Raccoon Dog, *Nyctereutes procyonoides*

**Overview**

Short description of *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog
The raccoon dog is a fox-sized mammal with short legs and tail and mainly blackish-grey fur. There are raccoon-like black markings across the face but this species lacks the raccoon's long banded tail.

Description of *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog status in GB
The raccoon dog is an unusual member of the dog family that is spreading westwards across continental Europe and has recently been recorded in GB as an escapee.

**Habitat summary: *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog**
Raccoon dogs occupy mainly damp forest habitats with abundant undergrowth and are typically found near water.

**Overview table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment:</th>
<th>Terrestrial</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Species status:</td>
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<td>Native range:</td>
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<td>Functional type:</td>
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<td>Status in England:</td>
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<td>Status in Scotland:</td>
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<td>Status in Wales:</td>
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<td>Location of first record:</td>
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**Invasion history: *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog**

**Origin**
The species is native to much of China, Mongolia, parts of eastern Siberia, Japan, Korea and northern southeast Asia.

**First Record**
There was a report of a raccoon dog killed near Loch Lomond in the 1990s but the first confirmed sighting was in Berkshire in July 2005.

**Pathway and Method**
The species was introduced deliberately to Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia and European Russia between 1929 and 1955, and also escaped from fur farms in eastern Europe. Since then, the range of this species has expanded westwards.
Species Status
Raccoon dogs have spread from their introduced range, in eastern Europe, westwards to include northern Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Bulgaria by 1999. The species is regarded as one of the most invasive non-native animals in Europe.

Ecology & Habitat: *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog

Dispersal Mechanisms
Most young animals disperse on reaching the age of 4–5 months, mostly during August–October. The average dispersal distance is less than 20 km but some animals travel further than 160 km.

Reproduction
The mating season begins mainly in March and cubs are born during April–June, after 9 weeks' gestation. The average litter size in Europe is between 7 and 9. Raccoon dogs are capable of breeding in their first year and the proportion of breeding females in the population is around 80%.

Known Predators/Herbivores
Raccoon dogs, mainly young animals, are preyed upon by wolves, red foxes, dogs, lynx and large predatory birds.

Resistant Stages
None known.

Habitat Occupied in GB
Not yet present in GB.

Distribution: *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog
There was a record of this species in Berkshire in 2005.

Impacts: *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog

Environmental Impact
Raccoon dogs are omnivorous and seem to have found a vacant niche in western Europe. They may compete for food and dens with native animals such as red fox and badger and their predation on birds and amphibians may at times affect prey populations. They are carriers of diseases such as sarcoptic mange and tapeworms that can affect native mammals.

Health and Social Impact
Raccoon dog is one of the main vectors of rabies in Europe. In conjunction with red foxes, they can raise the density of susceptible animals to the point where a rabies epizootic could break out.

Economic Impact
There are economic costs associated with raccoon dogs as a carrier of rabies, for example in treating them with oral rabies vaccinations.

References & Links: *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, Raccoon Dog

Identification


Biology, ecology, spread, vectors


**Management and impact**


**General**

DAISIE factsheet