



City of Yorba Linda
PO Box 87014, Yorba Linda CA 92885

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 15, 2009

The City of Yorba Linda warns residents about potential coyote threats

The City of Yorba Linda has received increased reports of coyote sightings and pet attacks through out the City in the past six weeks. Reports come from interested and concerned people who encounter coyotes everywhere from backyards to city streets and trails.

When the City of Yorba Linda dealt with the devastating effects of the Freeway Complex Fire the coyotes were literally burned out of Chino Hills State Park and down into the City to look for food, water, and shelter.

To sustain themselves in this environment or any other difficult situation where food is scarce, coyotes will often turn to artificial means of food. This is usually where coyotes unintentionally turn to food sources provided by people, which are readily available in urban and suburban areas. Coyotes most frequently seek garbage as an easy meal and will not hesitate to enter a neighborhood when trash is exposed in a trash can or spills from a dumpster.

The next most attractive food is seed, suet, bread and other food left out for birds. Not only is the bird food eaten by coyotes, but the birds, squirrels, rats, mice and other animals attracted to the seed are also on the coyote's menu. Other food sources that are used by opportunistic coyotes include road killed animals, pet

Press Release
2-2-2-2-2-2

food, compost, rotting dropped fruit from trees, drippings from outdoor grills, domestic cats, and small breeds of dogs. Coyotes may also behave territorially if they feel one of these food sources are being threatened, this may involve attacking another dog that is equivalent or bigger in size or in rare cases may growl at humans.

Typically coyotes do not pose a threat to people, but rather instinctively fear us. The handful of instances where coyotes have bitten people have been the result of a sick coyote (rabid), an animal that has lost all fear of people, likely from being previously in captivity, or is very desperate for food.

Common sense steps can virtually eliminate conflicts with coyotes. Be aware that coyotes can be found in all 49 states except for Hawaii, from the most urban street to the largest forest. Know that they are more active in the winter and spring months as they breed and seek limited foods, when weather is continuously mild as it is in California, this activity can be seen for periods extending into the summer months. Eliminate any possible food source around your home and in your neighborhood. Take down bird feeders if coyotes are seen consistently in the area. Feed all pets (water included) in doors and keep cats indoors at all times. Maintain direct control over small dogs, particularly at night and around the greenbelts and trail systems of Yorba Linda. Block off crawl spaces under decks and outbuildings and get rid of debris and brush piles (large bushes included) as these are places where coyotes and their prey find shelter. And finally, assert yourself if a coyote is in "your territory," namely your yard. Make the coyote feel like you are its worst enemy by using loud noises, bright lights, and thrown objects to drive it off. Coyotes understand that humans are a threat, and that natural fear needs to be reinforced in urban areas.

If a coyote is behaving abnormally, such as circling, acting disoriented, salivating or shaking, residents are encouraged to call Orange County Animal Care Services at (714) 935-6848. An empowered official may destroy a coyote or other wild animal in the interest of public safety.

Precautionary Information About Coyotes:

Don't feed or try to pet coyotes

Keep wild things wild! Feeding, whether direct or indirect, can cause coyotes to act tame and may lead to bold behavior. Coyotes that rely on natural foods remain wild and wary of humans.

Press Release
3-3-3-3-3-3

Keep your pets safe

Although free roaming pets are more likely to be killed by automobiles than by wild animals, coyotes do view cats and small dogs as potential food, and larger dogs as competition. For the safety of your pets, keep them restrained and accompanied at all times while outdoors, including your own yard. Provide secure shelters for pet rabbits and other vulnerable animals. Six foot walls are no barrier, coyotes will travel using the City's trail system, drainage systems, and

Keep Bird Feeder Areas Clean

Use feeders designed to keep food off the ground, as the seed attracts many small mammals coyotes prey upon. Remove Feeders if coyotes are regularly seen around your yard.

Feed Pets Indoors

Outdoor feeding attracts many wild animals to your door.

Remove Sources of Water

In these dry times coyotes will drink water wherever they can; this includes your pet's water dish or an overwatered area of your yard.

Close off crawl spaces under Porches and Sheds

Coyotes use such areas such areas for resting and raising young.

Don't Let Coyotes Intimidate You

Don't hesitate to scare or threaten coyotes with loud noises, bright lights, or water sprayed from a hose.

Cut Back Brushy Areas of Your Yard

These areas provide cover for coyotes and their prey.

Protect Livestock and Produce

Coyotes will prey on livestock. Various techniques, such as fencing, will protect livestock from predation. Clear fallen fruit from around fruit trees.

Educate Your Neighbors

Pass this information along. Your efforts will be futile if your neighbors are providing food and shelter for coyotes.

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