COYOTE ENCOUNTERS

Coyotes are usually wary of people and will avoid us whenever possible. Bold behavior is unusual and is most often a result of habituation due to intentional or unintentional feeding, the presence of a dog, or the coyote defending a den and young. If you encounter a coyote, remember the following:

- Never feed or try to "tame" a coyote; appreciate coyotes from a distance.
- Walk dogs on leashes; pick up small dogs if a coyote is near.
- If approached, be BIG and LOUD. You can also scare the animal by blowing a whistle, shaking a can with coins inside, popping open an umbrella, or throwing objects toward but not at the coyote. Do not run from a coyote; calmly leave the area.

COYOTE CONFLICTS

The very traits that have allowed coyotes to thrive, adapt, and coexist with people even in the most populated regions of North America have also led to conflicts with us and our domestic animals. Most coyote fear people. However, those who associate people with food may become habituated to our presence. The abundance of food, water, and shelter offered by urban landscapes—coupled with unsecured garbage, uncared for gardens, and unattended domestic animals—can lead to conflicts. Documented cases of coyotes injuring people are very rare and most often related to people intentionally or unintentionally feeding them and/or the presence of a dog. Coyotes become more active, vocal, and territorial during mating and pupping seasons (see chart reverse). Pay particular attention to your companion animals' safety during these times and do not let them roam.

COYOTE MANAGEMENT

Historically, our society has attempted to solve human-coyote conflicts through killing. However, despite decades of poisoning, trapping, and shooting coyotes, there are more coyotes in North America today. Why?

The coyote's remarkable success appears to be closely related to human attempts to control their populations. As with many wild species, coyote populations are naturally regulated by available food and habitat. Lethal control, however, can disrupt the group hierarchy, allowing more coyotes to reproduce, encouraging larger litter sizes because of decreased competition for food and habitat, and increasing pup survival rates. It is also highly likely that lethal control favors the survival of the most resilient and genetically robust coyotes.

At least half a million coyotes are killed each year—one per minute—by federal, state, and local governments and by private individuals in North America. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Wildlife Services program kills approximately 90,000 coyotes each year. Most of this killing is carried out in the name of "livestock protection" and is a taxpayer subsidy for agribusiness/ranchers. Despite scientific evidence suggesting this approach is misguided and ultimately ineffective, the emphasis on lethal control persists. Coyotes are also killed for their fur, for "sport," and in "body-count" contests where prizes are awarded for killing the most coyotes. Most states set no limit on the number of coyotes that may be killed, nor do they regulate the killing methods.

Killing to reduce coyote populations or relocating individual coyotes is not recommended. Disruption of family groups can cause more coyotes to be born or increase pup survival rates; orphaned juveniles may act unpredictably and other coyotes will simply move into vacant areas.

APPARENTLY ONE COYOTE IS KILLED EVERY MINUTE OF EVERY DAY. HELP STOP THE KILLING BY PRACTICING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND SUPPORTING PROJECT COYOTE.

EDUCATED COEXISTENCE

Urban landscapes offer an abundance of food, water, and shelter for coyotes. Take the following steps to prevent coyotes from being attracted to your home.

- Wildlife-proof garbage in sturdy containers with tight fitting lids.
- Don’t leave pet food outside.
- Take out trash the morning pick up is scheduled.
- Keep compost in secure containers.
- Keep fallen fruit off the ground. Coyotes eat fruit.
- Keep birdseed off the ground.
- Keep birdeed off the ground: seeds attract rodents which then attract coyotes. Remove feeders if coyotes are seen in your yard.
- Keep barbecue grill clean.
- Eliminate accessible water sources.
- Clear away brush and dense weeds near buildings.
- Close off crawl spaces under decks and around buildings where coyotes may den.
- If you frequently see a coyote in your yard, make loud noises with pots, pans, or air horns, and haze the coyote with a water hose.
- Share this list with your neighbors; coexistence is a neighborhood effort.

Help keep coyotes wild. Look around—what unnatural food sources may you be offering wildlife? A fed coyote is a dead coyote.
COYOTE COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

If coyotes are left to self-regulate, generally one litter of pups per year are born with 30-50% of pups surviving. Sobbing is loud noises. Indeed, the coyote's scientific name is Canis latrans. Coyotes communicate with each other for a large group. Coyotes are fast and agile; they can run at speeds up to 40 mph. Coyotes are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans.

