

The Loke Raccoon Farm

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The following article appeared in the Albion Midlander dated October 1934. This was a monthly newspaper published by the Orleans County Trust Company, which often dealt with stories of human interest. With the article provided was also a picture reproduced here of Wm. P. Loke feeding some young raccoons.

The story is as follows:

"A raccoon looks great in a fur coat, but few of us know what one looks like in the flesh. Mr. Wm. P. Loke Jr. makes it his business to raise raccoons for their pelts and their meat at his farm on the North Town Line Road, Lyndonville. Ten years ago, Mr. Loke brought two females and a male; the population of raccoon village this year consists of 80 of these beautiful and highly interesting animals. Twenty large cages screened with wire netting are the homes of the furry beasts. There is always something going on in raccoonville and the humorous antics of the



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animals are bound to delight anyone who watches them.

"Baby raccoons, Mr. Loke tells us, are born about the first of May. Four is the usual litter; occasionally there are six or seven. The little 'coons' are very shy

and suspicious of all strangers, a hereditary suspiciousness which is so predominant in their mother that strangers are prohibited from going near the cages until after Sept. 1, lest the mother raccoon becomes enraged and harms her offspring.

"Raccoons have many peculiar and amusing traits. As a species, they are one of the cleanest animals, generally washing their food in water before eating it. Their sense of touch is very delicate; instead of

looking for a morsel of food which is thrown to them, they will feel for it with their front paws. Like bears, they hibernate in their houses during the winter. Notwithstanding the peculiarities of the animals, Mr. Loke says he finds them extremely interesting and enjoys raising them."

C. W. Lattin is the Orleans county historian. His column appears every Thursday in The Journal-Register and The Albion-Advertiser.