

How Do I Deal With Coyotes?

A bit about Coyotes

Everyone; meet *Canis latrans*, more commonly known as the Coyote. One of the most adaptable animals on the planet, they are native to North America and very closely related to domestic dogs and wolves. This Canidae can be found in the backyards and fields of our town and across many areas, both urban and suburban, across the United States. Although there are about 20 different subspecies, the most common found in the Hubbard area is the Mountain Coyote, *Canis latrans lestes*. This is a larger subspecies, usually pale in coloring, with noticeably bigger ears and tail.

Coyotes tend to weigh in between 15-40 pounds. Their tracks are a more elongated shape than a domestic dog, without a lot of rounding. They are normally a light gray brown in color. Their diet is extremely versatile, hence their ability to adapt.

Are Coyotes a threat?

The CDC and local state agencies have not classified coyotes or foxes as a safety risk to humans. Human attacks are extremely rare. Occasionally, and very occasionally at that, coyotes will prey on free roaming cats and small domestic dogs. However, coyotes are very clever, and they know instinctively to prey on animals that will not pose a great risk themselves, such as wild rodents.

Coyotes are not frequent rabies carriers, although they are susceptible to the rabies virus like any other mammal. But the last known case of a coyote with rabies in Oregon was in 2011, and was the result of a small outbreak that burned itself out quickly. Therefore, it isn't necessary to panic if you see a fox or coyote during the daytime. While primarily active at night and in the early dawn and dusk hours, coyotes with a family to feed will be out in search of food around the clock.

What should I do if I see a coyote?

Unless the coyote is an immediate danger to yourself or your property, the short answer is nothing. Coyotes are an essential part of the ecosystem of the area and we must learn to co-exist with them. The Hubbard Police Department does not respond to calls about wandering

wildlife unless there is an immediate public threat. The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department does not respond to complaints unless a coyote has killed a pet in broad daylight, followed a human child, approached a person without fear, or acted aggressively without provocation. If a coyote has truly become a threat, you may contact a pest control service at your own expense.

In Oregon, it is illegal to move coyotes to another location. You also may not shoot them unless they are an immediate threat because of hunting regulations and Hubbard City Ordinances. If you see one on your property, you should make loud noises and try to startle it or chase it off.

Seeing a group of coyotes in town is actually a good thing. Coyotes are territorial, so as long as there is an active pack in the area, more will not wander in.

If you are concerned about your pets, there are steps you can take to proactively attempt to keep coyotes off your property. Keep your garbage can lids closed tightly; coyotes love human scraps. Do not feed your pets outside. If you must, remove their bowl after daylight hours. Do not let your small pets outside unsupervised, especially at dawn or dusk. Do not let your pets wander; an inside cat is a safe cat. If you have multiple issues or concerns, consider installing a fence on your property. If you keep chickens or rabbits, make sure their housing is secure and check it often for any tears or weak points. If you have concerns about livestock, consider getting a guard animal and also check the fencing for points in need of repair.