

Exclusion Techniques

Consistency over time is the most effective means to establishing appropriate human/coyote interactions.

1. Remove all sources of food. Keep trash and compost inaccessible. Pick up fallen fruit in yard. Clean under bird feeders.
2. Report any sightings of wild animals feeding from dumpsters. Include time of day and business name to Environmental Health at 720-913-1311.
3. Do not let cats run freely in neighborhoods. Keep small dogs close to you. Keep pets inside at night (or in a completely enclosed kennel) when coyotes are most active.
4. Maintain fences so coyotes cannot slip underneath. Add deterrents to tops of fences to reduce a coyote's ability to grab on and pull themselves up and over. Coyote rollers and wire extensions can discourage animals attempting to breach fences.
5. Install motion activated lights. Keep lights on when pets are outside.
6. Visually inspect yard before allowing any pet outside.
7. Trim vegetation away from house or up high enough so you can see underneath.
8. Communicate with local officials.
Report the following (include the date and location of incident)
 - a. Coyote biting or attacking cat or dog.
 - b. Coyote killing cat or dog.
 - c. Coyote biting a person.
 - d. Person feeding coyote, either accidentally or purposefully.
 - e. Open trash cans and dumpsters at local businesses.

For information and tips on living with different urban wildlife species visit:
Denvergov.org/wildlife



Questions?

- Contact a wildlife ecologist
ashley.delaup@denvergov.org
303 455-0785
- Call or email 311
- Contact your local city council person
- Call Colorado Division of Wildlife
303 291-7227



Coyotes in the City

*A guide to
living with
urban coyotes*



Coyotes

Coyotes are Colorado natives and have been one of the few species able to successfully expand its range, as open space has become increasingly developed. While originally a prairie native, they are now in every major ecosystem in North America.

Today living with coyotes is a controversial topic in many cities. Cities have created a unique habitat, rich in resources (food, water and shelter) while eliminating large predators. Certain species like the coyote learned to adapt and a new urban ecosystem developed. These urban animals have multiple generations of offspring that have been born in cities. People, houses, pets, cars and more are a normal part of their lives. An urban coyote has a different lifestyle than a coyote living far from people and has been raised to survive in an urban environment.



Biology & Ecology

- Omnivorous
- Small animals & fruit main diet items
- Average size ranges from 20 to 35 lbs.
- Second fastest mammals in North America
- Live in family groups
- One breeding pair per group
- Breeding occurs once a year in winter (January/February)
- Pups are born March - May

Family groups are very protective of pups and coyotes are excellent parents allowing for most pups to survive to adulthood. Litter size depends on amount of resources available and number of coyotes in the territory.

Conflict

Coyote behavior changes as they “habituate,” or get used to living with people. They can be seen out more frequently during the daytime, in neighborhoods and even in busy parks. Some coyotes learn to beg or scavenge in yards for fruit, rodents, bird seed, open trash and compost. When coyotes associate people with food it reduces their wariness in interacting with people and pets. Increased interactions occur and if nothing negative happens to the coyotes they become more comfortable around people. Unattended pets are no different to urban coyotes than any other animal in their territory. Without human protection pets can be treated like potential prey or as competition for resources. Pets often don’t have the ability to protect themselves like other wild animals do. Pet injury or loss is the biggest source of conflict. Concern over increasing population size is common. The number of animals found in an area is directly related to the amount of resources available. If resource availability does not change and animals are removed populations rapidly return to original size.

Safety

Injuries to people and children are big concerns but in reality are extremely rare. A recent study found that since 1960 there has been 142 reported bites to a person from coyotes throughout the USA and Canada. (Less than 3 a year throughout the country).

Many bites can be associated with certain human behaviors such as attempting to feed or pet a coyote, or a person intervening in a pet attack. For perspective, in Denver in 2009 there were 542 dog bites and 110 cat bites reported.

How to Reduce Conflict

Human Safety

1. Teach children not to approach or feed ANY strange animal.
2. Never ignore, turn your back on or run from a coyote(s).
3. Carry a walking stick or noisemaker at night or during early morning if walking with pets. (Coyotes are more likely to approach someone with a pet).
4. Haze or harass a coyote(s) until it chooses to leave the situation (it’s ok if it doesn’t run).
5. Let neighbors and friends know coyotes have been seen in an area.



Pet Safety

1. Keep cats safely indoors, especially after dark.
2. Keep pets on leash. Short leashes are safer than long ones.
3. Check your yard before letting pets outdoors. Coyotes will sometimes hide in yards.
4. Change your routine, coyotes learn neighborhood habits. (EX. Don’t let dog out every morning at 5 am).
5. Go outdoors with small dogs, especially after dark.
6. Close pet doors after dark.
7. Don’t let dogs play with or chase after coyotes.
8. Don’t feed pets or wild animals outside.
9. Be aware that coyotes naturally are found in parks and natural areas and act accordingly.

