

Coyotes

About coyotes

Coyotes are an extremely adaptable wildlife species that survive well in urban environments. Coyotes are often sighted on local golf courses and in parks. They can also be found in most Lower Mainland neighbourhoods – including Surrey.

Coyotes eat a variety of foods. In urban areas, coyotes prey on rats, squirrels, raccoons, geese, ducks and domestic pets (such as cats and small dogs).

Coyotes very rarely attack humans, but parents should not let very young children play alone and unsupervised around forested areas or where coyotes have been seen.



Coexistence the best choice

Coyotes are difficult to trap, and eradication and relocation programs in other parts of North America have proven ineffective.

Poisoning programs to reduce coyote numbers would also kill other wild animals. These poisons could also be a risk to pets and children.

Relocation simply moves the problem coyote to someone else's neighbourhood. It can also put a coyote at risk by placing it in another coyote's home range or territory. In addition, when you remove one coyote it may be replaced by one or more in the same area.

Coexistence with this interesting wild species seems to be the best option.

Never feed coyotes

Feeding coyotes can cause them to lose their natural fear of people and become dependent on handouts. A coyote that has been fed by humans may become too bold, bite someone and have to be destroyed. By feeding coyotes you put yourself, others and the coyote at risk.

Things you can do

- 1) Instruct your child to stay away from any animal they don't know. Children should tell an adult if they think they have seen a coyote.
- 2) Keep pets under your control and supervision. If you must let your pet out unattended, provide a secure space for it to exercise (such as an enclosed cat or dog run).
- 3) Never feed coyotes. Our best defence is to keep them wild.
- 4) Be careful not to feed coyotes unintentionally. For example, they are attracted to:
 - improperly contained garbage,
 - open composts containing fruit or vegetables,
 - fruit that has fallen from trees and left on the ground,
 - an overflowing bird feeder (they will eat the grain as well as the small mammals this food attracts),
 - pet food (avoid feeding pets outdoors).
- 5) Fencing helps discourage coyotes from entering your yard. Make sure fences are flush to the ground and in good repair.

*Adapted from the brochure "Urban Coyotes"
produced by the Urban Coyote Project*