

# RACCOON DOG

## NYCIEREUTES PROCYONOIDES

### DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

Short-footed, thick coated canine (dog) animal. Body length 45-80 cm. Weight 3-10 kg. Footprints are small and roundish like small dog's or cat's footprints. Underfur is thick, top fur is long, Muzzle, the end of tail and limbs are black. Fur farmed animals can also be totally white.

### PREVALENCE:

Southern and Central Finland. Southern species is from East Asia.

### HABITAT:

Lives in forests and at the edges of the cultivation areas, favorable oases like lake shores and riversides.

Living area is about 200 -1000 hectares. During the day raccoon dogs rest in caves or under the barns.

### LIFESTYLE:

Monogamous. Mainly nocturnal animal. Lives with the family. Nest hole is in the sand or it uses caves of the fox or badger. Hibernates from November - December until March - April. Hibernation is very light. Walks around the nest during the daytime also in winter. Possibly does not hibernate at all if the amount of snow is not an obstacle.

### NOURISHMENT:

Omnivorous, mainly small mammals, fish, insect maggots, carcasses, garbage, fruit and berries like blueberry, lingonberry. It also eats oats, chicks, eggs, frogs and reptiles.

### BREEDING:

Mating takes place in February or in March. Gives birth in May to 6-8 cubs, maximum 21 cubs. Also males participate in taking care of the young. The cubs stay with their mother until the autumn, they might even go to the same lair hibernating.

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE POPULATION:

Adaptable and very efficient to reproduce Raccoon dog has come to Finland via the Karelian Isthmus. It has become more common after 1950's and nowadays it belongs permanently to the Finnish fauna.

### HUNTING:

Hunted for the fur, but also game keeping reasons. Prey increases annually up to tens of thousands individuals.

