



City of Davis Coyote Management and Coexistence Plan



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Adapted from the City of Calabasas Coyote Management Plan

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Coyote Management Plan Goals

Goals

The goal of this management plan (Plan) is to support coexistence with urban coyotes using education, behavior modification and development of a tiered response to aggressive coyote behavior. The tiered response requires active participation on the part of the entire community including residents, volunteers and city personnel.

This Plan is modeled after a management plan currently employed by the City of Calabasas, CA. The Plan is based on research and best known management practices and includes a full spectrum of management tools. Basic principles that guide this Plan are based on the following:

1. Urban wildlife is valued for biological diversity, as members of natural ecosystems, and reminders of larger global conservation issues.
2. Davis residents appreciate wildlife and support the creation of open space and wildlife habitat in and around the community. Coexistence is the foundation of the city's general wildlife management program.
3. Human safety is a priority in managing wildlife/human conflicts.
4. Preventive practices such as, reduction and removal of wildlife attractants, habitat manipulation (e.g. removal of potential coyote denning areas), and responding appropriately when interacting with wildlife are key to minimizing potential human conflicts.
5. The city Wildlife Resource Specialist's management techniques and decisions are based on scientific research and a thorough understanding of the biology and ecology of urban wildlife species.
6. Education and outreach are essential in supporting human and wildlife coexistence.
7. Emphasis of this management plan is placed on preventative measures and non-lethal controls.
8. Lethal controls may be necessary, but should be considered only when public safety is clearly at risk and/ or all other options have failed.

Difficulties Managing Wildlife

Although Davis places a high value on wildlife, some species adapted to urban environments have the potential to create problems and/or conflicts in specific situations. In addressing such problems, the city promotes policies supporting prevention and implementation of remedial measures that do not harm the wildlife or their habitats.

A wildlife problem, within the city, is defined as any situation that causes a health or safety issue to residents. In cases where problems with wildlife are associated with human behavior (leaving garbage exposed or intentional wildlife feeding), ordinances and enforcement may need to be adopted and implemented to minimize conflict.

In some cases, traditional management tools are problematic and/ or ineffective. For example, trapping and relocation of coyotes is not legal without a state permit, nor is it ecologically sound. Relocated animals often do not survive the transfer. If they do, they tend to disperse to other locations where they may cause problems. In some instances, the dispersed coyotes will go to great lengths to return to known territory or adversely affect residents.

Lethal control measures should be considered a last resort. Such measures are controversial and may be, depending on the method, non-selective. If lethal control measures are used, they must be humane and in compliance with federal and state laws and require prior approval by the City of Davis Wildlife Resource Specialist. City funds will not be used to trap and kill coyotes, unless there is a clear and imminent public safety threat.

Limits of this Management Plan

The intent of this plan is to provide a clear community understanding of how coyotes will be managed. Guidelines and provisions of this plan do not supersede federal, state and county regulations and policies. Furthermore, the provisions of this plan do not apply to Davis residents in pursuit of their legal rights in protecting private property.

The Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

Distribution

Coyotes are originally native to the central and western states including the southern deserts of California. Due to their intelligence and adaptability, in addition to urban expansion and subsequent decline of larger predators, coyotes have successfully expanded their range. They are now found in all states except Hawaii and have successfully established themselves in every urban ecosystem across North America.



Source: The Cook County, Illinois, Coyote Project

Identification

On the upper parts of their body, coyote pelts vary from gray-brown to yellow-gray. Their backs have tawny-colored under fur and long overcoats with black-tipped guard-hairs. The latter forms a dorsal stripe and dark band over their shoulders. Throat and bellies tend to be buff or white. Forelegs, sides of the head, muzzle and feet are reddish brown. Coyotes have long legs, small paws, large pointed ears and a pointed snout. Weighing between 15 to 40 pounds, their long legs and thick fur make them appear larger.



