



PREVENTING COYOTE CONFLICTS:

How to Keep Coyotes Out of Your Yard and Keep Your Pets Safe

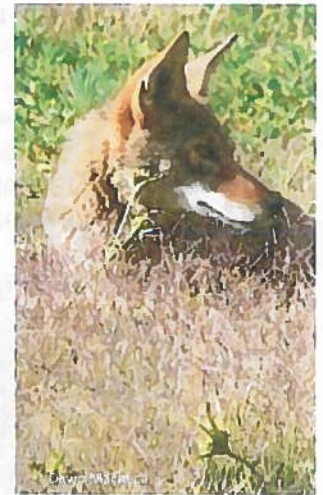
Coyotes generally avoid humans, even when their home range encompasses largely urban or suburban habitat. However, the presence of a free buffet in the form of pet food, compost or trash can lure coyotes into yards and create the impression that these places are bountiful feeding areas. Without the lure of food or other attractants, their visits will be brief and rare. But a coyote who finds food in one yard may learn to search for food in others.

What attracts coyotes to urban and residential areas?

Food

Deliberately feeding coyotes is a mistake. You may enjoy hand-feeding animals, but this is a surefire way to get them accustomed to people and will ultimately lead to their demise. Here are some other general rules to follow:

- Avoid feeding pets outside. If you must, feed them only for a set time during the day (for no more than one hour) and remove the food bowl as soon as your pet has finished her meal.
- In dry conditions, water can be as alluring as food, so remove water bowls set outside for pets and make watering cans unavailable.
- If you compost, use enclosed bins and never compost meat or fish scraps.
- Good housekeeping, such as regularly raking areas around bird feeders, can also help discourage coyote activity near residences.
- Remove fallen fruit from the ground.
- Keep trash in high-quality containers with tight-fitting lids. Only place the cans curbside the morning of collection. If you leave them out overnight, they are more likely to be tipped and broken into.



Shelter

Coyotes are secretive animals, and studies have shown they can live for a long time in close proximity to dense human settlements without ever being noticed. Such coyotes are abiding by the rules we set for minimal conflicts, and should be left alone.

In the spring, when coyotes give birth and begin to raise litters, they concentrate their activities around dens or burrows in which the young are sheltered. At these times, they may become highly defensive and territorial, and challenge any other coyote or dog that comes close to the pups. People walking their dogs in parks and wooded areas may run into these situations and even be challenged by parent coyotes to back off. Fights occur rarely and most often when dogs are off leash. It's important to recognize such incidents for what they are: defense of space, not random attacks. If you encounter a coyote when walking your pet, do NOT run away; haze the coyote with the techniques described in our **Hazing Guidelines**.



Free-roaming pets

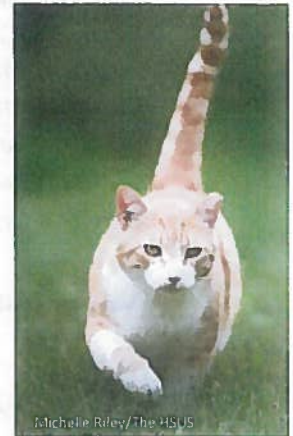
Free-roaming pets, especially cats and sometimes small dogs, may attract coyotes into certain neighborhoods. Although coyotes are primarily nocturnal, the best way to minimize risk to pets

is not to leave them out unattended at any time. Don't allow your cat to roam freely. Ideally, cats should be kept indoors regardless of whether there is a coyote in the area or not—to keep cats safe and healthy as well as to keep them from killing birds and other wildlife.

Feral cat colonies

People who feed feral cats are often concerned coyotes might prey on the cats. These concerns are well founded, as coyotes will be attracted to both the outdoor pet food and the cats themselves as prey. Here are some general suggestions for keeping such cats safer:

- Feed cats only during the day and at a set time— and pick up any leftovers immediately. Provide escape routes for cats. In treeless or open areas, erect "cat posts" (see below).
- Elevate feeding stations beyond coyotes'—but not the cats'—reach. The size of the station/s can be customized to the size of the colony you feed and the amount of food should be adjusted for the number of cats you feed. Avoid leftovers that attract other animals. Elevated feeding stations mean safer cats, no more messy, turned over bowls and great savings in cat food bills!
- In places where trees and other climbing opportunities are scarce, some people have reported success protecting barn and feral cats from coyotes by giving the cats escape routes in the form of "cat posts." These can be wooden posts (four inches by four inches or corner posts) that stand out of the ground at least ten to twelve feet and can be climbed by cats, but not by coyotes.
- Discourage/harass coyotes seen on the property. Go after them aggressively, using the techniques described in our **Hazing Guidelines**. Making them feel uncomfortable will encourage them to stay out of the area.



