

# Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre

## Living with Coyotes



Coyotes are common throughout North America, including in urban areas. You may see and hear them more during mating season (Dec-Feb) and when juveniles are dispersing from family groups (Sept-Nov). These facts and safety tips will help increase comfort and decrease conflicts when living or recreating near North America's native "Song Dog"

Coyotes will also be more evident when their habitat has been disturbed due to new development or alteration to existing natural areas. They do adapt to making good use of bordering habitat, so it is important to learn the few basic rules in co-existing with them.

In our climate, Coyotes will be seen more frequently around our properties during late fall and winter in that they are following their primary food source which is mice. And, as we all know, mice seek shelter around our homes and sheds during the cold winter months.

Another significant percentage of a Coyote's diet consists of fruit like crab apples and berries. It is the reason they are attracted to our properties in the fall and winter months.

### FACTS

- Coyotes are members of the dog family; they are curious, adaptable, and learn quickly.
- Coyotes often mate for life, are devoted parents, and are highly communicative (barks, yips, howls).
- Coyotes in this area, known as Eastern coyotes, weigh an average of 30-40 lbs. They live alone, in pairs, or in small family groups.
- Coyotes eat large numbers of rodents, as well as fruit, vegetation, insects and carrion. They help keep ecosystems vital, healthy and clean.

### SAFETY

- **DON'T FEED COYOTES.** Their life and your safety depend on coyotes remaining wild and naturally wary of people. Remove or secure any food source, including garbage, composters, pet food, fruit and berries. Remember, birdfeeders attract birds and small animals, which Coyotes feed on.
- **KEEP PETS SAFE.** Pets left unattended are a potential food source for animals like Coyotes and Fishers. For smaller dogs and cats this means keeping them indoors and staying with them while outside. For larger dogs, it is good to keep them contained in a fenced yard or dog run. Walk dogs on leashes. Pick up your small dog if you see a coyote.
- **DISCOURAGE BOLD COYOTES.** Because Coyotes have become used to seeing people, some may appear bold on occasion. You should discourage this behaviour by making noise, waving your hands, clapping and shouting.
- **ENCOUNTERING A COYOTE WHILE WALKING.** Don't run. Wave your arms and make noise until he retreats. Be 'Big, Bad and Loud'

Information provided by:



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