COYOTE ECOLOGY

Coyotes may live as solitary individuals, in pairs, or in small family groups, both in rural and urban areas. Coyotes are generally monogamous, with pair bonds frequently lasting for many years, and some for life. Both male and female coyotes actively maintain territories that may vary in size from 2 to 30 square miles. Reproduction is generally once per year and limited to the group's leaders, while other females remain behaviorally sterile. Breeding season peaks in mid February, followed by 4-8 pups born in a den in April or May. Pup mortality is high, with an average of 50%-70 dying within their first year. Some juveniles disperse in late fall to seek new territory, and some individuals remain with their parents and form the basis of the pack.

COYOTE LIFE CYCLE

Dec—Feb Breeding Activity
Feb—Apr Den Site Selection
Apr—May Birthing
May—Aug Raising Pups
Sep—Nov Pup Dispersal

DISEASE CONCERNS

Rabies is rare and coyotes are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans or domestic animals.

FOOD

Coyotes eat a wide variety of food, and like most animals, prefer food that is easiest to obtain. They are true omnivores, and will eat a wide variety of foods, including rodents, rabbits, insects, birds, snakes, vegetables, and fruits. They will also take advantage of unsecured garbage and pet food left outdoors. As scavengers, they provide an ecological service by helping to keep our communities clean.

HABITS

In rural habitats, coyotes hunt by day and night. In urban areas, coyotes appear to be more nocturnal but can often be seen during daylight hours, especially at dawn and dusk. Coyotes are fast and agile; they can run at speeds of up to 40 mph. Coyotes are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans.

KEEPING DOMESTIC ANIMALS SAFE

Although free roaming pets are more likely to be killed by vehicles than by wild coyotes, coyotes view cats as potential prey and dogs as competition. Other domestic animals including sheep, chickens and rabbits may also be seen as food and must be protected. Consider the following:

- Don’t let domestic animals roam; keep them securely enclosed and protected at all times.
- Fence your property. The fence must be at least 6 feet tall with the bottom extending at least 6 inches below the ground. Fences are more effective by using wire mesh, outwardly facing the top of the fence, by using electric fencing along the top and bottom (more stripping for protecting livestock), or by installing the CoyoteRoll™ which makes it difficult for predators to gain the “foothold” they need to pull up and over the top of an enclosure.
- Spay or neuter your dogs. Though uncommon, coyotes can mate with dogs under control during the day and indoors at night.
- Install motion-sensor lights near buildings.
- Don’t leave animal foods outside; keep all food well secured.
- Install motion-sensor lights near buildings.
- Walk dogs on leashes, particularly during coyote mating and pupping seasons (see chart).
- Keep mountains, rivers, streams and valleys calling for coyotes.
- Keep your dog quiet and under control during coyote mating and pupping seasons (see chart).
- Don’t nearby features such as rocky areas, cliffs, streams, open fields, and open water. Coyotes are known to avoid these areas as much as possible.

Native carnivores are healthy components of our rural and urban communities. By shifting attitudes toward native carnivores, we replace fear and ignorance with understanding and appreciation. We believe that public education is at the core of accomplishing these goals. Project Coyote offers a variety of educational outreach programs and resources; contact us at info@projectcoyote.org.

Project Coyote is a fiscally sponsored project of WildEarth Guardians, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible. For more information, visit www.projectcoyote.org.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

Coyotes are slightly larger than domestic cats, averaging 35-55 pounds, which is believed to be a pointed down. Their eastern counterparts may be larger, having a long, bushy, black-tipped tail that is usually carried longer. Coyotes are similar to a small Shepherd or collie-type dog but have denser fur and pointed, erect ears. Coyotes have a sweet disposition and foxes which helps to boost biodiversity.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

Domestic cats can appear as prey. The Labrador Retriever is twice the weight of a coyote. Domestic animals often come into conflict with coyotes, which can lead to the death of pets and livestock. Coyotes are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans.

COYOTE LIFE CYCLE

Dec—Feb Breeding Activity
Feb—Apr Den Site Selection
Apr—May Birthing
May—Aug Raising Pups
Sep—Nov Pup Dispersal

Coyotes have an ecological service by helping to keep rodent and rabbit populations in check. The “song dog” has many different vocalizations for communicating with other coyotes.

Livestock guard animals can effectively reduce or eliminate coyote conflicts on farms and ranches.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

If coyotes are left to self-regulate, generally one litter of pups per year are born with 30-50% of pups surviving. Colonial man does not need to be a large society of coyotes, but would need a manage number of coyotes to help keep rodent and rabbit populations in check.

COYOTE ECOLOGY

Two hundred years of costly persecution has not eliminated the resilient coyote from our landscape. In fact, coyotes have expanded their range two to three folds since the 1850s largely in response to human changes to the environment and the eradication of wolves. Coyotes have adapted to living close to people and now inhabit even the most densely populated metropolitan climes from Boston to San Francisco, Austin, and Seattle. Estimates are that 2,000 coyotes are on self-appointed "patrol" in the Chicago metropolitan area.

