

How to avoid negative experiences with coyotes



It's coyote pupping season

What you need to know

Coyotes tend to be more visible during the spring – more sightings, more interactions with dogs, more shadowing (or following) people. The reason is it is denning and pupping season, the time of year when coyotes are both more active around and protective of their den sites.

Most negative coyote interactions can be prevented or mitigated by following the steps outlined below. Please only call 911 if you feel you are in immediate danger.

During denning and pupping season (April - July):

- If there's a den in your area, consider changing your walking route for a few weeks while the pups are young. The coyotes will eventually leave the den.
- Do not approach coyotes, their dens or their pups, even if it appears the parents have abandoned them.
- Do not stop your car outside the den to get a closer look.
- Do not get close enough to take a picture with the pups.
- Do not allow your dog to approach, chase or play with a coyote even if the coyote appears friendly. Allowing dogs to befriend or harass a coyote only alters the natural behaviour of this normally timid animal. Keep dogs on a leash and away from the area.

What to do if a coyote follows or approaches you:

- **STOP.** Pick up children and small pets if necessary.
- **STAND STILL.** Never run from a coyote (or stray dog).
- **MAKE YOURSELF BIG.** Appear aggressive, stand tall, wave your arms high in the air. Surprise gestures work best.
- **BE LOUD AND ASSERTIVE.** Shout "Go Away!", stomp your feet or clap your hands. Carry a noise maker such as a whistle or plastic bag to use to make a loud popping sound.
- **SLOWLY BACK AWAY.** Maintain eye contact and remember never run.

Teach children about wildlife and how to safely respond to a coyote (or any unknown dog or other wild animal). Visit the coyote page at oakville.ca for more tips on keeping coyotes away including our [coyote hazing video](#).

[Learn more >](#)

Answers to your questions

Why is the coyote in this area?

Coyotes are found in urban areas throughout North America, including Oakville, though they usually tend to keep to our woodlands and out of sight. A coyote family may move into a residential neighbourhood temporarily during denning and pupping season. Coyotes typically abandon their dens once the pups are independent, usually in early summer.

Can we relocate them?

Capture and relocation of coyotes more than one kilometre away is not permitted under Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act. Capturing a coyote is difficult to accomplish and only a band-aid solution. Removing a coyote opens up the landscape for another coyote or two to move in filling nature's vacancy. Relocating a coyote to a new area will impede on another existing coyote territory. Only in rare cases where an individual coyote is demonstrating unusual / aggressive behaviour or severe trauma or illness do animal control agencies try to capture coyotes.

Why is the coyote out on the street and following me?

A coyote may follow you to ensure you are a safe distance from its den and pups, particularly if you are walking a dog which may appear as a threat. This is normal coyote behaviour. Keep dogs on a short leash and practice hazing as described on the other side of this sheet. Do not run from a coyote.

Will the coyote attack me or my children or my dog?

Coyotes rarely come into a yard if humans are out and about. If you are concerned that a coyote is paying too much attention to your small dog or child, pick them up and begin making loud noises and/or throwing objects toward (but not at) the coyote to scare it away (*see other side*). Do not leave small pets unattended in your yard.

If I feed them will they be less aggressive and leave us alone?

NEVER FEED or leave food out for a coyote. As highly intelligent animals, coyotes will recognize that they are being fed by humans, which will result in them returning to the specific area and increase 'food conditioning' behaviour – or make them less cautious around people and properties. If you have concerns about someone feeding coyotes or uncontained garbage, contact ServiceOakville at 905-845-6601 or service@oakville.ca.

How can I keep them out of my yard?

Store garbage, compost and pet food in a place coyotes cannot access. Ensure gaps around and under decks and sheds are closed off with wire screening. Use motion sensors. Continue to scare the coyote away by practicing hazing whenever you see one on your property to let it know it is not welcome.

Who do I call if I see a coyote?

If a coyote poses an immediate threat to safety, call 911. Report coyote sightings, noting any overly brazen, unusual or aggressive behaviour, on the town's coyote reporting form at oakville.ca. The details are important. Contact the Oakville Milton Humane Society at 905-845-1551 if you encounter a coyote you believe to be sick or injured. Learn more about coyote behaviour at coyotewatchcanada.com

Respect, compassion and education are common sense tools we can all use to nurture safe and healthy human - wildlife interaction.