Adult Coyote

Reproduction, Behavior and Habitat

Coyotes may live alone, in pairs, or, more commonly, in family groups with one breeding pair. Breeding pairs mate once a year, usually January through February. Social organization and group size are highly correlated with food availability. The rest of the group is comprised of multiple generations of offspring. Pups are born March through May. The entire group protects the pups though pup mortality averages between 50 and 70% in the first year. Litter size depends on available resources and the number of coyotes in the area.

A litter varies from two to 12 pups, but the average is six or seven. Pups remain in the den the first six weeks and then travel with the adults. By the end of summer the pups are more independent, yet may still travel with parents and siblings.

Because coyotes are socially organized, the group raises the young and defends their territory from other coyotes. Territories do not overlap. Although they generally live in groups, individuals from the group often travel alone or in pairs.

In the urban areas, most coyotes live in large parks, golf courses, greenbelts and natural open space where they find food, water and cover. As such, territory delineation may follow the park or open space boundaries. They are extremely adaptable in creating territories under a wide range of urban conditions.

Ecological Importance

Coyotes play an important role as top predators in the urban ecosystem. They are predators of turkey, geese, squirrels, mice, rabbits, rats, gophers, other small animals. Rodents make up a majority of their diet. Areas with resident coyotes often report a decrease in populations of rodents, geese, and other pest species.

Local Coyote Population

Without adequate tracking and census data, it is difficult to understand how many coyotes currently occur around Davis. We do know that suitable habitat occurs on all sides of the city, and that most coyotes reports come from the northern areas of the city.

Coyotes, like all predators, will stabilize their populations in the absence of human caused mortality. Coyotes regularly roam an area of about 5-12 square kilometers, or larger, to get enough food for the pack members. Normally, each pack is a territorial family group that varies in number from 3 to 10 individuals. A portion of the area the pack inhabits is the pack's core territory, which they defend from other coyotes. The number of mature coyotes in the pack is linked to the amount of food resources in the territory. The pack system keeps coyotes from getting too numerous because the packs defend the area they need to survive.

A coyote pack usually has one breeding (or alpha) female. This female produces many more puppies than are ultimately wanted in the pack. Young coyotes may leave the pack at about 9-11 months of age but dispersal patterns are highly variable. These coyotes become transients. Other types of transients include older individuals that can no longer defend their role as upper level pack members and leave the pack.

Transients move all over in narrow undefended zones that exist between pack territories searching for an open habitat to occupy or group to join. Many will die before they succeed (hit by cars or killed by landowners), but many are successful. It is largely because of these transients that coyote culling programs are unsuccessful. Removing a group of territorial coyotes will create an undefended area into which the transient coyotes may migrate. At all times of the year, numbers of transients are immediately available to replenish any voids created by killing the resident coyotes. Further, if either the alpha male or alpha female in a pack is killed, other breeding-age females in the pack will begin to ovulate. This results in an increase in the number of litters as well as the number of pups per litter.

Coyotes and People

People respond to coyotes in various ways. Some observe them with enjoyment, others with indifference and some with fear or concern. Personal experiences with coyotes

may influence these perceptions. Experiences range from animal sightings without incident to stalking, killing of pets or, at the extreme, an attack on a person.

Because wild animals conjure up fear, actual sightings and perceptions may become exaggerated or misconstrued (see Appendix A for coyote encounter descriptions). The wide range in perceptions of urban coyotes supports the need for strong and consistent educational messages to clarify management techniques.

Urban Coyotes

Urban areas may support larger populations of coyotes in close proximity to people for the following reasons:

1. Increased access to food - Humans provide easy access to large supplies of food by leaving pet food, bird seed, unsecure compost or trash and fallen fruits in yards. Unintentional and intentional feeding of coyotes may encourage bold behavior and increase aggression towards people and pets. Intentional feeding can lead coyotes to see humans as a source of food.
2. Increased access to water – Urban areas provide year round water supplies from constructed storm water ponds and channels, artificial lakes, irrigation, pet water dishes, etc., which supports both coyotes and their prey.
3. Increased potential shelter - Parks, greenbelts, open spaces, golf courses, buildings, vehicles, sheds, decks and crawl spaces, etc., increase the amount and variability of cover for coyotes. They can safely and easily remain close to people, pets, homes and businesses without detection.
4. Increased exposure to pets - Pets are a normal part of an urban landscape. Pets can be considered either potential prey or a potential competitor in coyote territory.