At least 19 subspecies of coyote roam North and Central America, from California to Newfoundland and Alaska to Panama, occupying a broad range of habitats. Coyotes play an important ecological role helping to maintain healthy ecosystems and species diversity. As the top carnivore in some ecosystems, coyotes help regulate the number of mesocarnivores (such as skunks, raccoons, weasels) which helps to boost biodiversity.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

Domestic cats can appear as prey. The Labrador Retriever is twice the weight of a coyote. Domestic animals often come into conflict with coyotes, which can lead to the death of pets and livestock. Coyotes are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans.

COYOTE LIFE CYCLE

Dec—Feb Breeding Activity
Feb—Apr Den Site Selection
Apr—May Birthing
May—Aug Raising Pups
Sep—Nov Pup Dispersal

Coyotes have an ecological service by helping to keep rodent and rabbit populations in check. The “song dog” has many different vocalizations for communicating with other coyotes.

Livestock guard animals can effectively reduce or eliminate coyote conflicts on farms and ranches.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

If coyotes are left to self-regulate, generally one litter of pups per year are born with 30-50% of pups surviving. Colonial man does not need to be a large society of coyotes, but would need a manage number of coyotes to help keep rodent and rabbit populations in check.

COYOTE ECOLOGY

Two hundred years of costly persecution has not eliminated the resilient coyote from our landscape. In fact, coyotes have expanded their range two to three folds since the 1850s largely in response to human changes to the environment and the eradication of wolves. Coyotes have adapted to living close to people and now inhabit even the most densely populated metropolitan climes from Boston to San Francisco, Austin, and Seattle. Estimates are that 2,000 coyotes are on self-appointed "patrol" in the Chicago metropolitan area.

At least 19 subspecies of coyote roam North and Central America, from California to Newfoundland and Alaska to Panama, occupying a broad range of habitats. Coyotes play an important ecological role helping to maintain healthy ecosystems and species diversity. As the top carnivore in some ecosystems, coyotes help regulate the number of mesocarnivores (such as skunks, raccoons, weasels) which helps to boost biodiversity.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

Domestic cats can appear as prey. The Labrador Retriever is twice the weight of a coyote. Domestic animals often come into conflict with coyotes, which can lead to the death of pets and livestock. Coyotes are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans.

COYOTE LIFE CYCLE

Dec—Feb Breeding Activity
Feb—Apr Den Site Selection
Apr—May Birthing
May—Aug Raising Pups
Sep—Nov Pup Dispersal

Coyotes have an ecological service by helping to keep rodent and rabbit populations in check. The “song dog” has many different vocalizations for communicating with other coyotes.

Livestock guard animals can effectively reduce or eliminate coyote conflicts on farms and ranches.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

If coyotes are left to self-regulate, generally one litter of pups per year are born with 30-50% of pups surviving. Colonial man does not need to be a large society of coyotes, but would need a manage number of coyotes to help keep rodent and rabbit populations in check.

COYOTE ECOLOGY

Two hundred years of costly persecution has not eliminated the resilient coyote from our landscape. In fact, coyotes have expanded their range two to three folds since the 1850s largely in response to human changes to the environment and the eradication of wolves. Coyotes have adapted to living close to people and now inhabit even the most densely populated metropolitan climes from Boston to San Francisco, Austin, and Seattle. Estimates are that 2,000 coyotes are on self-appointed "patrol" in the Chicago metropolitan area.

At least 19 subspecies of coyote roam North and Central America, from California to Newfoundland and Alaska to Panama, occupying a broad range of habitats. Coyotes play an important ecological role helping to maintain healthy ecosystems and species diversity. As the top carnivore in some ecosystems, coyotes help regulate the number of mesocarnivores (such as skunks, raccoons, weasels) which helps to boost biodiversity.

COYOTE IN COMPARISON TO PETS & FOX

Domestic cats can appear as prey. The Labrador Retriever is twice the weight of a coyote. Domestic animals often come into conflict with coyotes, which can lead to the death of pets and livestock. Coyotes are not commonly implicated in the transmission of the disease to humans.

COYOTE LIFE CYCLE

Dec—Feb Breeding Activity
Feb—Apr Den Site Selection
Apr—May Birthing
May—Aug Raising Pups
Sep—Nov Pup Dispersal

Coyotes have an ecological service by helping to keep rodent and rabbit populations in check. The “song dog” has many different vocalizations for communicating with other coyotes.

Livestock guard animals can effectively reduce or eliminate coyote conflicts on farms and ranches.