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## The Ecology and Epidemiology of the Raccoon Roundworm in Baskett Wildlife Area

Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) are the definitive host of the raccoon roundworm (*Baylisascaris procyonis*), an endoparasitic worm that is highly pathogenic to other wildlife species. Raccoons can carry numerous adult worms, which produce large quantities of eggs that are passed in feces. Raccoons continually return to defecate in a single communal area, known as latrines, that serve as a long-term point source for infection of other wildlife species. However, latrine formation and prevalence of this parasite is poorly understood in forested ecosystems. The objectives of this study were to determine (1) the prevalence of *B. procyonis* in raccoons and latrines, (2) density of latrines, and (3) if latrines are maintained in the same locations in a central Missouri forest. Initial results indicate that latrine density ranged from 0-28 per hectare, latrines are not maintained in the same positions, and that prevalence of *B. procyonis* is lower than rates observed in other ecosystems.