Urban sprawl and habituation through intentional and unintentional feeding have brought humans and coyotes in close proximity. While human attacks are very rare, pet related incidents and media attention have led some urban residents to fear coyotes. Steps must be taken to address safety concerns, misconceptions and appropriate responses to potential threats to human safety. It's important to keep in mind that coyotes have been in and around the Sacramento Valley, interacting with people, for at least the last 100 years.

Hazing and Behavioral Change

Some coyotes have become too comfortable in the close proximity of people. To safely coexist, it's important to modify this behavior and attitude in resident coyote populations. Habituated coyote behavior needs to be reshaped to encourage coyotes to avoid contact with humans and pets.

Hazing, also known as “fear conditioning”, is the process that facilitates this change and is by necessity a community response to negative encounters with coyotes. The more often an individual animal is hazed, the more effective hazing is in changing coyote behavior (see Appendix C for coyote hazing methodology).

Overview of Hazing

Hazing is a process whereby a number of individuals encountering a coyote respond in like manner to make a coyote uncomfortable and choose to leave a situation where their presence is unwanted.

Basic hazing - Consists of standing your ground, never ignoring or turning your back to a coyote(s), yelling and making unpleasant and frightening noises until the coyote(s) choose to leave.

Aggressive hazing - Consists of approaching an animal quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles, spraying with a hose or water gun, or creating fear of contact so the animal leaves the situation. For more options see Appendix C on hazing.

Hazing must continue once it begins until the animal leaves, otherwise, the coyote will learn to “wait” until the person gives up. Not following through with hazing will create an animal more resistant to hazing instead of reinforcing the negative association with humans.

Hazing should never injure the animal. An injured animal becomes less predictable versus a healthy one, who responds in a consistent and predictable manner to hazing.

A common concern with hazing involves potential danger to the hazer. A coyote’s basic nature is to be very skittish and wary and to avoid confrontation. These behavioral characteristics are what make this technique successful. A normal, healthy coyote will not escalate a situation with an aggressive person. Hazing is NOT successful with every species of wild animal because different species have different behavioral characteristics.

Goals of Hazing

The goals of hazing are to:

- Reshape coyote behavior to avoid human contact in an urban setting.
- Give residents tools to actively engage in reshaping coyote behavior and to instill a feeling of safety while they use open space and greenbelt areas.
- Encourage sharing of hazing methodology and accurate information about coyotes with other residents, friends and family.

Hazing Process

Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. People living in close proximity to coyotes can remove coyote attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior.

Behavioral change and hazing includes the following:

1. Pet owners need to protect pets. Off-leash and unattended dogs and unattended outside cats attract coyotes (as does pet food).
2. Residents need to learn hazing effectiveness and techniques. A hazing program must be instituted and maintained on a regular basis.
3. Hazing needs to be active for a sustained period of time to achieve the desired change for the highest possible long-term success.
4. Hazing requires monitoring to assess its effectiveness and to determine if further action or more aggressive hazing is needed.

Management Strategy

The city's strategy for managing coyotes is based on balancing respect and protection for wildlife and their habitats without compromising public safety. The main strategy is comprised of a three-pronged approach consisting of public education designed around coexistence with coyotes, investigating coyote sightings and implementing hazing as needed, and ensuring public safety by implementing appropriate responses to an aggressive interaction or attack by a coyote on a human.

This management strategy will be adaptive. Volunteers and community members are encouraged to provide feedback on the strategy's success and failures. Such feedback shall guide the modification of methods to improve success, if necessary. The effectiveness of the overall management strategy shall be assessed after the second year of implementation (fall of 2014). Criteria for the effectiveness of the outreach element will be:

- 1) Five or less coyote complaint calls received per year
- 2) Staff and/ or volunteers attending five or more public outreach events providing coyote outreach

Criteria for the effectiveness of the monitoring and hazing element will be:

- 1) Ten or fewer "sightings" as defined in Appendix A
- 2) Five or fewer "encounters"
- 3) Two or fewer "incidents"
- 4) No "attacks"

Public Education and Outreach

Education is the key to having residents make appropriate decisions regarding their safety, and/or managing their property and pets. This involves decreasing attractants, increasing pet safety and creating reasonable expectations of normal coyote behavior.

