

IRVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

IRVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT □ ONE CIVIC CENTER PLAZA
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Some Facts about Coyotes

Appearance:

Coyotes weigh, on average, 20 to 30 pounds and stand 23 to 25 inches at the shoulder. In appearance, the coyote looks similar to a tan colored shepherd-type dog with a long pointed muzzle, large ears, long legs, and a bushy, black-tipped tail.

Habitat:

Coyotes inhabit all life zones of the Desert Southwest, from low-valley floors to the crest of the highest mountains, but especially open plains, grasslands and high mesas. Their natural habitat is open grassland, but it will move to wherever food is available

Diet:

Coyotes travel over their range and hunt both day and night, running swiftly and catching prey easily. They have a varied diet and seem able to exist on whatever the area offers in the way of food. Food habit studies reveal coyotes' principle diet is composed of mice, rabbits, ground squirrels, other small rodents, insects, even reptiles, and fruits and berries of wild plants. They eat meat and fish, fresh or spoiled, and, at times, have even been known to raid melon patches.

Behavior:

Coyotes have a good sense of smell, vision and hearing. Their acute senses coupled with evasiveness enable them to survive both in the wild and in the suburban areas of large cities. They are common in most rural areas, but

because of their secretive nature, few are seen. Efforts to control or exterminate the coyote by predator control agents seem to have produced an animal that is extremely alert and wary and well able to maintain itself.

Co-existing With the Coyote

Residents, especially those living near open space or wild lands, are advised to give special attention to the following **DO'S** and **DON'T'S** to safely and peacefully co-exist with the coyote.

DO

- Consider making your dog or cat an indoor pet when living in an area that is known to be occupied by coyotes.
- Accompany your dog in well lit areas at night for walks.
- Keep your dog on a maximum 6 foot leash whenever you take your pet off of your own property.
- Keep all outdoor trash can lids securely fastened to the trash can receptacle.
- Improve yard fencing to coyote-resistant standards.
- Pick fruit when it ripens, and don't leave rotting fruit on the ground.
- Eliminate ivy and other thick ground covers which may attract rats, which can attract coyotes.
- We recommend that cats be housed in a substantial cat run when left unattended outdoors.
- Teach children not to approach stray animals.

DON'T

- Don't feed wild animals.
- Don't leave pet food outdoors, especially at night.
- Don't allow pets to roam from home unaccompanied.
- Don't leave water bowls for pets outdoors.
- Don't leave water in birdbaths, or birdseed outdoors for songbirds.
- Don't attempt to contact or "tame" coyotes.

Other Important Reminders

As with many wild animals, coyotes, if left alone, will regulate their own numbers. If coyotes are removed from a certain area, the remaining individuals will fill the area, either with larger litters, or by allowing outsider coyotes to move in. For this reason, trapping or other forms of abatement normally have no long term impact.

Flashing lights, tape recorded human noises, scattered moth balls, and ammonia soaked rags strategically placed may deter coyotes from entering an area. Also,

using a strong voice command, yelling or using noise makers are an effective method to deter coyotes from becoming too comfortable in your neighborhood.

Coyotes and other predatory animals are “opportunistic” hunters. While the coyote’s natural diet may be small rodents and fruit, they will not hesitate to prey on small domestic animals, or human refuse, if the opportunity exists. Consequently if you live in an area within the range of coyotes, it is your responsibility to afford protection to your domestic animals and to store your trash in a sound and secure manner. Trash should be put out on the day of pick up and not the night before.

RECOGNIZE that the coyote is indigenous to North America. We are living in the coyote’s back yard, and the coyote has adapted well to our proximity. We have an obligation to adapt to the coyote.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Practice the dos and don’ts listed above. By doing so, we believe we stand a much better chance of peacefully coexisting with our wildlife.

Report sightings and unusual occurrences to the Irvine Police Department at
(949) 724-7000.

For further information, contact Irvine Animal Services at (949) 724-7092.

