



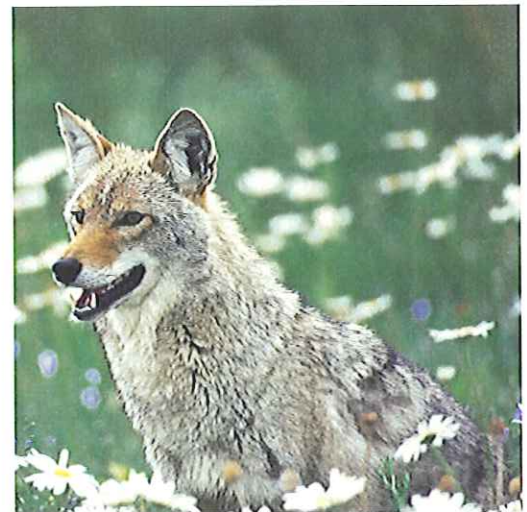
County of Santa Clara
Department of Environmental Health
Vector Control District



Managing Neighborhood Coyotes: Proactive Recommendations

In order to assist residents in minimizing potential conflicts with coyotes, we are sharing this compilation of suggestions based on state and federal wildlife management agencies and nonprofit organizations specializing on coyotes.

Although it is recognized that coyotes are an important component in the natural food chain, problems arise when they inhabit suburban and urban neighborhoods. In these areas, coyotes learn to target domestic pets such as cats and dogs that are easily subdued by these predators in yards or when allowed to roam free. The promise of food is what lures coyotes into suburban yards. Purposeful or incidental feeding of coyotes (or other wild animals) is a prescription for conflict. If you elect to let your pet loose outside (in areas not protected by adequate fencing), doing so **ONLY** during daylight hours will decrease the risk of it being taken by a coyote, but does not eliminate it.



- Keep your pets on a leash when walking them. Retractable leashes do NOT afford enough protection, as small dogs can travel an unsafe distance away from people.
- Carry a walking stick while walking your dog to intimidate wildlife should you cross paths.
- Intimidate coyotes by using loud noises to scare them away (e.g., air horn, a referee whistle, can with marbles inside). Tolerating their presence encourages coyotes (and other wildlife) to remain nearby and lose their fear of humans.
- Maintain a property with adequate 'defensible space'. Not only does this offer protection from fires, it will reduce your home's attractiveness to rodents, coyotes, and bobcats (who hunt where rodents are most plentiful). Clear brush and dense vegetation from around your house that provide hiding for coyotes and habitat for rodents. Trim and clean around bushes and reduce dense coverage at ground level.
- Pick up fallen fruit. Two reasons: Coyotes are omnivores and will eat the fruit, and fallen fruit attracts rodents and birds, which will, in turn, attract coyotes.

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- Never leave pet food outside. Not only does it attract wildlife to your home, wild animals become protective of food sources and may attack pets to protect this new source of food. Remember, pet food directly attracts coyotes AND because rodents and birds (part of a coyote's diet) are attracted.
- Regularly rake areas around bird feeders to remove potential food for rodents and coyotes.
- Secure your garbage and recycle bin lids. Coyotes have a keen sense of smell. Strong garbage odors and food left outdoors is an invitation for a hungry coyote, as well as other wildlife.
- Install strategically placed motion detector lights outside to deter coyotes from your home. They tend to shy away from lighted areas.
- Wooden stockade fencing will NOT keep coyotes out of your yard. They can climb many fences (similar to a cat) or just leap over them.
- 6' fencing, secured at ground level, is necessary to prevent coyotes from scaling a fence or digging under it.
- Take note if your pets seem nervous and frightened when outside. They may have encountered or smelled a coyote nearby.
- Poultry or hobby livestock can be protected from coyotes with fencing (both structural and electric) and by ensuring that the animals are confined in sturdy cages or pens each evening. Fences should be at least six feet high and secure at ground level, since coyotes are good diggers.
- Abandoned animals compete with wildlife for food, and ultimately become food for wildlife. Santa Clara County Animal Control or the animal control service in your area should be contacted if there are stray dogs or cats in the vicinity.
- And of course, in all circumstances, toddlers and small children should never be allowed to play outside unsupervised.



For more information, please feel free to contact Santa Clara County Vector Control District at (408) 918-4770 or refer to USDA Wildlife Services' Fact Sheet: www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/ca/caws_fact_sheets/california_ws_coyote.pdf

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