Learning how to respond to a coyote encounter empowers residents and supports reshaping undesired coyote behavior. The public should understand what normal coyote behavior is when living in close proximity with coyotes. For example, vocalization is normal acceptable behavior and does not indicate aggression. Education and outreach include:

1. Understanding coyote life history, human safety, pet safety, leash law, coyote attractants, deterrents to coyotes on private property, including appropriate fencing, exclusion techniques, "what to do" tips, and information on appropriate hazing techniques.

2. Developing a common language and awareness of normal versus abnormal behavior when discussing encounters with coyotes (see definitions in Appendix A).
3. Dissemination of information to residents, businesses and schools through the city's website, CTV, media newsletter, e-news, etc.
4. Cooperating with non-profit organizations like Project Coyote that provide public education materials, programs, and expertise.

An outreach and education team, composed of trained community volunteers, will be used to help outreach to the community via staffing information tables at community events, presenting in classrooms, and/ or following up directly with individuals and neighborhoods who may have concerns. The city's Wildlife Resource Specialist will also participate in volunteer training and community workshops.

Coyote Complaint Investigation and Response

A coyote response team, composed of community volunteers, will be used to investigate and respond to coyote sightings and complaints. If the coyote(s) are observed to be in an undesirable location and/ or display undesirable behavior toward humans, the response team will implement hazing. If normal behavior is observed, the team will refer the reporting resident to the education and outreach team.

Areas Where Coyotes are Acceptable

Coyotes are considered important members of a healthy ecosystem and should be encouraged to occur in the city's open space and habitat areas that exist adjacent to, and outside of, the urban limit (e.g. urban/ agricultural transition areas and other city owned open space and habitat areas within the planning area). Hazing shall not occur within these areas.

Attack Response Plan

An "attack" is defined as: when a human is injured or killed by a coyote (see Appendix A for definitions). If a human is attacked and physically injured by a coyote, the Davis Police Department will lethally remove the offending animal and/ or contact the California Department of Fish and Game (See Appendix B on levels of coyote behavior).

City funds will not be spent on lethally removing "nuisance" wildlife affecting private property. However, according to state laws, coyotes are considered "non-game wildlife", therefore any resident or homeowner association Board of Directors can initiate, at their own expense, action to protect themselves and their property from coyote attacks. State law prohibits the use of leg-hold traps statewide and severely restricts use of other body- gripping traps and poisons. City and County regulation prohibits the use of firearms or projectiles within the city limits.

Appendix A

Definitions on Encounters with Coyotes

Active coexistence: Humans and coyotes exist together. Communities decide on community space, such as agricultural transition areas and other open space habitat, where coyotes are appropriate and do not haze or interact with them in these areas. Humans take an active role in keeping coyotes in their community wild by learning about coyote ecology and behavior, removing attractants, taking responsibility for pet safety, and hazing coyotes in neighborhood or community spaces (except for predetermined coyote appropriate areas).

Attack: A human is injured or killed by a coyote.

Provoked – A human-provoked attack or incident where the human involved encourages the coyote to engage. Examples include dog off-leash in an on-leash area; dog on leash longer than 8’ in length, or a human intentionally approaches or feeds the coyote.

Unprovoked - An unprovoked attack or incident where the human involved does not encourage the coyote to engage.

Attended animal loss or injury: When a pet, within 8’ of the owner and on a leash, is attacked and killed/ injured by a coyote.

Domestic animal loss or injury: A coyote injures or kills a pet animal. Also includes “depredation” - predation on domestic pets or livestock. Unattended animal loss or injury is normal behavior for a coyote.

Encounter: An unexpected, direct meeting between a human and a coyote that is without incident.

Feeding:

Intentional feeding – A resident or business actively and intentionally feeds coyotes including intentionally providing food for animals in the coyote food chain.

