

Coyote Facts:

- Coyotes have adapted well to city life. While coyote families can be fun to watch, they can also cause problems for property owners and residents.
- In Ontario, coyotes breed from late January to March: gestation is 60-63 days. Each year they produce one litter of one to 12 young. At three to four weeks of age the young will venture outside of their den and begin to explore the world around them. Young stay with their parents until the fall.
- Coyotes have an average lifespan of six to eight years and weigh between 36-60 lbs.
- Coyotes are active during the day and at night. They do not hibernate, so you may see them in the winter.
- It is estimated that there is one coyote per 13 square kilometers. This could vary greatly in different areas and territories may overlap to some extent.
- Coyotes prefer a habitat of mixed farm areas, swampland and parks.
- Coyotes will look for secluded locations along stream banks, ravines or sandy ridges to use as a den. They often use old den sites of foxes and groundhogs.
- Coyotes are very smart and adaptable to their surroundings. They are curious animals who are non-confrontational by nature.
- Coyotes are not considered high-risk rabies carriers, but are still susceptible to the virus.
- Coat colours range from blondes to reds to browns.
- A pack of coyotes is usually made of a group of siblings. Male and female are the basic social unit.
- A coyote can run for a long period of time and can cover a range of 10-15 km.

Problems and best solutions:

Coyote sightings

Just after dawn or before dusk coyotes may be seen hunting in an open area or on the way to a hunting area. They can also be seen running along highways or near ravines. All these environments are good hunting areas for coyotes. The coyote, like the fox, is very alert and has keen senses of smell, hearing and sight.

Coyotes can live close to humans and rarely be seen. Some people may be concerned about the safety of children and pets, and may be afraid that the coyote is sick or has rabies. If you are concerned about the safety of your pets, feed and keep them indoors.

Abnormal behavior

If your house or apartment is near the river or a ravine, you may see a coyote. This is not unusual. However, you should call MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES at 1-877-TIPS-MNR-(1-887-847-7667) or if you see a coyote exhibiting any of these symptoms or behaviours on this list:

- approaching dogs or people
- exploring a home or building far from a large park or open area
- entering a barn area where large animals are confined
- limping or staggering or with paralyzed hind legs
- acting confused
- attacking non-living objects
- fighting or attacking pets

Garbage/Composters

Coyotes are intelligent, adaptable and curious creatures. As a rule they are also shy, cautious and non-confrontational. They are drawn to places where they can find "easy pickings". By using the preventative tips below you can learn how to discourage these animals from backyards and avoid the possibility of a negative interaction or conflict.

- Never feed coyotes! Do not leave any type of food outdoors for any animal, including food for house pets.

- Store garbage in a sealed steel container. Make sure you keep the container in a secure area until garbage day.
- Remember that bird feeders attract birds, squirrels and rodents, which in turn may attract coyotes.
- Never compost meat products.
- Do not house poultry or livestock in close proximity to your home.

Keeping your family and pets safe

Coyotes have adjusted well to living in close proximity to humans and are generally shy and would prefer to avoid confrontations. To avoid a possible confrontation, never leave a young child unattended. Make sure you teach your children safety and what to do if they should encounter various types of wildlife.

If you must walk in an area with coyote activity, take note of the following safety tips:

- Carry a personal audible alarm (it will deter a coyote and bring attention to yourself in case you needed help).
- Carry a bright flashlight (bright light has been known to deter coyotes).
- Keep your pet leashed at all times.
- Keep an umbrella in close reach (the action of opening/closing will deter a coyote).
- Avoid walking during key coyote activity hours (dusk and dawn)

If you are approached by a coyote:

- Make yourself appear larger and shout and/or clap your hands together.
- Make sure the coyote sees you as a person and not as its next meal.
- Stay calm, hold your ground.
- Never run.

Attractions to food:

Coyotes are omnivores and will eat whatever is available such as small mammals and birds, carrion, fruit and improperly stored garbage. The coyotes' diet will also change depending on its surrounding environment.

Natural Diet	Small rodents such as mice, groundhogs and rabbits. Also birds, eggs, snakes, turtles, frogs, fish, fruit, plants, carrion and road kill. They are not known to hunt deer but may try to hunt sheep or young calves if in desperate need.
Urban Diet	Garbage that overflows from residential dumpsters or garbage that is carelessly stored outdoors. Garbage often attracts mice and rats, which in turn attracts coyotes and foxes into residential areas.
Outdoor Animals	Cats (allowed outdoors). Rabbits (confined and helpless in pens). Livestock (poultry and other non-pets).

In summary:

Many wild animals, including coyotes, have adapted well to life in rural & residential areas. Because food and shelter are plentiful, and natural predators are limited, these animals will continue to live near us. If we learn to share the environment with wildlife and reduce problems by getting rid of sources of food and shelter on our properties, we can be entertained by these visitors as they make their way to a more suitable home.