

Our Neighbor – the Coyote

Living in the Village of Palos Park offers its residents the pleasure of living close to nature. And living so close to nature brings special concerns, and sometimes problems, as residents seek to peacefully co-exist with local *neighbors* – deer, raccoons, foxes and COYOTES.

Traditionally speaking, the coyotes and other animals are the “native” residents of Palos Park. We’re the newcomers, having built homes, schools, businesses, and stores on the land that was once wide-open fields and far reaching forests.

In an effort to address some of the aspects of living with and near coyotes, this brochure is an accumulation of pertinent facts about coyotes that you need to know.

History

How come there are more coyotes nowadays? Where did they all come from? Well, statistically speaking, the Cook County coyote population has remained relatively the same

over the past years. What has risen is the human population. Combined with a decrease in open lands (farmland), coyote sightings have become more prevalent.

Although coyote sightings have increased, coyote attacks have not. Coyote attacks on humans are very rare! During the past 12 years, there has been a record of 18 attacks nationwide, nearly all involving children and most resulting in minor injuries. None were fatal. Most of these attacks were in California and Arizona. There have been NO recorded attacks on people in Illinois, including the Chicagoland area, in recent history (i.e., at least 30 years). Prior to the 1990’s, there were a total of 14 attacks in North America (including Canada) during a 30-year period. As a matter of comparison, the Humane Society recorded over 300 fatalities due to dog attacks during the 1990’s.

- Information provided by
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Facts about Coyotes

The coyote is approximately 20 to 45 pounds in weight, resembling a small German Shepherd dog. It has a bushy tail with a black tip and is yellowish gray with a white throat and belly. Its has large, pointed ears and its tail is held below the back while running.

Coyotes eat small animals such as, mice, squirrels, and rabbits, but they will also eat birds, birdseed, pet food, fruit, and vegetables. They will rarely prey on animals that are larger than them. Coyotes are also capable of taking a small cat or dog, but will rarely strike at a supervised pet.

Coyotes live around brush or lightly wooded areas. They like to travel along waterways, such as creeks and canals, or to use trails and pathways. The suburbs have become the new haven of coyotes, as communities continue to build closer and closer to wooded areas, creeks, and such... looking for homes away from the city, and closer to nature.

Activity

Coyotes are most active at night, though they can be seen during the day. Coyotes mate during February and March, with the young being born in April and May. Young coyotes are on their own at six to nine weeks (early June and July.) It is suggested that pets be supervised closely during these months.

Precautions

The majority of coyote attacks that have occurred in the past occurred when children attempted to feed coyotes. Children and adults should NEVER feed coyotes. Coyotes are smart enough to recognize a potential food source, and will continue to return to such sites to feed. In addition, attempting to feed coyotes breaks down the coyote’s natural fear of human beings.

As territorial creatures, coyotes view other animals, including dogs, as competition. Therefore, especially during the mating and breeding seasons, dogs should be supervised and leashed. Though

rare, coyotes are capable of attacking larger animals, such as a 90-pound dog!



What to Do

- ❖ Do NOT leave pet food, garbage cans, birdfeed/birdfeeders, barbecue grills, or any other food sources out or uncovered.
- ❖ Do NOT leave water/drinking sources out or uncovered.
- ❖ Pets should NOT be allowed to run freely without supervision. Key times breeding/mating seasons & early morning and evening hours.
- ❖ Coyotes are creatures of habit. They will use the same trails and travel at the same time of day. Consideration should be made to change your schedules or routes.

Education & Tracking

The Village of Palos Park is concerned with the safety of its residents. Through the awareness of its residents and the efforts of Cook County's Animal Warden, we are tracking repeated coyote sightings in the Palos Park area. Please report sighting to the Village at 671-3700.

Palos Park supports a positive and humane approach to co-existing with wildlife. Studies have shown that killing or removing coyotes from their natural habitat does not eliminate coyotes from the area. Rather, a new coyote replaces an old coyote...thus, the situation remains the same or worse. In addition, coyote young may be orphaned and starve to death. (Please remember it is illegal to kill or trap coyotes without proper permits/state licensing.) Our primary focus as a Village is to remove the temptations and change the circumstances that attract coyotes. Through education, we can learn to live safely "close to nature" and appreciate our local *neighbors* – the coyotes.

Living with Coyotes In Palos Park

**To Report Coyote Sightings
Village of Palos Park
708-671-3700**

**To Report Coyote Attacks
Palos Park Police Department
911**

