

There have been several Coyote sightings in our community and we wanted to provide some helpful information on Coyotes in Florida. Please review the links and article snippets. The District takes no responsibility for any of this information. They are presenting it for informational purposes only. If the hyperlink is not working properly cut and paste the underlined link to your browser address bar

University of Florida

1. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw127>
2. <http://news.ufl.edu/archive/2000/04/no-big-threat-but-coyotes-here-to-stay-uf-research-monitors-rising-animal-populations-in-florida.html>

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

1. <http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/profiles/mammals/land/coyote/fags/>

Articles

1. <http://www.tallahassemagazine.com/May-June-2014/The-Coyotes-Among-Us/>
2. <http://www.dogster.com/lifestyle/protect-your-dog-predators-coyotes-birds-of-prey>

The information below is from multiple sources.

Eliminate food sources liked by coyotes. While coyotes love flesh food (especially rodents), they are very opportunistic feeders and will eat anything they come across. As such, it's important to make it impossible to get food from our environs. Before all else, never try to feed a coyote as a means to try and tame it or help it; feeding it is simply reinforcing poor behavior that will encourage them to return and will not tame them. Some of the ways you can keep down food sources around your yard or campsite include:

- Keep all garbage in a coyote-proof box or container. Basically if it's secure and cannot be opened with ease, it will deter the coyote. Ask your local municipality for details if your local store cannot help provide such a container.
- Dispose of all food waste properly both at home or at a campsite. Either place edible waste into a secure garbage container or into a secure compost bin. Do not leave food waste lying around.
- Pick ripe fruit from your trees and remove fruit that has fallen to the ground before it becomes the subject of a coyote feast.

Keep pets away from coyotes. Cats, dogs, and other pets can present a reason for attacking, mating, or as a potential meal. To protect your pets, if you live in a coyote area or you're camping with a pet, do the following:

- Keep pets (dogs and cats) in at night and to keep an eye on them during the day, to prevent encounters and to prevent them from being a possible source of the coyote's next meal or attack.
- Keep pet food inside or away from where a coyote can forage. If you want pets to eat outside, bring in all uneaten food as soon as the pet has finished eating.
- Spay or neuter your dogs. When dogs are ready for mating, coyotes will try to mate with them.
- Don't use your dog as a coyote guard dog unless he has been properly trained to do so. Such a dog needs both proper rearing and training to be able to protect livestock from coyote attacks, otherwise he can become prey.
- Cover fish ponds. Coyotes eat koi fish that are not protected.
- Don't scatter birdseed around. Even though it doesn't seem like coyote food, coyotes are attracted to birdseed. Collect such birdseed up after the birds have eaten or use a non-spilling method of feeding (keeping it up high) if you want to feed birds.

Remove junk piles from your property. These can serve to hide both predator and prey. Rabbits and other prey liked by coyotes might use junk piles to breed and live in, thereby attracting coyotes. Moreover, coyotes can use junk piles to hide behind before making an attack. Removal of junk piles has several other benefits, such as reducing habitat for snakes, poisonous insects, and spiders or scorpions, and it looks better.

- Remove all water sources around the yard or campsite; these can attract coyotes.

Try wolf urine. One natural and innovative answer to the growing coyote problem is the use of wolf urine as a deterrent. Wolves are one of the coyote's natural predators, and coyote populations drop as wolves are reintroduced into an area.

- Another odor that might deter coyotes is the common mothball or ammonia soaked rags. Place these at strategic locations around the yard or campsite.

COYOTES

These pack animals live in every state except Hawaii. Coyotes eat whatever they can find, from seeds and fruit to small animals, both alive and dead. They pose a particular threat to cats and dogs weighing less than 25 pounds. That said, two coyotes could take down a larger animal, according to Rory Aikens, Public Information Officer with the Arizona Game and Fish Department. He explains, "One will keep the dog's attention, while the other comes up behind to hamstring it."

Aikens also corrects a common misunderstanding about coyotes. Many informational resources state that coyotes breed once a year in the spring, and that pet owners should be

hyper-aware during this time, because the presence of pups increases food requirements for the pack. Aikens says coyotes can produce up to six litters per year, and stresses the need to stay vigilant no matter the season.

1. Start in your backyard

While a wily coyote can breach just about any barrier, some do exist to keep the predators out if you have the freedom (read: no homeowners association) to install them. A coyote-proof fence measures 6 feet tall or higher and has a roller bar or 15-inch woven-wire extension on top. It also extends into the ground or has a wire apron to prevent coyotes from digging under and into your yard.

If HOA regulations prevent you from creating such a barrier, do the following to make your yard less attractive to the predators:

- Install motion-sensitive lighting.
- Trim landscaping to eliminate hiding places.
- Add a roof if you have an outside kennel.
- Remove bird feeders, pick up fallen fruits and nuts from trees, and regularly harvest gardens; the food attracts not only coyotes but also their natural prey.
- Keep trash bins in the garage or use animal-resistant models if allowed by your collector.

These efforts also deter invading mountain lions and bobcats, especially if you remove cave like areas and water sources such as fountains. They also discourage nuisance animals such as possums and raccoons.

2. Change your behavior

If you live in an area where coyotes regularly roam, also make a habit of the following:

- Keep food and water bowls inside.
- Supervise your dog while in the yard, especially at dawn and dusk; never tie your dog up outside.
- Close any pet doors before dusk each day.
- Do not allow your dog to interact with wildlife; doing so teaches him or her it's okay to approach strange animals.
- Never feed wildlife.
- Use a 6-foot, non-retractable leash and avoid walking at dawn and dusk.