



## Losing The Battle Against Neighborhood Raccoons?

By Joanne McEvoy-Samborn

Before going to nuclear warheads to keep these persistent rodents out of your trash cans, try some simple, inexpensive and green deterrents. A strong sense of smell makes raccoons susceptible to strong odors that will deter them from coming after your trash.

✿ Ammonia has a pungent odor and is an effective repellent by irritating the nose and eye of raccoons. Place old towels or rags soaked with ammonia in the bottom of trash cans. The odor is trapped in the trash cans because they are enclosed and air flow is very still.

✿ Vinegar is used as a deterrent more for its strong taste than smell. Put one tablespoon of liquid soap and some vinegar in a spray bottle. The liquid soap acts like a glue and allows the solution to adhere to sprayed surfaces. After rain or watering from sprinklers, reapply the solution to the outside of the trash cans every couple of days.

✿ By keeping these animals at bay with some simple household products, you are lessening the impact on the environment from commercial products. And if these solutions fail, use bungee cords to keep trash can lids on tight.

Adapted from an article in the *Long Island Gardeners* newsletter of Spring 2012