



City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Code Enforcement

30940 Hawthorne Blvd, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275 (310) 544-5281

Report Coyote Sightings

rpvca.gov/335/Coyotes

HOME & YARD AUDIT CHECKLIST FOR WILDLIFE

Complete the checklist to identify areas on your property that may need improvements to reduce wildlife, such as coyotes, opossums, skunks, raccoons, etc. on your property and in your neighborhood; improve any condition for which you check the box. Eliminate attractants on your property in order to minimize conflicts with wildlife. Share this information with your friends and neighbors because minimizing conflicts is most effective when the entire neighborhood works together.

COMMON ATTRACTANTS	Checkbox	CONDITIONS OR HABITS THAT MAY ATTRACTION WILDLIFE
FOOD SOURCES		
Never hand-feed or intentionally feed wildlife animals!		
Pet Food		Do you feed your animal outside or leave food outside unattended? Do you leave pet treats or bones out?
Water Sources		Do you have pet water bowls or unnecessary water sources on your property, or fish ponds without nets covering the water?
Bird Feeders		Do you have bird feeders with fallen seed on the ground which could attract bird for wildlife to prey on?
Fallen Fruit		Do you have fallen fruit around trees that can be a food source?
Compost		Do you include meat or dairy products within compost contents that could attract or feed wildlife? Other food attractants?
BBQ Grills		Is your barbeque grill uncleaned with food or wrappers left out?
Trash		Do you leave your trash containers out? With lids open? (Periodically clean cans to reduce residual food or trash odors)
LANDSCAPING		
Trim vegetation to reduce hiding places and potential denning sites.		
Structures and Out Buildings		Do you have an access space under a house, deck or shed, or around woodpiles, or any other structure that can provide cover or denning sites for wildlife or their prey?
FENCING		
Enclose property with a 6-foot fence to deter wildlife from entering your yard. Consider placing rollers on top of fencing, fit gaps and spaces with metal mesh (like hardware cloth) and bury at least 2 feet down along the perimeter to deter the animal from digging deep.		
Fencing Around Yards		Do low fences, walls, or gates enable wildlife to enter your yard?
Gates		Do you leave gates open through which wildlife can enter your yard?
PETS AND ANIMALS		
Never leave pets unattended outside. Keep pets leashed when out. Keep other animals in secure enclosures.		
Pet/Wildlife Interaction		Do you permit your pets to "play" or interact with wildlife?
Kennels/Coops		Do you have an outdoor pet kennel/coops that are not fully enclosed?
Walking Pets on Leash		Do you sometimes walk your pet on a long leash or no leash? (Pets can be snatched by wildlife if not watched on a short leash)
Animal Waste		At home, do you sometimes or often fail to clean up after your pet or leave animal waste in your yard? (Wildlife animals are attracted to areas where animal waste is present because of the potential food source of the waste producing animal.)
Doggie Door		Do you have a doogie door that your dog/cat may go out? Coyotes may enter inside your property and snatch your pet via doggie door.

Preventing Coyote Conflicts

How to keep coyotes out of your yard and keep your pets safe

Coyotes generally avoid humans, even when their home range encompasses largely urban or suburban habitat. However, the presence of a free buffet in the form of pet food, compost or trash can lure coyotes into yards and create the impression that these places are bountiful feeding areas. Without the lure of food or other attractants, their visits will be brief and rare. But a coyote who finds food in one yard may learn to search for food in others.

What attracts coyotes to urban and residential areas?

Food

Deliberately feeding coyotes is a mistake. You may enjoy hand-feeding animals, but this is a surefire way to get them accustomed to people, and it will ultimately lead to their demise. Here are some general rules:

- Avoid feeding pets outside. If you must, feed them only once per day and remove the food bowl as soon as your pet has finished her meal.
- If you compost, use enclosed bins and never compost meat or fish scraps.
- Clean up spilled bird seed around feeders.
- Remove fallen fruit from the ground.
- Keep trash in high-quality containers with tight-fitting lids and place the cans curbside the morning of collection (instead of the night before).



PHOTOS, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, BY: PAT JOYCE; DILULLO/ISTOCK.COM

How to protect dogs



Dogs (especially small dogs) are also vulnerable to coyote confrontations. These incidents generally involve coyotes who are either accustomed (habituated) to people (usually due to wildlife feeding), or coyotes who are protecting their territory, their mate (during breeding season, January–March), or their pups (during pup season, April–August).

Dogs should not be left outside unattended and should always be kept on a leash in public areas. Never let your dog interact or play with a coyote. Keep pet food and water indoors to avoid attracting coyotes to your yard.

Although attacks on larger dogs are rarer, coyotes sometimes go after a large dog when they feel that their territory is threatened. This generally occurs during coyote breeding season, which takes place from January through March. During this time, it is especially important not to leave dogs outside unattended and to keep them on leashes in public areas.

Don't leave dogs of any size alone in a fenced yard unless the fence is "coyote-proof." Coyote-proof fences are either at least eight feet tall—and made of a material that coyotes cannot climb—or at least six feet tall with a protective device on top, such as a "coyote roller" (coyoteroller.com), that rolls off any coyotes who try to scramble over the fence. To prevent coyotes from digging under a fence, make sure the fence extends at least 12 inches underground or includes an L-shaped mesh apron that extends outward at least 18 inches and is secured with landscaping staples.



PHOTO BY: CHARLES WOOD

Shelter

Coyotes are secretive animals, and studies have shown they can live for a long time in close proximity to dense human settlements without ever being noticed. These coyotes are abiding by the rules we set for minimal conflicts and should be left alone.

In the spring, when coyotes give birth and begin to raise litters, they concentrate their activities around dens or burrows in which the young are sheltered. At these times, they may become defensive and territorial and challenge any other coyote or dog who comes close to the pups. People walking their dogs in parks and wooded areas may run into these situations and be followed or confronted by a parent coyote. Fights rarely occur, and when they do, they happen most often when dogs are off leash. It's important to recognize such incidents for what they are—a defense of space, not a random attack. If you encounter a coyote when walking your pet, do NOT run away. Instead, haze the coyote with the techniques described in our Coyote Hazing Guidelines fact sheet.

Free-roaming pets

Free-roaming pets, especially cats (and sometimes small dogs), may attract coyotes into neighborhoods. The best way to minimize risk to pets is never to leave them

outside unattended. For cats, this means either keeping them indoors at all times or letting them outside only under your supervision wearing a harness and leash or in a secure enclosure (such as a catio). Always walk dogs on a leash (6 ft long or less), and attend to them when they're outside unless you have a coyote-proof fence (see above).

Community cat colonies

People who feed community cats are often concerned that coyotes might prey on the cats. These concerns are well-founded, as coyotes are attracted to both the outdoor pet food and the cats themselves as prey. Here are some general suggestions for keeping such cats safer:

- Feed cats only once per day and at a set time. Pick up any leftovers immediately.
- Elevate feeding stations beyond coyotes'—but not the cats'—reach.
- Give community cats escape routes (in the form of “cat posts”) in places where trees and other climbing opportunities are scarce. These can be wooden posts (four inches by four inches or corner posts) that stand out of the ground at least 10 to 12 feet and can be climbed by cats but not by coyotes.
- Discourage/harass coyotes seen on the property. Go after them aggressively, using the techniques described in our Coyote Hazing Guidelines. Making them feel uncomfortable encourages them to stay out of the area.



PHOTO BY: JAMES EVANS

For more information and tips, visit humanesociety.org/coyotes.



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