



Common Name – Coyote

Scientific Name – *Canis latrans*

Description: The coyote resembles a medium size dog with adults weighing an average of 22-30 pounds; males are generally heavier than females. The muzzle is long, slender, and pointed; the eyes yellow with round pupils; the ears large and erect; the lips black-pigmented and the tail bushy. Coloration can vary from nearly black to light gray. Coyotes have exceptional senses of smell, vision and hearing.

Protection Status: Nongame, non protected on public land and “Predatory Animal” on private property.

Habitat: Coyotes are very adaptable. They can live in a wide variety of areas from the city to the wilderness. They prefer to live in brushy habitat near timber edges and in open farmlands.

Habits: The home range of a coyote may be as small as 3 to 4 miles when caring for young or as large as 25 to 30 miles during the rest of the year. They like semi-open country and prefer to travel on ridges or old trails. Coyote normally hunt singly or in pairs, but in late summer or early fall may hunt with a family group. They are primarily nocturnal with peak activity periods within one or two hours of sunset or sunrise. Coyotes swim well and can run as fast as 45 miles per hour for short distances. Coyote dens are found in steep banks, rock crevices, sink holes, hollow logs and underbrush.

Reproduction: Coyotes breed mainly during the months of February and March. The gestation period is about 60-63 days. Coyotes produce one litter per year. Young are born in April and May with litter sizes averaging 5-7 pups. The young are weaned at 5-6 weeks and leave the parents at around 6-9 months of age. Pairs may remain together for several years. Both parents care for the pups

Diet: Coyotes are opportunistic predators. They commonly prey upon small animals, sometimes including pets, and often scavenge food items and carrion, as well as fruits, seeds and other plant material. Coyotes also kill larger mammals such as deer, antelope and livestock.

Sign: Coyote tracks are sometimes confused with certain breeds of domestic dog tracks. Generally they are more elongated and the toes are closer together than dogs. The hind portion of the heel pad of the front foot of a coyote is well lobed and

spread horizontally in comparison to a dog's. Coyote scats are extremely varied in size and will overlap in size with dog and red fox scats. The most conspicuous coyote sign denoting their presence is their howl.

Predators: Other coyotes, dogs, and great-horned owls may take pups. Mountain lions and bears have been reported taking adult coyotes.

Diseases: Distemper, canine hepatitis, parvo virus, rabies and tularemia.

Parasites: Ticks, fleas, roundworms, tapeworms, fluke and mites.

Prevention and Control

Many coyote problems are based upon unfounded fear of these animals due in part because of sensational media coverage of their presence on urban landscapes.

Education is often sufficient to resolve human-coyote conflict. Property owners should be made aware that even if a coyote is removed, other coyotes could soon move back into the area.

Exclusion:

- To exclude coyotes, fences should be at least 6 feet tall and buried in the ground at least 12 inches. An outward slant at the top can be added to keep coyotes from climbing over, and a 23 inch apron of wire extending outward from the bottom will keep them from digging under the fence.
- Coyotes can get through anything wider than their own head so closing fence gaps is essential.
- A high-tensile predator-proof electric fence built to the proper specifications can be effective.

Habitat Modification:

- Secure garbage can lids at all times or store indoors.
- Feed pets outdoors only during the day.
- Bring pet food and water bowls in before dark.
- Cover ripe fruits and vegetables at night; enclose gardens and/or fruit trees with a coyote-proof fence; pick up all downed fruit and vegetables daily.
- Do not leave cats or small dogs out after dark and allow them outside only under strict supervision after dark.
- Never leave food out for wild animals.
- Bring livestock into barns, sheds, or coyote-proof enclosures at night.
- Illuminate area at night.
- Trim and clear near ground level any vegetation that provides cover for coyotes or their prey.
- Remove birdfeeder. Coyotes are attracted to them and to the birds and rodents that use the feeder.