

COMMUNITY INFORMATIONAL NOTICE: COYOTE PRECAUTIONS

There is growing community concern about the presence of coyotes in Hinsdale, particularly the reporting of a coyote that has been frequenting areas on the south side of the tracks. A coyote has been observed to be resting in areas of open land, including public parks. Officers have responded to calls and continue to use “hazing” measures to cause the coyote to re-locate. Experts have advised that hazing measures are proven to keep coyotes from habituating in an area where they can find comfortable refuge.

In response to the increasing reports, the police department is requesting community assistance in educating others about these hazing techniques, and to encourage resident support in these techniques to cause the coyotes to re-locate sooner than later. It is recommended that residents who see coyotes make loud noises using air horns, vehicle horns, or whistles to scare them away. The police department is soliciting the community to support its objectives in forcing the coyotes to re-locate through hazing. This technique is at the direction of wildlife experts who have provided similar recommendations to regional municipalities experiencing the presence of coyotes.

Please review the additional notice below for additional information regarding coyotes, and share this information to other members of the community.

LIVING WITH COYOTES

During the fall season, the Hinsdale Police Department as well as Public Services Department receives inquiries from concerned citizens regarding the presence of fox, coyotes, deer, and even turkeys. These animals are a part of the natural habitat, and absent extenuating circumstances, there is little intervention that can lawfully be taken by a member of the police or Village of Hinsdale Public Services.

Residents wishing to learn more about these animals and their presence within the community should contact the Willowbrook Wildlife Center at (630) 942-6200. You can also obtain additional information on the internet: www.willowbrookwildlife.com.

The following information are suggested guidelines by the Willowbrook Wildlife Center:

How to Deter Coyotes

While coyotes are valuable in decreasing the rodent population, their presence in populated areas can be minimized by removing things that attract them to places they are not wanted. Coyotes can become a nuisance when they have easy access to food in residential areas, such as pet food or garbage.

Do not encourage coyotes or foxes by feeding them!

- Keep pet food and watering dishes inside, especially at night.
- Do not allow spillage to accumulate outside bird feeders.
- Keep grills and barbecues clean. Even the smallest food scraps may attract coyotes or foxes.
- Do not keep garbage cans outside if possible.
- Use welded wire to exclude animals from underneath decks.
- Keep cats indoors.
- Keep small dogs and cats on leashes and stay with your pets while outside, especially during the evening and early morning.
- Coyotes are creatures of habit. If you encounter a coyote the same place and same time while walking your pet, you may want to change your path or time of your walk.

Coyote "Hazing"

Equally important is helping teach coyotes where they are not welcome through a process called hazing. This is the term used for actions such as making loud noises toward coyotes to change the behaviors of habituated coyotes and reestablish their natural fear of humans. If you encounter a coyote in a place where they are not welcome, practice these techniques to send the message to the coyote that you are dominant and the coyote must leave.

Techniques include:

- Make eye contact and yell at the coyote(s)
- Wave your arms and make yourself appear as large as possible
- Use a noisemaker or a whistle
- Throw objects toward the coyote
- Stomp your feet
- Clap your hands
- Run toward the coyote to scare it off
- Act threatening
- Spray a hose toward the coyote(s)

Hazing **does not** include weapons and does not physically harm coyotes. **Be persistent** and keep hazing until the coyote leaves. Because they may have become accustomed to humans, coyotes may not immediately leave, but following through is important for hazing to be effective.

Wildlife experts **do not** recommend hazing if a coyote is injured, sick or has become cornered; in these situations, coyotes may act unexpectedly.

Coyotes are very intelligent animals and will soon learn to avoid these places where they feel uncomfortable.

What Not To Do

- Please remember that it is illegal to keep wild animals even for a very short time and that they have specialized nutritional, housing, and handling needs that you are unlikely to be able to provide. Inexperienced individuals who attempt to raise/treat them inevitably produce an unhealthy, tame animal that cannot survive in its natural habitat
- Trapping and removing is illegal without the proper permits and is not always the solution to the problem. Removing the animal creates an open space for another animal. Trapped adults may be leaving young behind to die of starvation in an inaccessible area. Focus on removing the attraction, not the animal.
- Never move young from the den. Contact Willowbrook Wildlife Center for advice at (630) 942-6200.
- Do not use poisons. They are inhumane and may be illegal. They can result in secondary poisoning of raptors, wild scavengers and neighborhood pets.

How to Protect Pets

- Keep small pets (cats, rabbits, small dogs) indoors. Don't allow them to run free at any time. They are easy prey.
- Use a short leash when walking your pet. Never let a coyote get between you and your pet.
- Dogs should be brought inside after dark and never allowed to run loose. **This is especially important during mating season, which is February through April.**
- DO NOT leave domestic pet food outside. Wildlife will soon depend on it.
- Fences do not guarantee your pet's safety. Always attend to small pets outdoors.

If you believe any animal appears to be an immediate threat or danger to yourself or others, contact the Hinsdale Police Department by calling 9-1-1.