rehabilitator.

If aggressive raccoons are routinely seen in your area, prepare your children for a possible encounter.

Explain the reasons why raccoons live there (habitat, food sources, species adaptability) and what they should do if one approaches them. By shouting a set phrase such as "Go away raccoon!" when they encounter one, instead of a general scream, children will inform nearby adults of the raccoon's presence. Demonstrate and rehearse encounter behavior with the children.

If a raccoon finds its way into your house, stay calm, close surrounding interior doors, leave the room, and let the animal find its way back out through the open door, window, or pet door. If necessary, gently use a broom to corral the raccoon outside. (Do not corner a raccoon, thereby forcing it to defend itself.)

### Public Health Concerns

A disease that contributes significantly to raccoon mortality is canine distemper. Canine distemper is also a

virus and is spread most often when animals come in contact with bodily secretions of animals infected with the disease. Gloves, cages, and other objects that have come in contact with infected animals can also contain the virus. The best prevention against canine distemper is to have your dogs vaccinated and kept away from raccoons.

Raccoons in Washington often have roundworms (like domestic dogs and cats do but from a different worm). Raccoon roundworm does not usually cause a serious problem for raccoons. However, roundworm eggs shed in raccoon droppings can cause mild to serious illness in other animals and humans. Although rarely documented anywhere in the United States, raccoon roundworm can infest a person who accidentally ingest or inhales the parasite's eggs.

Prevention consists of never touching or inhaling raccoon droppings, using rubber gloves and a mask when cleaning areas (including traps) that have been occupied by raccoons, and keeping young children and pets away from areas where raccoons concentrate. (If washing raccoon droppings from a roof, watch where the liquid matter is going.) Routinely encourage or assist your children to wash their hands after playing outdoors. Unfortunately, raccoon roundworm eggs can remain alive in soil and other places for several months.

If a person is bitten or scratched by a raccoon, immediately scrub the wound with soap and water. Flush the wound liberally with tap water. In other parts of the United States raccoons can carry rabies.

Contact your physician and the local health department immediately. If your pet is bitten, follow the same cleansing procedure and contact your veterinarian.

### Legal Status

Because legal status, trapping restrictions, and other information about raccoons change, contact your [WDFW Regional Office](#) for updates.

The raccoon is classified as both a furbearer and a game animal ([WAC 232-12-007](#)). A hunting or trapping license is required to hunt or trap raccoons during an open season. A property owner or the owner's immediate family, employee, or tenant may kill or trap a raccoon on that property if it is damaging crops or domestic animals ([RCW 77.36.030](#)). In such cases, no permit is necessary for the use of live (cage) traps. However, a special trapping permit is required for the use of all traps other than live traps ([RCW 77.15.192](#), [77.15.194](#); [WAC 232-12-142](#)).

It is unlawful to release wildlife anywhere within the state, other than on the property where it was legally trapped, without a permit to do so ([RCW 77.15.250](#); [WAC 232-12-271](#)). Except for bona fide public or private zoological parks, persons and entities are prohibited from importing raccoons into Washington State without a permit to do so ([WAC 246-100-191](#)).

For more information on raccoons go to the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife web site.



# February 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
21	22	23 Architectural Committee 9:00 am	24	25	26 Clam Dig 4:49 pm	27 Clam Dig 5:34 pm
28 Clam Dig 6:16 pm						
	MARCH 2010					
	1 Clam Dig 6:57 pm	2 Architectural Committee 9:00 am Community Relations Committee 1:00 pm	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Architectural Committee 9:00 am Bunco 6:30 pm	10 9:00 am RV Storage and RV Compliance Committee Meeting	11 Land and Buildings Com- mittee 1:00 pm	12	13