



COEXISTING WITH COYOTES

TIPS FOR PET CAREGIVERS

FACTS

- Coyotes are members of the dog family. They are curious, adaptable, and learn quickly.
- Coyotes often mate for life. Their average litter size is 5 pups born April-May. Ovulation has been shown to decrease as food decreases and as coyote density increases. (Bekoff 2001)
- Coyotes are dedicated parents and will defend and teach their pups. They den and rear pups through August. If mama is wary of humans, she will pass this on to her pups.
- Coyotes eat mostly rodents and also fruit, insects and raccoons. Other foods observed in coyote scat on Vashon include: olive pits, gray squirrel, seeds and deer fawn. Dog and cat hair have not been found, but there have been unconfirmed reports of missing small pets that may have been taken by coyotes.
- Coyotes have been on Vashon since at least 2005.
- Where coyotes are hunted and trapped, females produce more pups per litter than in areas where they are protected. (WDFW 2015)

Citations:

Bekoff, M. 2001. Coyotes: Biology, Behavior and Management, Blackburn Press, Caldwell, NJ.
WDFW 2015. wdfw.wa.gov/living/coyotes.html



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SAFETY TIPS

- **Don't feed coyotes.** Feed pets inside and secure garbage and compost.
- **Keep your pets on leash,** especially during April through August when coyotes den and rear pups.
- **Keep pets indoors at night.** Most coyote sightings on Vashon occur after 8pm and before 7am.
- **Keep pets out of forested ravines and open fields** that coyotes frequent.
- **Appreciate coyotes from a distance.** If approached, don't run; wave your arms, pick up small dogs, and be loud until the coyote is scared away.
- **Consider outdoor cat enclosures or "catios".** They keep cats safe and protect wildlife. paws.org/library/cats/home-life/outdoor-enclosures/
- **Vaccinate your dogs.** Coyotes can carry diseases like Canine Distemper and Parvovirus.
- **Do not feed feral cats.** Coyotes prey on these cats and food you leave for them. Visit vippp.org for more information about feral cats.
- **Build coyote-resistant fences.** 6' high with digbarrieratthebottomandrollersoroutriggers at the top and no openings greater than 4"x4".

To learn more tips about pets or to report sightings visit:
vashonnaturecenter.org/coyotes/

Vashon islanders are familiar with raccoons, deer, and river otters, but coyotes are relatively new neighbors. We can learn to live in harmony with coyotes and it is easy when you know what to do. The following guidelines introduce "hazing"--a powerful technique that helps reinforce a coyote's natural instinct of wariness towards humans.



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HAZING GUIDE

WHAT IS HAZING?

Hazing simply means scaring a coyote away from you, your yard, or your neighborhood. Keeping coyotes wary of people is the key to avoiding conflict and living in harmony with them. Hazing includes passive means like securing pet food, pets, garbage, compost, and other coyote attractants so that they learn that they will not be rewarded for approaching your home. Active hazing strategies are detailed below.

DO NOT HAZE IF...

- A coyote is at a comfortable distance from you. Seeing a coyote at a distance is no cause for alarm. Coyotes are active both day and night.
- If it is April-August, you could be near a den or pups. Often dens are in steep, forested ravines on Vashon, but could be other places too. Coyotes need space and privacy to raise their young and feel safe. A coyote may try to haze you away from his/her family by acting anxious and assertive. If you find a den or family area, keep pets on leash, give coyotes a wide berth, and report it to info@vashonnaturecenter.org
- You think a coyote is sick or injured. Call a wildlife rehabilitation center. The closest one is Westsound Wildlife Shelter: 206.855.9057. Another option is PAWS: 425.412.4040.

WHEN AND HOW TO HAZE...

- Haze if a coyote approaches you (unless you are near a den) or seems comfortable walking the streets or yards of your neighborhood.
- Be persistent: always haze whenever you see too-close-for-comfort behavior.
- Act Big, Bad, and Loud. Maintain eye contact and wave your arms, a stick, or a jacket. Pop up an umbrella and make noise with pots, pans or a noisemaker. Use your imagination and vary your technique.
- Don't stop until the coyote gets your message and leaves or you will teach the coyote that hazing is nothing to worry about.
- Do not haze from inside your house or vehicle. You want the coyote to associate your person with the danger/discomfort.
- Share your knowledge with neighbors and work together!



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