



Natural History of Coyotes

Coyotes are very similar to medium-sized canines and can easily be confused with German Shepherds. Coyotes do not look to attack people and then drag off their kids. They like small prey such as: mice, chipmunks, shrews, rabbits and squirrels. However they will eat food that come from people such as easily accessible garbage and pet food. They adapt to their surroundings and do not mind living close to people in suburban as well as urban areas and their presence can go unnoticed. Seeing one in someone's backyard can bring about surprise and could lead to panic.

Daytime sightings

This is normal behavior especially during the spring and summer months because they are busy hunting rodents for their youngsters. Because they are seen during the day does not mean that the coyote is rabid, aggressive, or dangerous.

Keeping Coyotes out of Yards

There are some precautions that can be taken to ensure that coyotes stay of your yard. It is not a good idea to leave pets outside unattended. Make sure that pet food is not left outside because coyotes will eat from this food. Keep your garbage in a secure container, and only put it outside in the morning of pick-up. Do not put any meat scraps in compost heaps. Pick up fallen fruit from underneath trees. Cut back brush around your property that might provide cover for coyotes or prey. Coyotes can scale six feet tall or shorter fences. There is a device called coyote roller which can be found at 619-977-6031 or coyoteroller.com which is very effective to keep canines in and coyotes out of your yard. The Coyote Roller is free standing from the fence and is a cylinder that attaches to the top of the fence and any animal that tries to go over the top of the fence rolls off of the fence.

Fear of Family Being Attacked

Coyote attacks on people are extremely rare and that is why it gets national attention when it happens. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) nor any other health authority has classified coyotes as a risk to people. If someone or a pet is bitten immediately contact the local animal control. Also contact your own doctor or veterinarian for guidance when a bite does occur. Try and remember as much as possible such as what was happening at the time of the incident, were pets being fed, time of day, etc.

Only contact animal control if the animal appears to be sick or injured or showing abnormal signs of behavior that might indicate rabies, such as partial paralysis, circling, staggering as if the animal is drunk or disoriented, self-mutilating, or exhibiting unprovoked aggression or unnatural tameness. Keep family and pets inside while waiting for animal control to arrive.

Coyotes that are seen scratching a lot, or seem to be disorientated or weak and who might have fur missing could be suffering from mange. Mange is caused by mites under the skin. Coyotes might be seen taking advantage of pet food that has been left outside.

Attacks on Domestic Animals

It is normal behavior for a coyote to prey on cats that are kept outside, which is why it is important for people to keep pet cats inside. Small breed canines left unattended outside are also at risk especially during the spring and summer months when coyotes are hunting for their offspring. To help protect pets do not leave pets outside unattended and keep pet food inside the house. During the winter months (breeding time for coyotes) it is a good idea to keep a leash on a large breed canine. If the canine is not on a leash then the coyote may view the canine off a leash as a threat to their mate.

In order to protect chickens from coyotes, use 16-gauge or better welded wire with one inch by one inch openings to keep them out. Reinforcing the pen could be a temporary inconvenience but once it is wildlife proofed then the problem is solved.

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If you would like to hire a Trapper the following is a list of individuals that are licensed by the Virginia Department of Inland Game and Fisheries that have permits to trap coyotes within the City of Hampton:

Mark Bland 757-498-1835

John Coakley 540-335-6088

James Csuhata 757-255-4710

James Dolan 757-817-7287

William Gillen 434-223-6032

Wendell Goss 804-834-3075

Russell Hale 406-696-9600

David Johnson 757-292-6489

Warren Pence 540-652-8703

Don Shumaker 434-983-8826

Jon Sprague 757-897-8738

Jason Weaver 757-725-1558

James Whitlock 540-731-1321

Tim Walosuk 434-246-3702