Unintentional feeding – A resident or business is unintentionally providing access to food. Examples such as accessible compost, fallen fruit from trees, pet food left outdoors, among others.

Unintentional feeding: bird feeders - A resident or business with bird feeders that may provide food for coyotes, e.g. bird food, birds, rats and squirrels. Bird

feeders must be kept high enough from the ground so a coyote is unable to reach the feeding animals. The area under the bird feeder must be kept clean and free of residual bird food.

Hazing: A negative conditioning method that employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage an undesirable behavior or activity. Hazing techniques include loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, throwing objects, shouting, etc. Hazing can help maintain a coyote's fear of humans and deter them from neighborhood spaces such as backyards, greenbelts and play spaces. Hazing does not damage animals, humans or property.

Incident: A conflict between a human and a coyote where the coyote exhibits the following behavior(s) - approaches a human and growls, bares teeth, or lunges; injures or kills an attended domestic animal. A human is not injured.

Levels of animal contact:

Level 1: A coyote that has been involved in an investigated and documented unprovoked attack on a human. Targeted education and hazing needed, public awareness of incident and circumstances discussed. Lethal response may be appropriate.

Level 2: A coyote that has been involved in an investigated and documented provoked attack on a human with no pet involved. Evaluate circumstances and human safety, provide education and hazing training, enhance public awareness of incident and circumstances. Lethal response may be appropriate.

Level 3: A coyote is involved in an incident(s) and/or an attended domestic animal loss. Education and hazing needed, public awareness of incident and circumstances discussed.

Level 4: A coyote appears to frequently associate with humans or human related food sources, and exhibits little wariness of people, including unattended domestic animal loss. Education and hazing needed, public awareness of incident and circumstances discussed.

Observation: The act of noticing or taking note of tracks, scat or vocalizations.

Sighting: A visual observation of a coyote(s). A sighting may occur at any time of the day or night.

Unsecured trash: Trash that is accessible to wildlife, e.g. uncovered garbage cans and bags, uncovered or open dumpsters, over-filled trash containers and other occurrences of scattered trash near a receptacle.

Appendix B

Coyote behavior, behavior classification and recommended response

Coyote behavior	Classification	Response
Coyote heard	Observation	Distribute educational materials and info on normal coyote behavior
Coyote seen moving in area	Sighting	Distribute education material and info on normal coyote behavior
Coyote seen resting in area	Sighting	If area frequented, educate people on normal behavior, haze to encourage animal to leave
Coyote following or approaching a person & pet	Sighting Encounter	Educate on potential hazing techniques, what to do tips and pet management
Coyote following or approaching a person w/o pet	Encounter	Educate on potential hazing techniques, what to do tips and pet management
Coyote entering a yard without pets	Sighting	Educate on coyote attractants, yard audit, hazing info
Coyote entering a yard with pets	Encounter	Educate on coyote attractants, yard audit, hazing info, pet management
Coyote entering yard with people & pets, no injury occurring	Encounter	Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, monitoring/hazing, pet management
Coyote entering yard and injuring or killing pet	Incident	Develop hazing team in area, gather info on specific animals involved, report on circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard and neighborhood audits, pet management
Coyote biting or injuring pet on leash	Incident	Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, monitoring/ hazing, pet management
Coyote aggressive, showing teeth, back fur raised, lunging, nipping w/o contact	Incident	Gather info on specific animals involved, report circumstances, educate on coyote attractants, yard/neighborhood audits, monitoring/ hazing, pet management
Coyote biting or injuring person	Attack	Identify and gather information on specific animal involved and report circumstances. If a human is physically injured, the Davis PD will lethally remove the offending individual and/ or contact the California Department of Fish and Game. Educate on coyote attractants, yard/ neighborhood audits, hazing, and pet management.

Appendix C

Hazing Program and Training Plan

Coexistence is not a passive undertaking. The City of Davis's guiding principles are to coexist with wildlife.

