



Spring 2001

Feeding an orphaned baby raccoon a balanced diet

The North American Wildlife Health Care Center's rehab network has used the below feeding schedule for some five years now and has had a great deal of success with it. This schedule was originally developed by Dr. Richard Evans, DVM MS, Pacific Wildlife Project, PO Box 7673, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677. You may order the entire report entitled, "Raising Raccoons for Release." The report is a five-part one in its entirety. This schedule first appeared in Wildlife Health News, Vol. 1, No. 3, June 1990 with Dr. Evan's permission.

Age	How Fed	Type of Food
Birth to 4-5 weeks	Bottle	Formula
4-6 weeks to 8-10 weeks	Bottle	Formula plus puppy chow mixed. (Mix until the consistency of cooked hot cereal. Smear on baby raccoon's paws and sides of mouth. When they clean themselves, they will get a taste of the mix.)
11-12 weeks	Wean from bottle totally	Formula plus puppy chow. Gradually thicken mix until like cooked hot cereal before you add milk.
12-13 weeks	Offer as wide a variety of natural foods as is possible. Offer a steady supply of dry puppy food and lots of water	Disable young mice so that the growing raccoon can catch them. Offer small chicks and only about 50% as much milk formula over the puppy chow.
13-15 weeks	Continue offering as wide a variety of natural foods as is possible	Offer live crayfish and allow raccoon to kill and eat it. Offer dry puppy chow with ample supply of water.
15 weeks and up	Offer a wide variety of foods	Discontinue puppy chow with milk formula. Offer dry puppy chow and water for snacks. Should be

		able to kill mice, birds, young rats and young rabbits.
16-17 weeks	Offer wide variety of natural foods	Should be able to kill adult rats, pigeons, frogs and crayfish.

***Remember, each raccoon develops at its own pace. Do not become discouraged if the baby raccoon objects to natural foods. Keep offering them to it, and be patient. While using the above feeding schedule, the Center's rehab network has not reported a case of metabolic bone disorder or cataracts. *Since rabies is on the move through North Carolina, wildlife rehabilitators are not permitted to care for orphaned raccoons.*

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