

# Living With Coyotes In Greenwich



Coyotes were first reported in Connecticut in the mid-1950's. Since then, they have expanded their range and are now an integral part of Connecticut's ecosystem. They are well established throughout the state, including lower Fairfield County, and thrive in urban and suburban areas close to people.

People and coyotes can co-exist. Just as coyotes have adapted to living in close proximity to humans, we can adapt our behavior to ensure that the natural fear coyotes have of humans is maintained. An understanding of coyote behavior is important to our successful co-existence.

Coyotes eat many different foods including rodents, rabbits, birds, deer, snakes, frogs, insects, fruit, vegetables, garbage and pet food. In residential areas, coyotes can lose their fear of people because they associate food supply with us. Coyotes may also become bold if they are attracted to natural food sources near people and have no negative experiences when being close to people and houses. They readily prey on rodents, which is a benefit to people.

Coyotes do not live in packs. They live in family units consisting of an adult pair and their young, which may stay with the parents for up to two years. They protect their territory from other canids, including coyotes and foxes.

Coyotes may view dogs as competition. They become most territorial during spring and early summer when they are raising young. Both the coyote and your dog believe that your yard is their territory. Older and small dogs are more likely to be attacked, as the coyote knows it is physically superior. Coyotes can view cats and very small dogs as prey. Homeowners need to supervise these small pets at all times when they are outside.

Conflicts with coyotes are common and may occur at anytime of year, but attacks on humans are extremely rare. However, coyotes that have lost their natural fear of humans may exhibit unpredictable behavior. Preventative measures and an improved understanding of coyote behavior by the public will reduce unwanted fears and increase the likelihood that we can co-exist.

For more information on coyotes, check out these web sites:  
[www.dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife/factshts/covote.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife/factshts/covote.htm)  
[www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/wildgame/covconfl.htm](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/wildgame/covconfl.htm)  
[www.state.ma.us/dfwele/dfw/dfwcoy.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/dfwele/dfw/dfwcoy.htm)  
[www.greenwichct.org](http://www.greenwichct.org) – go to Conservation Commission

## Tips for Preventing and Resolving Coyote Conflicts

- ❖ **Treat coyotes as wild animals, with respect and from a distance!**
- ❖ **Do not feed or pet coyotes!**
- ❖ **Do not let the coyote intimidate you!** If you see a coyote, be aggressive in your behavior – make loud noises (shout or bang pots), wave your arms, throw sticks and stones, or spray with garden hose.
- ❖ Do not allow pets to run free. Supervise small pets at all times.
- ❖ Do not feed pets outside.
- ❖ Secure garbage from coyotes and other animals.
- ❖ Eliminate availability of bird seed. Use feeders that keep seed off of the ground. Coyotes are attracted to the concentration of birds and rodents that come to feeders. Remove feeders if necessary.
- ❖ Compost in closed containers that are well vented.
- ❖ Clear fallen fruit from under trees.
- ❖ Teach children to appreciate coyotes from a distance.
- ❖ Close off crawl space under porches and sheds that coyotes or other animals may use.
- ❖ **Regulated** hunting and trapping may be used to remove problem coyotes in combination with prevention measures.
- ❖ Fencing may deter coyotes. Proper and well-maintained fencing can keep coyotes away from pets and people.
- ❖ **Educate your neighbors.** Ask them to follow these steps.

### For information and to report coyote problems in Greenwich:

Conservation Director – 622-6461  
Animal Control Division – 622-8299

CT Dept of Environmental Protection  
Wildlife Division – 860-424-3011

**For emergency response only: 911**