

COYOTES IN OUR AREA



Coyotes Seen In Clyde Hill

Coyotes have been observed in and around the Clyde Hill area...this is not unusual. Most of the observations are located in the southwest portion of the community. Coyotes are present because they have ample food and shelter to survive. To learn more about coyotes and what you can do to protect your pets and make your home less attractive to coyotes take a look at the information below.

Managing Coyote Encounters

Prevention is the best tool for minimizing conflicts with coyotes and other wildlife. To prevent conflicts with coyotes, use the following management strategies around your property and encourage your neighbors to do the same.

Coyotes are curious, clever and adaptable. They quickly learn to take advantage of any newly discovered food source and are often attracted to yards with abundant fruit and wildlife to eat. Coyotes will eat pet food and knock over unsecured garbage cans, or may walk along the tops of walls around homes in search of unattended dogs and cats to eat. Coyotes may consider large or loud dogs to be a threat to their territory and become aggressive toward those dogs.

Here are some steps you can take to reduce the chance of human-coyote conflicts:



Never feed coyotes. Coyotes that are fed by people often lose their fear of humans and develop a territorial attitude that may lead to aggressive behavior. Try to educate your friends and neighbors about the problems associated with feeding coyotes.

Don't feed or provide water for coyotes or other wildlife. This practice attracts coyotes and promotes an increased number of rodents, birds and other creatures that are all major parts of a coyote's natural diet. Keeping your bird feeder areas clean is important as well. Prevent the buildup of feeder foods under bird feeders. Coyotes will eat bird food and are attracted to the birds and rodents that come to the feeders.

Don't provide coyotes access to your garbage. Eliminate garbage odors by cleaning trash cans with a 10 percent chlorine bleach solution. If there's a problem with your garbage getting knocked over, consider using garbage cans with clamps or other mechanisms that lock the lids down. Also consider placing the trash containers out in the morning of the pickup, not the night before.

Prevent access to fruit and compost. Keep fruit trees inaccessible but especially pick up fruit that falls to the ground. Keep compost piles within a fenced area or securely covered. Cover new compost material with soil or lime to prevent it from smelling. Never include animal matter in your compost, it attracts coyotes. If burying food scraps, cover them with at least 12 inches of soil, and don't leave any garbage above ground in the area, including the stinky shovel.

Feed your dogs and cats indoors. If you must feed your pets outside, do so in the morning or at midday, then make sure to pick up food, water bowls, leftovers and any spilled food well before dark every day... Store all pet food where it's inaccessible to any wildlife.

Don't feed feral cats or other wildlife. Coyotes prey on wildlife as well as any feed you leave out for the wildlife.

Don't leave your pets unattended or allow them to run loose, especially at dusk and dawn when coyotes are most active. Pets running loose are not only against the Municipal Code, it can be disrespectful to your neighbors and makes your pets easy targets for coyotes. If left outside at night in an unprotected area, coyotes may kill cats and small to mid-size dogs. Pets can be easy prey for coyotes. Being raised by humans leaves pets unsuspecting once they leave the safety of your home. If you suspect losing a dog or cat to a coyote, notify your neighbors. Once a coyote finds easy prey it will continually hunt in the area.

Clear brush and dense weeds from around your property... this deprives rodents (coyote food) of shelter and reduces protective cover for coyotes. If needed, use traps and other methods to control rodents.

Don't leave small children unattended outside if coyotes have been frequenting the area. Also consider modifying the landscape around children's play areas. Shrubs and trees should be pruned several feet above ground level so coyotes can't hide in them. Prepare your children for a possible encounter by explaining the reasons why coyotes live there (habitat/food source/ species adaptability) and what they should do if one approaches them (don't run, be as big, mean, and loud as possible). By shouting a set phrase such as "go away coyote" when they encounter one, children will inform nearby adults of the coyote's presence as opposed to a general scream. Demonstrate and rehearse encounter behavior with the children.

Don't make your yard a source of water for wildlife... water sources can include a pet's water bowl or a swimming pool.

Coyotes will keep coming back to the same area if attractants are not removed. These steps may decrease the frequency of coyote encounters in your area if practiced continuously. Coyotes are adaptable to change and are quick to learn new ways of survival. Occasional sightings most likely will continue. By making life for coyotes in your neighborhood more difficult, you will increase the likelihood that they will go somewhere else. Coyote interaction with humans in Clyde Hill is preventable, but it will take your help.

What Should I Do if I Encounter a Coyote?

If you start seeing coyotes around your home chase them away by shouting, making loud noises or throwing rocks at them..don't ignore them. Ignoring a coyote may cause it to lose its natural fear of people, which can eventually lead to aggressive behavior. **Whenever possible, coyotes should be harassed or scared to condition them to avoid humans.**

To Discourage a Coyote:

- Make loud noises
- Wave your hands or objects like sticks and brooms
- Throw small stones or cans
- Spray the coyote with a hose

What Should I Do if I See a Coyote?

There is no need to inform the City if you happen to see a coyote. Most coyotes pose little threat to humans. Problems with coyotes generally start when people feed them. It's not uncommon to see a coyote pass through a suburban neighborhood. However, most coyotes are not thrilled about being seen by people.

If a coyote is aggressive to you, holds its ground or exhibits a behavior that demonstrates it is not scared of you by growling, snarling or biting, then:

- You should appear as aggressive as possible, shout in a loud & deep voice, toss objects in the area of the coyote to divert its attention
- Don't turn away or run because the animal may view that as an opportunity to chase
- Maintain eye contact as you move toward other people, a building or an area of activity
- If you see a coyote that appears to be sick, injured, or aggressive to humans report it to the Police Department