Hazing and Behavioral Change

Some urban coyotes have become comfortable in close proximity to people. To safely coexist, it's important to modify this behavior and attitude in resident coyote populations. Urban coyote behavior needs to be reshaped to avoid contact with humans and pets.

Hazing is the process that facilitates this change and is, by necessity, a community response to encounters with coyotes. The more often an individual coyote is hazed, the more effective hazing is in changing its behavior.

Hazing employs immediate use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage undesirable behavior or activity. Deterrents include loud noises, spraying water, bright lights, throwing objects, shouting. Hazing can help maintain a coyote's fear of humans and discourage them from neighborhoods, greenbelts, backyards and play areas. Hazing does not harm or damage animals, humans or property. Behavioral change also involves human activities such as how to identify and remove attractants and how to responsibly protect pets.

Foundation of Hazing

1. It is not economically, ecologically, or in other way efficient to try and remove coyotes from the urban ecosystem.
2. Hazing is one piece of a long-term plan in creating safe and acceptable living situations, increasing understanding and reducing conflict between coyotes and people.

Goals of Hazing

1. To reshape coyote behavior to avoid human contact in an urban setting. Human behavior can shape animal behavior, in either a negative or positive manner. People living in close proximity to coyotes can remove coyote attractants, identify potentially dangerous situations for their pets and themselves, and respond in a manner designed to change coyote behavior.

2. To provide residents information and tools to actively engage in reshaping coyote behavior and to support feeling safe in their parks and neighborhoods. This can be accomplished by teaching residents hazing techniques. The latter will be initiated by community volunteers.
3. To model hazing behavior and share accurate information about coyotes among other residents, friends and family.
4. Monitor hazing by volunteers to assess its effectiveness and determine if further action or more aggressive hazing is needed.
5. Develop long-term community based hazing programs using volunteers.

General Considerations

1. Levels of hazing need to be appropriately relevant to coyote activity.
 - a) Coyotes live in open spaces and the best practice is to leave them alone and educate the public on personal safety.
 - b) Urban coyotes are often out late at night when few people are present. This is normal acceptable behavior. Hazing may not be necessary.
 - c) Exceptions: In early stages of hazing, programs should still engage animals. Coyotes that associate danger in the presence of people under all circumstances will be more wary and more likely to avoid contact.
2. Hazing must be more exaggerated, aggressive and consistent during initial program implementation. As coyotes “learn” appropriate responses to hazing, it will take less effort from hazers. Early in the process, it is extremely common for coyotes not to respond to hazing techniques. Without a history of hazing, they do not have the relevant context to respond with the desired outcome (to leave).
3. Techniques and tools can be used in the same manner for one or multiple animals. Usually there is a dominant animal in a group who will respond. Others will follow its lead. DO NOT ignore, turn your back or avoid hazing because there are multiple animals instead of a single individual.
4. The more often an individual coyote is hazed by a variety of tools and techniques and a variety of people, the more effective hazing will be in modifying that animal’s behavior.
5. Hazing must be able to see the person involved in the hazing actions. The coyote must be aware of where the potential threat is coming from and associate it with the person.

6. Coyotes can and do recognize individual people and animals in their territories. They can learn to avoid or harass specific individuals in response to behavior of the person and/or pet.
7. Coyotes can be routine in habit. Identifying their normal habits can help target which habits to change. For example, the coyote patrols the same bike path at the same time in the morning three to five days a week. Hazers should concentrate on that time and place to encourage the animal to adapt its routine to decrease contact with people.
8. Certain levels of hazing must always be maintained so that future generations of coyotes do not learn or return to unacceptable habits related to habituation to people.
9. Changes in human behavior are necessary for hazing to be effective. Therefore, possible coyote attractants should be identified and removed.
10. Education about exclusion techniques including how to identify and remove attractants, personal responsibility in pet safety and having reasonable expectations are critical parts of a coyote hazing plan.
11. Coyotes are skittish by nature. Habituated behavior is learned and reinforced by human behavior. Coyotes DO NOT act aggressively towards aggressive people. The one exception is a sick or injured animal. Engaging a sick or injured animal can result in unpredictable behavior. If this is suspected, people should not haze the animal, should remove themselves from the situation, and then inform appropriate agencies (i.e. the city's Wildlife Resource Specialist, Yolo County Animal Control or California Department of Fish and Game).
12. Individuals involved in hazing need to be trained in explaining hazing to residents who witness the process. They also need to explain the difference between hazing and harassment of wildlife, and goals of appropriate behavior for coexistence.

