



Living with Coyotes

Coyote (*Canis Latrans*)

The coyote weighs 20 to 30 pounds and stands 23 to 26 inches at the shoulder. In appearance, the coyote looks similar to a tan-colored shepherd type dog with a long pointed muzzle, large ears and long legs.

It is important to recognize that the coyote is indigenous to Malibu. We built our city in the coyote's backyard and the coyote has adapted to this environment. We should adapt to the presence of the coyote.

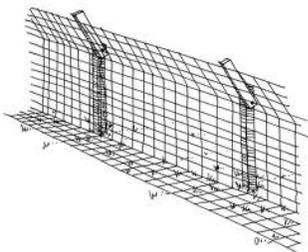
Updated for 2014: Due to California's severe drought conditions, animals are increasingly coming into busy public areas to find food and water. This also means coyotes are more comfortable around humans and can exhibit uncharacteristic behaviors. Animals are being seen more often in the middle of the day, are more aggressive, and can be destructive to irrigation lines, hoses, gardens, and landscape.

The coyote is an extremely intelligent predator that has adapted to living in close proximity to humans. Coyotes, whose natural habitat is the Los Angeles Basin, have adjusted to the shrinking habitat by living closer to humans, sometimes in residential areas, hills, and open space. Coyotes use the flood control channels, hillside erosion gutters, streets, and roadways as convenient means of travel. They find an abundant source of water from swimming pools, gutters, leaking hose faucets and sprinkler heads, bird baths, and pet water dishes in residential areas.

Although the coyote is an excellent hunter, feeding primarily on rats, mice, ground squirrels, rabbits, insects and fruit, it will not hesitate to kill cats, small dogs, poultry, sheep or goats if given the opportunity. They learn that domestic animals are easier to catch than wild prey and will prowl neighborhoods in search of unattended domestic animals.

What You Can Do to Protect Your Family, Pets, Poultry and Livestock

Coyotes are capable of scaling fences up to six feet high. They will also dig under fences. They can be deterred by increasing the height of fencing and facing it outward at a 45-degree angle.



Bury the bottom of the fence at least six to twelve inches underground to prevent the coyote from digging underneath. A covered enclosure set up with a pet door will permit your pet to go safely outdoors. Coyotes are wild animals and should be treated as such. No attempt should be made to pet or otherwise make contact with them.

Chickens, rabbits and other small animals often kept outside should be kept in well-protected areas and in sturdy cages at night. Cages made of chicken wire will not keep desperate coyotes or other predators from entering. Stronger gauge wiring is a necessity in protecting these small animals.

City residents are advised to give special attention to the following do's and don'ts:

Do's

- Keep your cat or small dog indoors at night or any other time when a coyote is known to be in the area
- Accompany your small dog in a well lighted area at night for comfort walks
- Walk your dog on a leash whenever you take it off of your property
- Confine poultry and rabbits in covered enclosures constructed with heavy mesh wire. Coyotes can break through ordinary chicken wire.
- Keep all outdoor trash can lids securely fastened to trash containers
- Pick backyard fruit as soon as it ripens and keep rotten fruit off the ground

Don'ts

- Don't feed wild animals
- Don't leave pet food outside, particularly at night
- Don't allow pets to roam from home, especially at night
- Don't leave water bowls for pets outdoors
- Don't leave garbage containers open
- Don't leave water in birdbaths or bird seed outdoors for songbirds

Remember, as with many wild animals, the coyote, when left alone, will regulate its own numbers. If coyotes in a certain area are killed, die or are relocated, the remaining members will fill the vacancies, either with larger litters or by allowing outsiders to move into the area. Flashing lights, tape-recorded human noises, scattered moth balls, and ammonia-soaked rags strategically placed may deter coyotes from entering your property. Coyotes and all other predatory mammals are considered "opportunistic" hunters. It is your responsibility to afford fundamental protection for all your domestic and companion animals.



The City highly recommends visiting the California Department of Fish and Game's website at: www.dfg.ca.gov/LivingWithWildlife/.

Other great resources for living with coyotes are:

www.cawildlife.org/index.php/action-landing-pg/coexisting-with-wildlife-

www.humanesociety.org/animals/coyotes/

www.cityofcalabasas.com/environmental/pdf/living-with-coyotes.pdf

www.projectcoyote.org/