Risks to dogs



Dogs (especially small dogs) are also vulnerable to coyote confrontations. These incidents generally involve coyotes who are either accustomed (habituated) to people (usually due to wildlife feeding), or coyotes who are protecting their territory and pups (usually during breeding season).

Dogs (especially small dogs) should not be left outside unattended and should always be kept on a leash in public areas. It is important to never let your dog interact or play with a coyote. Pet food and water should be kept indoors to avoid attracting coyotes to your yard.

Although "attacks" on larger dogs are rarer, coyotes will sometimes go after a large dog when they feel that their territory is threatened. This generally occurs during the coyote breeding season, which takes place from January through March. During this time, it is especially important not to leave dogs outside unattended and to keep them on leashes when in public areas.

To further protect cats and dogs, fencing can be used to keep coyotes out of residential yards. Fences must be at least 6 feet tall, extend underground at least 12 inches or include an L-shaped mesh apron extending outward at least 18 inches and secured with landscaping staples. Devices such as the "coyote roller" (www.coyoteroller.com) "roll off" coyotes that try to scramble over the fence and can enhance the effectiveness of a fence. Do-it-yourself options include adding PVC piping or chicken wire to the top of your fence to prevent coyotes from jumping over, and retrofitting a mesh apron to the bottom of the fence (extending 12+ inches out, secured with landscaping staples) to keep coyotes from digging under.

For more information and tips, see our website: www.humanesociety.org/animals/coyotes

Coyote Hazing Guide

Appropriate Responses for Various Coyote Behaviors

Animal Activity	Hazing Response
Coyote (s) seen moving through an area (any time of day)	No response necessary, stay aware of animals location until out of sight. Remember coyotes are creatures of habit and may use same path, same time on other days.
Coyote (s) resting in an area (any time of day)	Examine location-if near to where people & pets will be moving, clap hands, shout, try and startle it to leave. If in the distance, away from path, just be aware of presence.
Coyote (s) moving along same path as people/pets	Don't ignore or avoid. Make eye contact, yell, clap hands, use noise makers and encourage coyote to change path away from people/pets
Coyote (s) following person/pet	Aggressively face coyote-yell, clap, noisemakers, move towards, gather other people and encourage coyote to change path away from people/pets. DO NOT STOP until coyote has left.
Coyote(s) sniffing areas recently vacated by people/pet	Don't ignore or avoid. Make eye contact, yell, clap hands, use noise makers and encourage coyote to move away from people/pets
Coyote (s) entering back yard w/ no pet present	Aggressively face coyote-yell, clap, noisemakers, move towards, spray with hose, gather other people and encourage coyote to leave yard. DO NOT STOP until coyote has left.
Coyote (s) entering back yard w/ pet present	Get pet inside or pick up if possible. Aggressively face coyote-yell, clap, noisemakers, move towards, throw items, spray with hose. DO NOT STOP until coyote has left. DO NOT INJURE-can increase chance of attack.
Coyote (s) "playing" w/pet	DO NOT ALLOW. Get pet inside or pick up if possible. Aggressively face coyote-yell, clap, noisemakers, move towards, throw items, spray with hose. DO NOT STOP until coyote has left. DO NOT INJURE-can increase chance of attack.
Coyote (s) approaching person directly	Aggressively face coyote-yell, clap, noisemakers, move towards, spray with hose, gather other people and encourage coyote to leave yard. DO NOT STOP until coyote has left. Report incident.
Coyote (s) circling a person/pet	Pick up pet if possible. Aggressively face coyote-yell, clap, noisemakers, move towards other people, throw items. Don't ignore and turn back to it. DO NOT STOP until coyote has left. DO NOT INJURE-can increase chance of attack
Coyote approaching, circling a child	Pick up child immediately, yell, noisemakers, throw things, act aggressively. DO NOT RUN AWAY OR IGNORE. DO NOT STOP until coyote has left the area. Report immediately.
Coyote biting pet	Yell, call for additional people, pick up pet if possible, use item to hit coyote, it is possible and common to be able to scare a coyote into dropping pet. THERE IS DANGER OF GETTING BITTEN BY GETTING BETWEEN ANIMAL AND PREY. Report incident.
Coyote biting person	Yell, call for help, punch, kick and fight, coyote will usually flee. Seek medical attention as needed and report incident to proper authorities immediately.

