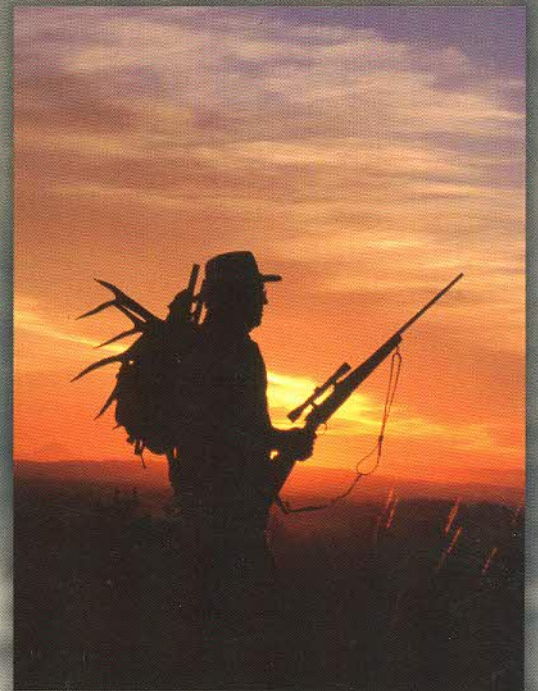
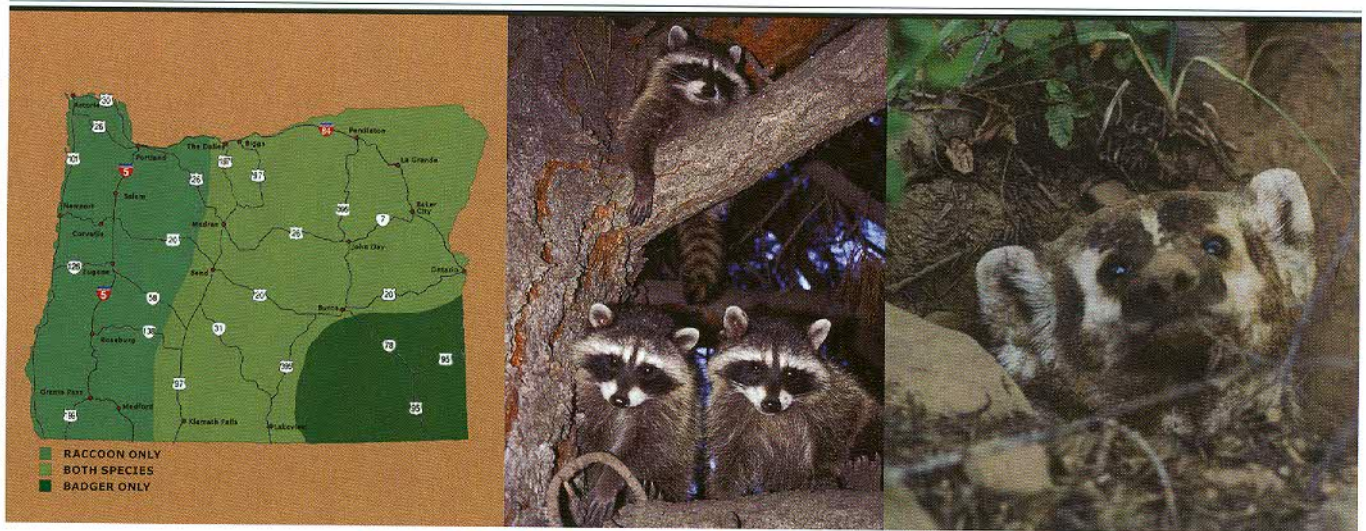


*Gary Lewis's*

# Hunting

# OREGON





## RACCOON AND BADGER

### RACCOON

Equipped with needle-sharp teeth and a quick temper, the raccoon is a fighter and a challenge to the houndsman/hunter. They may run for miles and when cornered, can kill or maim hunting dogs twice their size.

Hardwood forests and marshy lowlands near water make good raccoon habitat. Berries, fruits, nuts, frogs, crayfish and insects are all on the menu, but sweet corn is a favorite.

An adult raccoon may travel up to five miles on its nightly feeding rounds, especially in warm weather. During the day they often den up in hollow trees. But they may bed in the tall vegetation along the edge of a marsh, in a culvert, or in the ground burrow of another animal. Raccoon frequently use different dens or beds on successive days. They den up for a period after heavy snow; in cold climates they may hibernate.

Raccoon have excellent hearing and good eyesight. They can run up to 15 mph and are good swimmers. The vast majority of hunting them is done with hounds, especially Walkers, black-and-tans and red-bones. Tracking is easiest on damp, cool nights with a slight breeze. Some dogs can pick up a cold trail, making it possible to hunt in daylight.

When pursued by dogs, raccoon usually run in large circles, crawling in and out of holes and climbing up and down trees to lose the dogs. They may jump to the ground from as high as 50 feet and scurry away unharmed. They will stay in a tree only when the hounds get so close that other avenues of escape are impossible.

Early in the season you may be able to call a raccoon. After dark, take a stand along a streambank, lakeshore, or cornfield. Use calls to imitate an injured bird or rabbit.

Most raccoon hunters use .22 rifles, although some prefer 20 gauge shotguns with No. 6 or 7-1/2 shot. Where legal, a few hunters use small-caliber handguns.

### BADGER

The badger, a member of the weasel family, is on the prowl wherever other ground-dwelling varmints are abundant. Small rodents, snakes, birds, insects and eggs are on the daily menu of this solitary animal.

A male badger, which can weigh up to 20 pounds or more, will range far and wide, covering a large territory that may take in a square mile of ground or much more, depending on the habitat. It is a largely nocturnal animal, but in areas of little human activity, you might see a badger during daylight hours.

For a badger, home is wherever it happens to be when it's time to rest. It will simply dig a burrow and crawl inside. In less than a minute, it can be underground. For this reason, if you've found a badger's territory, you will find dozens of empty holes in banks close to water sources and squirrel colonies.

Many badgers are taken each year by ground squirrel hunters. Your best opportunity will be in the morning before the shooting starts. Keep an eye out for a badger on the move, headed for its hole.

Badgers will respond to a call, but are not likely to travel far to reach the caller. Successful badger hunters stay on the move until a badger is spotted at long range then set up to call.

When using a call, focus on sounds made by easily-caught ground dwellers like ground squirrels. A squirrel, prairie dog or woodpecker in distress may bring a badger on the run. ■

