

America's
HIDDEN
Animal Treasures

White-Nosed Coati

Raccoon's
Cousin



by Joyce Markovics

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Biologist and Coati Expert

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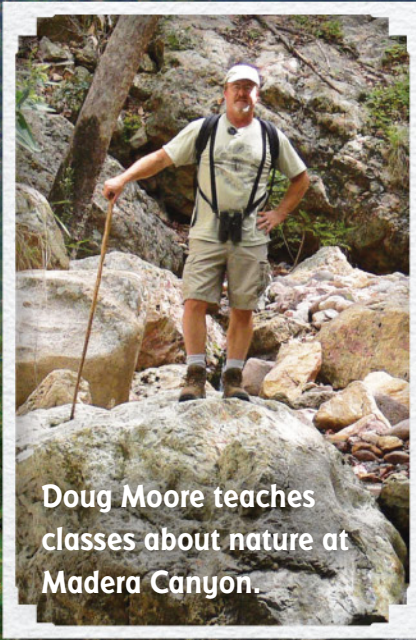
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“A Monkey in Madera Canyon”

One sunny morning in late summer, **naturalist** Doug Moore was driving in Madera Canyon in southeastern Arizona. Suddenly, he noticed a strange-looking animal in the middle of the road. Doug slowed down and peered through the windshield. As the car inched closer, the animal spun around to face the car head-on!



Doug Moore teaches classes about nature at Madera Canyon.

Madera Canyon is a large wilderness area that attracts many hikers and visitors each year.



“The critter turned to reveal a long piglike **snout**,” said Doug. Around its tail were rings of light and dark fur. Doug especially noticed the animal’s “slender body... short, **bowed legs**, and ... a **stupendously** long **erect** tail.” His first reaction was “There’s a monkey in Madera Canyon.”

Doug stopped his car and was able to get a good look at the animal. He soon realized that it was not a monkey at all. It was a white-nosed coati (koh-AH-tee), one of America’s hidden animal treasures.

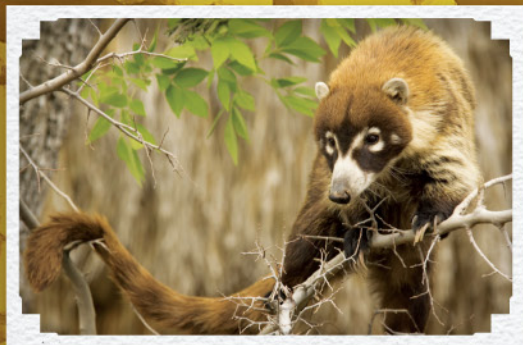


There are three known types of coatis: white-nosed coatis (shown here), South American coatis, and mountain coatis.

The white-nosed coati gets its name from the patch of white fur on its snout.

Raccoon Relative

White-nosed coatis are small **mammals** found in the Southwest United States, Mexico, and Central America. They may also live in northern parts of Colombia in South America. Because coatis are **rare** and not often seen by people, they are often mistaken for other animals, such as raccoons. In fact, coatis and raccoons are closely related and similar in many ways. For example, both animals have black fur on their faces and a furry, ringed tail. Also, like their raccoon cousins, coatis are very intelligent.



A full-grown coati (top) weighs anywhere from 8 to 16 pounds (4 to 7 kg)—about the size of an adult raccoon (bottom).

White-Nosed Coatis in the Wild



Even though coatis and raccoons are related, they're not exactly alike. For example, a coati's tail is much longer than a raccoon's, which may be up to 12 inches (30 cm) long. A coati's tail can be up to 27 inches (69 cm) in length—that's more than half the length of its body! Another difference is that coatis are active during the daytime, which is when raccoons are usually asleep.

A photograph of a white-nosed coati (Nasua narica) clinging to a thick, dark tree branch. The coati has brown fur and a long, bushy tail that hangs down. Its face is white with dark markings around its eyes and a dark nose. The background is a dense thicket of branches and green leaves.

The white-nosed coati has an extremely long tail.

Coatis live in woodlands or in canyons, where good water sources are located.

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About the Author

Joyce Markovics is a writer and editor in New York City. She lives with her husband, Adam, and a spirited rabbit named Pearl, that is mischievous, just like coatis!

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One morning in late summer, naturalist Doug Moore was driving in Madera Canyon in southeastern Arizona. He suddenly noticed a strange-looking animal in the middle of the road. At first Doug thought it was a monkey, but as the car inched closer, the animal spun around to face him head-on. It wasn't a monkey—it was a mysterious white-nosed coati!

Look inside to learn more about these secretive animals, including how they hunt, raise their young, and survive in the wild. You'll also find out how humans are helping to make sure that coatis—truly among America's finest hidden animal treasures—are around for a long, long time.

Collared Peccary
Cactus Eater

Ringtail
Miner's Cat

Cougar
A Cat with Many Names

Roseate Spoonbill
Pretty in Pink

Jaguarundi
Otter Cat

White-Nosed Coati
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