Important Notes: If you think an animal is sick or injured DO NOT engage with hazing techniques. Contact proper authorities and remove yourself from the vicinity. A sick or injured animal is UNPREDICTABLE and you should avoid contact.



COYOTE HAZING GUIDELINES:

How to Haze for Effective Reshaping of Coyote Behavior



Generally, coyotes are reclusive animals who avoid human contact. Coyotes who've adapted to urban and suburban environments, however, may realize there are few real threats and approach people or feel safe visiting yards even when people are present. These coyotes have become habituated (lost their fear of humans), likely due to the ready availability of food in our neighborhoods. Sometimes, this food is deliberately provided by people who like to watch wild animals or misguidedly feel they are helping them by feeding. These bold coyotes should not be tolerated or enticed, but definitely given the message that they should not be so brazen.

Hazing is a method that makes use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage an undesirable behavior or activity. Hazing can help maintain a coyote's fear of humans and deter them from neighborhood spaces such as backyards and play spaces.

Methods of Hazing include:

Using a variety of different hazing tools is critical; coyotes can habituate to individual items, sounds, and actions.

- Yelling and waving your arms while approaching the coyote
- Noisemakers: Voice, whistles, air horns, bells, soda cans filled with pennies or dead batteries, pots and pans banged together
- Projectiles: sticks, small rocks, cans, tennis balls, rubber balls
- Other: hoses, water guns with vinegar water, spray bottles with vinegar water, pepper spray, bear repellent, walking sticks

"Go Away Coyote!"

- The simplest method of hazing a coyote involves being **loud** and **large**:
 - Stand tall, wave your arms and yell at the coyote, approaching it if necessary, until it runs away.
 - Follow this link for a demonstration:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDm9wjfcdbw&feature=player_embedded
- If a coyote has not been hazed before, he may not immediately run away when you yell at him. If this happens, you may need to walk towards the coyote and increase the intensity of your hazing.
- The coyote may run away, but then stop after a distance and look at you. It is important to continue to haze the coyote until he completely leaves the area. You may need to use different tactics, such as noisemakers, stomping your feet, or spraying the coyote with a hose, to get him to leave.

Dog-walking Tools

- There are several tools that you can carry with you while walking your dog that can be used to repel coyotes. (*Remember to always walk your dog on a leash.*) These include:
 - Homemade noisemakers (follow this link for “recipe”):
<http://www.stanleyparkecology.ca/programs/conservation/urbanWildlife/coyotes/deterrent.php>
 - Whistle or small air horn (you can purchase small air horn “necklaces”)
 - Squirtguns
 - Pepper spray
 - Pick up sticks or rocks and throw them towards the coyote

In Your Yard:

Remember, keeping pets and pet food inside is the best way to keep coyotes out of your yard. If you do encounter coyotes, all of the above methods can be used in your yard at home. First, try the “Go Away Coyote!” method (yell and wave your arms as you approach the coyote). Here are some additional methods you can also use:

- Squirt the coyote with your garden hose
- Bang pots and pans together

Remember:

- **NEVER run away from a coyote!**
- The coyote may not leave at first, but if you approach it closer and/or increase the intensity of your hazing, it will run away.
- If the coyote runs away a short distance and then stops and looks at you, continue hazing it until it completely leaves the area.
- After you have successfully hazed a coyote, he or she may return again. Continue to haze the coyote as you did before; it usually takes only one or two times to haze a coyote away for good.
- Coyotes are skittish by nature and as a rule do not act aggressively towards aggressive people. However, engaging animals that are sick or injured can result in unpredictable behavior. If you suspect that a coyote is sick or injured, contact the proper authorities and **DO NOT** interact with the coyote.



Tips for Success:

- The more often an individual coyote is hazed, by a variety of tools and techniques and a variety of people, the more effective hazing will be for changing behavior.
- The coyote being hazed must be able to recognize that the potential threat is coming from a person. (Hiding behind a bush and throwing rocks, for example, will not be effective.)
- Techniques and tools can be used in the same manner for one animal or multiple animals. Usually there is a dominant animal in the group who will respond, and others will follow her lead.
- Certain levels of hazing must always be maintained so that future generations of coyotes do not learn or return to unacceptable habits or behaviors.
- Educating the public about removing coyote attractants, proper pet care and safety, and coyote behavior are critical parts of a successful coyote plan.

For more information and tips, see our website: www.humanesociety.org/animals/coyotes