



Raccoon Roundworm (*Baylisascaris procyonis*) in Europe

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Subject Reference: GS Paper III (Environment & Biodiversity | Science & Technology)

- **The News (Dec 2025):** A study in Europe has flagged a massive surge in the infection of wild raccoons with the *Baylisascaris procyonis* parasite. Infection rates in countries like Germany have reached as high as 77%, raising fears of **zoonotic transmission** (animal to human).
- **Apt Topic: "Invasive Species as Biological Health Risks"**
- **The Zoonotic Link:** This is a classic case of **Invasive Alien Species (IAS)** causing public health crises. Raccoons are not native to Europe (imported from North America); their spread introduces pathogens to which local ecosystems and humans have no natural immunity.
- **Mechanism of Harm:** The parasite causes **Larval Migrans**. When humans accidentally ingest the eggs (often through contaminated soil), the larvae migrate to the brain (Neural) or eyes (Ocular), leading to permanent damage or death.
- **UPSC Link:** Connect this with the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**, which aims to reduce the introduction and establishment of invasive species by 50% by 2030.