



**City of Costa Mesa
Police Department Animal Control**

COYOTE ACTIVITY BULLETIN

This bulletin is to advise and warn residents about coyote activity in the Costa Mesa area. Several residents have lost their pets to these skilled predators because they were not aware of coyote activity in the area. Others are concerned about recent sightings and the potential consequences of predatory animals within the urban environment.

Coyotes are found in ALL areas of Orange County. They are a native animal and a critical component of the ecosystem. Contrary to popular belief, these animals do not require open space or wild areas to survive. In fact, most coyotes within the urban setting are the offspring of generations of coyotes who lived and flourished in the urban areas of Orange County.

Protecting Your Pets

Though they are far from domesticated, coyotes are very comfortable living alongside human beings. They have little fear of man and are frequently seen in close proximity to joggers, bikers, and inside residential areas. While not normally a danger to human beings, coyotes will display defensive behaviors if threatened or cornered, therefore, it is important to leave a comfortable distance between you and a coyote. Small pets can easily become coyote prey. Cats and small animals should not be allowed outside alone, even in a fenced yard. It is highly recommended that their owner always accompany small pets. Though coyotes generally hunt between sunset and sunrise, they can be observed at all hours of the day and will not pass up the opportunity for an easy meal. A dog or cat can be taken from a backyard enclosed by a six-foot high fence or wall in a matter of moments.

Steps You Can Take

The following steps can be taken to protect you and your pets from nuisance animals like coyotes and other wildlife:

- Fence off animal enclosures (fully enclose if possible).
- Keep cats and small dogs indoors or in the close presence of an adult.
- Feed pets indoors.
- Store trash in covered heavy-duty containers.
- Keep yards free from potential shelter such as thick brush and weeds.
- Enclose the bottoms of porches and decks.
- Eliminate potential food and water sources, such as fallen fruit and standing water.

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If Confronted by a Coyote

If you do encounter a coyote that behaves aggressively, you have probably gotten too close to its prey or its family. Increase the comfort zone between you and the coyote. Coyotes behave in a manner similar to domestic dogs that are defending their territory and family. All children should be taught from a very early age that they should avoid strange animals, whether domestic or not. They should never attempt to feed a wild animal and they should be instructed on coyote safety, such as discussed here.

Use Negative Reinforcement

If coyotes begin frequenting your neighborhood, let them know they're not welcome. Make loud noises, throw rocks or spray them with garden hoses. For everyone's safety, it is essential that coyotes retain their natural wariness of humans.

Eradication and/or relocation of the urban coyote is not effective. These types of programs actually provide a vacuum in nature that causes these animals to have even larger litters and ultimately increase the coyote population. Coyotes are beneficial in keeping balance within the ecosystem by controlling the population of other small animals and rodents.

If You Need Help

If you need help with an animal control issues you may call any of the following:

For routine Animal Control Calls **(24 hours)**:

CMPD Communications:

714 754-5252

For Animal Licensing and other animal control issues, call (Business hours):

Diane Majerski

714 754-5188

For information regarding animal control and enforcement issues you can call **(24 hour voice mail)**:

Animal Control Officer Art Beames

714 754-5163

Animal Control Officer Anna Rodriguez

714 754-5309