

## TIPS FOR LIVING WITH URBAN COYOTES

**Why are they in the neighborhood?** Like raccoons, opossums, and skunks, coyotes are drawn to neighborhoods by available food resources. This is key to getting rid of them. A consistent presence of coyotes indicates a food source, like rodents, accessible garbage or compost, free-roaming cats, or pet food. Eliminate access to the food resources and the coyotes will move on to better hunting grounds. This equation is true for all animals - their presence and population size is inextricably relative to food resources. In urban areas, then, the key to managing wildlife populations is to manage the resources they are dependent on - food and shelter.

**If we get rid of them will our pets be safe, and for how long?** Total eradication is impossible. Besides, removal of any number of coyotes will not make the area safer for pets. Once individuals are taken out, new coyotes will move into the vacant habitat. If the habitat is changed, however - if the habitat becomes less hospitable, less welcoming, less advantageous - their presence will diminish. In other words, reduce the food resources.

**Lethal control can result in more coyotes.** Coyotes often live in packs of two or more individuals. Each pack consists of a dominant male and female - a King and Queen. They are truly monogamous - until death do they part. Only the King and Queen reproduce, and only once a year. Coyotes are highly territorial and defend their area from other coyotes. When one or more of the alphas is killed, the social structure of the pack is destroyed. Surrounding packs may vie for the territory, while the once subordinate, non-breeding females of the original pack may reproduce, resulting in an increase in coyotes. It is better to work with a resident pack to achieve a respectful co-existence.

### REDUCING COYOTES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

**STEP ONE: PROTECT YOUR PETS!** Make sure small pets are contained and not allowed to roam freely. If your neighborhood has a HIGH coyote presence, consider coyote-proofing your yard. Walk small dogs on leashes no longer than 6'. During walks, carry a Coyote Pack containing one or more of the following items: pocket air horn; rescue whistle; Penny Can; mylar ribbon, Scare Stick. Be prepared to effectively haze the coyote. More on hazing here: [https://youtu.be/b\\_2OY1G8e-c](https://youtu.be/b_2OY1G8e-c) .

**STEP TWO: REDUCE ATTRACTANTS.** Pick up fallen or ripe fruit; do not leave pet food outside at any hour of the day; make sure garbage is contained securely; remove birdseed feeders. Free-roaming cats attract predators. Eliminate dense brush around the home; make sure structures are tightly sealed; remove hiding spots.

**FEEDING WILDLIFE IS ILLEGAL** in the State of California under 14 CCR § 251.1 Harassment of Animals, which states, no person shall disrupt an animal's normal behavior patterns, which includes, but is not limited to, feeding or sheltering.

**STEP THREE: MAKE THE AREA LESS HOSPITABLE - LESS WELCOMING.** If your neighborhood has a LOW coyote presence, electronic light and sound emitting repellers will help discourage them. A HIGH coyote presence will require a stronger response to turn around their habituation. Residents must be prepared to haze effectively, giving chase with a noisemaker and follow through until the animal retreats out of sight. In some cases, official response using projectiles and/or dogs may be warranted.

Getting rid of coyotes from a neighborhood where they have learned to get food IS possible, but it takes a concerted effort by all residents to be successful. Spread the word!