

Never, Ever Run

The one thing to never do if you encounter a coyote is run. What runs from coyotes are the things they eat . . . rabbits, mice, squirrels. If you run from a coyote you will trigger its prey instinct and it is likely to chase you. You are not prey. You are a big, strong, scary human and you need to act like one.

It is very important to teach children this. Practice what to do if they encounter a coyote. Make sure they yell loudly, wave their arms high and know to throw something if the coyote does not move away.

Safety For Pets

Coyotes see small dogs and cats as prey. Keep cats indoors as required by the Town Bylaw. Do not let small dogs out at night unsupervised. Always keep dogs leashed for walks.

If you encounter a coyote while walking a small dog, pick the dog up and hold it against your chest. Wave your other arm in the air and yell at the coyote until it moves off.

Coyotes may follow people walking larger dogs through their territory. This is normal coyote behaviour called "shadowing". It does not mean they are stalking you or are going to attack, it only means they want to make sure that you leave their territory.

Home Sense

Never leave pet food or food waste outdoors. Clean up after your dog. Clean up fallen fruit. Put garbage out in the morning.

Coyotes have been in our area for decades and are here to stay. We should remember that in all of that time, only one minor bite has been recorded compared to hundreds of dog bites every year.

Free Living With Coyotes Seminars

Ontariogreen offers free seminars about coyotes to schools, neighbourhood associations and community groups. Learn all about these interesting animals and practice what to do if you encounter them. Suitable for all ages from Kindergarten to seniors. For more information contact Liz at 289-813-1568

Resources

Good Video

Being Coyote Wise: Living With Urban Coyotes
by the Colorado Division of Wildlife
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQMxZo0YSM>



**Ontariogreen Conservation
Association:**
*Providing environmental education
in classrooms and communities*
www.ontariogreen.ca

Living With Coyotes

**Keeping Children, Pets
And Wildlife Safe
In Our Urban Environment**




Ontariogreen
Environmental Education
in Classrooms and Communities

Introducing Coyotes

Coyotes are a species of wild dog that originated in the American southwest but started to move east and north as wolf populations were wiped out by hunting.

They have been in Ontario for about 100 years and as Ontario's cities and towns have grown, they have adapted to our urban environment.

They are very intelligent animals and despite persistent hunting by humans their population has grown all over North America.

Coyotes play an important role in the ecosystem by keeping rodent populations under control. Mice, rats, voles and rabbits make up the bulk of coyotes' diets.



Family Life

Coyotes live in family groups consisting of a breeding pair and their pups.

Coyotes mate for life. Pups are born in April and May and usually there are about five or six pups in a litter.

Like wolves, if there is a lot of food available the litters will be larger. If there is a food shortage, the litters will be small.

Both parents share pup-raising duties and teach the pups how to hunt.

Coyotes use dens when they are rearing their pups. The dens are often dug out spots on hillsides or in fields or under rocky ledges.

They prefer to build dens close to water. They do their best to find well-hidden locations.

Ravines in this area are perfect den sites. Coyotes will guard their pups fiercely. Never approach a den or pups.



The Facts On Coyotes

Coyotes are generally small with females weighing 13 to 16 kilograms and males weighing between 16 and 18.

In the wild, coyotes can live up to 14 years. In cities, they are often hit by cars. The average city coyote only lives 5 or 6 years.

They are territorial meaning they stay in a particular area though they may travel up to 100 km in search of food.

Coyotes usually prefer to live and hunt in fields and woodlands where rabbits and mice are plentiful.

Keeping Humans And Coyotes Safe

Coyotes have a natural fear of humans and avoid them when possible.

Attacks by coyotes on humans are very rare and occur most often with animals who have lost their natural fear of humans because someone is feeding them.

Feeding can be deliberate ie. putting food out specifically for them, or it can be inad-

vertant, for instance, putting garbage outside the night before pickup, leaving dog or cat food outside etc. Coyotes should never learn to associate humans with food.

NEVER FEED WILD ANIMALS. It endangers both humans and animals.

What To Do If You Encounter A Coyote

Coyotes try to steer clear of people whenever possible. Usually, if you happen to encounter one, it will turn and move away from you.

If it doesn't, stand your ground, look at the coyote, wave your hands over your head (to make yourself appear as big and as frightening as possible) and yell loudly at it. Coyotes respect dominant behaviour.

Coyotes do not want to pick a fight with animals that are bigger and stronger than they are. As hunters, if they get injured in a fight, they can't hunt and if they can't hunt they can't eat. So they definitely do not want to pick a fight with a big, strong, scary human.

If you have waved your arms and yelled at it and it still hasn't moved off, throw something at it — a rock, a stick, your shoe, jacket or backpack will do.

Once the animal has moved off, move away slowly in the opposite direction, keeping an eye on the coyote to make sure it is moving away.