Training Program

Because coexisting with wildlife involves the community, initiating the hazing training programs and hazing activities by volunteers must be supervised by experts. Without this support, such programs ultimately fail. Information should include basic training on background, coyote ecology information, an overview of hazing and examples of techniques. Materials should be provided such as handouts, contact information and resources when questions, comments and concerns come up relating to coyotes.

Volunteers need to learn about coyote behavior and understand realistic expectations, normal versus abnormal coyote behavior and have a consistent response to residents' concerns and comments.

Hazing Training for Volunteers

Hazing requires community involvement, understanding, and support. Residents are best equipped to respond consistently and at the most opportune times in their own neighborhoods, greenbelts, parks and open spaces.

1. Locations of trainings offered should be based on data accumulated from the public on coyote activity in specific neighborhoods, greenbelts, parks or open space.
2. Trainings shall be free to the public.
3. Topics that need to be covered include but are not limited to:
 - a) basic coyote information
 - b) discussion on why coyotes are in the city
 - c) normal and abnormal coyote behavior
 - d) seasonal behavior changes – breeding season, pups, denning behavior
 - e) reality of dangers towards people vs. danger towards pets
 - f) children and coyotes
 - g) how human behavior influences coyote behavior
 - h) attractants
 - i) tips on deterring animals from entering private property
 - j) appropriate response when encountering a coyote
 - k) what is hazing, goals, how to engage
 - l) appropriate hazing techniques and tools
 - m) pet safety tips
4. Volunteers shall be placed on a confidential email list. Updates, additional coyote information, electronic flyers and handouts should be sent out. All information can be and is encouraged to be passed on to others.
5. Volunteers shall be notified of “hot spots” and asked to haze in the area.
6. Volunteers should be asked for feedback on hazing training and the effectiveness of hazing techniques.
7. Volunteers shall email detailed accounts of encounters and hazing effectiveness to keep other volunteers informed on progress, tools and techniques that work, and tools and techniques that should be employed. Accounts should include the following:
 - a) Date, location, time of day, number of animals

b) Initial coyote behavior, hazing behavior, coyote response

Summary of Hazing

Hazing is a process whereby volunteers, and individuals, respond in like manner to make a coyote uncomfortable and choose to leave a situation.

Basic hazing consists of standing your ground, never ignoring or turning your back to a coyote(s), yelling and making unpleasant and frightening noises until the coyotes(s) choose to leave.

More aggressive hazing consists of approaching an animal quickly and aggressively, throwing projectiles, spraying with a hose or water gun, or creating fear of contact so the animal leaves the situation. **Note:** Many projectiles are not legal including but not limited to slingshots, bow and arrow, or guns that fire bullets, pellets, or paint or pepper balls.

Hazing must continue once it begins until the animal leaves. Otherwise, the coyote will learn to “wait” until the person gives up. Inconsistent hazing will create an animal more resistant to hazing instead of reinforcing the image that “people are scary”.

Hazing should never injure the animal. An injured animal becomes less predictable versus a healthy one who responds in a consistent and predictable manner to hazing.

Hazing should be conducted in a manner that allows the coyote to return to a desirable area in a direction that would minimize harm to the animal. Hazing the animal in the direction of other houses and busy streets should be avoided if possible.

Hazing uses a variety of different hazing tools. Variation is critical so that coyotes do not habituate to a particular tool or method. Examples of hazing tools include:

1. Noisemakers - voice, whistles, air horns, bells, “shaker” cans, pots, pie pans, etc.
2. Projectiles - sticks, small rocks, cans, tennis balls, rubber balls, etc.
3. Deterrents - hoses, spray bottles with vinegar, pepper spray, bear repellent, umbrellas, walking sticks, etc.