



# Coyote Awareness

Like other communities located near wilderness areas, coyotes are a part of the local ecosystem. While most encounters with coyotes are non-threatening, coyotes can exhibit aggressive behavior and attack people and pets. Climate-related reductions in wilderness sources of food and water, as well as the presence of “attractants” such as off-leash dogs, free-roaming cats, pet food and water bowls left outside, and fallen fruit, may increase coyote activity in residential areas.

## What is Being Done?

Laguna Beach/Laguna Woods Animal Services works throughout the year to prevent and respond to instances of aggressive coyote behavior. Our approach to coyote control is multifaceted and includes:

- ✓ **Public Education** – Animal Services Officers are available to speak with residents and businesses one-on-one, in-person or by telephone, as well as at club meetings or other gatherings. For more information, please call Laguna Beach/Laguna Woods Animal Services at **(949) 497-0701 (Press 0)** or email **coyotes@lagunabeachcity.net**.
- ✓ **Hazing** – Animal Services Officers use sound, visual, and tactile stimuli to frighten coyotes and discourage their presence.
- ✓ **Habitat Management** – Animal Services Officers work closely with private property owners to eliminate “layups,” dens, and other areas where coyotes might hide, lurk, rest, or breed.
- ✓ **Trapping** – Trapping and other methods of population control are employed as conditions warrant. Research shows that there is a fine line between effective and ineffective population control efforts. While targeted trapping can be effective in disrupting aggressive behavior, it is not undertaken, nor would it be successful, as a strategy for reducing long-term populations. Coyotes also learn to avoid and manipulate traps over-time, causing continual trapping to be both impractical and ineffective.



**MYTH: Coyotes can be completely eradicated** – It is not possible to eradicate all coyotes due to their breeding and territorial patterns, nor would it be wise given ecosystem implications. Research shows that, often times, when coyotes are aggressively eradicated, their reproductive rates increase, with breeding occurring earlier and in greater numbers.

**MYTH: Coyotes can be controlled by poison or sterilization** – It is generally illegal to use poisons or toxicants to control coyotes. Similarly, there is no practical and, perhaps, lawful, sterilization practice.

**MYTH: Coyotes can be relocated** – Trapped coyotes must be destroyed as relocation is generally illegal and would, in any case, involve an unacceptable level of risk and liability.

***Our efforts are only as effective as residents are vigilant.*** Please do your part and follow the laws and recommendations described on the back of this flyer.

## What Can Individuals Do?

- ✓ **OBEY LEASH LAWS** – Keep your dog on a leash when outdoors. Allowing dogs to be off-leash for even “just a moment” (e.g., while bringing in the mail, unloading groceries, or at the end of a walk) greatly increases the risk of a coyote attack. When returning home from a walk, do not remove your dog’s leash until you are inside with the door securely closed behind you. **Allowing dogs to be outdoors without a leash is illegal and carries fines and penalties!** (Laguna Woods Municipal Code Section 5.14.010)
- ✓ Walk your dog using a leash of six feet or less. The greater the distance between you and your dog, the more likely a coyote is to attack. **Walking dogs using a leash longer than six feet is illegal and carries fines and penalties!** (Laguna Woods Municipal Code Section 5.14.010)
- ✓ **WHEN YOU WALK, WALK SAFELY** – Walk your dog in groups, whenever possible, and carry a whistle, air horn, or other noisemaker to startle any coyotes you encounter. In addition, stand tall, shout, flail your arms in a defiant manner, and throw rocks or other small objects.
- ✓ **KEEP CATS INDOORS** – Free-roaming cats are easy prey for coyotes, no matter the size or breed. Keep your cat inside your home to ensure its safety and avoid emboldening coyotes.
- ✓ **KEEP PET FOOD AND WATER BOWLS INDOORS** – Pet bowls are convenient sources of food and water for coyotes. Keep pet bowls indoors at all times. Doing so has the added benefit of enhancing your pet’s safety while eating and drinking.
- ✓ **DO NOT FEED WILDLIFE** – Though often well intentioned, feeding wildlife draws coyotes closer to populated areas where they can lose their natural fear and caution, making them a threat to both people and pets. **Feeding wildlife is illegal and carries fines and penalties!** (Laguna Woods Municipal Code Section 5.20.070)
- ✓ **PICK-UP FALLEN FRUIT** – Coyotes are omnivores, which means that they eat both meat and vegetation. Pick up fallen fruit, and remove fruit hanging within three feet of the ground, to prevent fruit trees from becoming sources of food for coyotes.
- ✓ **REPORT AGGRESSIVE COYOTE BEHAVIOR** – Too often, residents fail to report encounters with aggressive coyotes or make their reports to entities other than Laguna Beach/Laguna Woods Animal Services. As your animal services provider, we are only able to act on reports that we actually receive.



***DO NOT allow  
your dog to  
be off-leash.***



***Walk your dog  
in groups!***



***DO NOT feed  
wildlife.***

If you encounter a coyote exhibiting aggressive behavior, off-leash dogs, or feeding of wildlife, please call Laguna Beach/Laguna Woods Animal Services  
(949) 497-0701 (Press 0)