



Coyote Management Plan

The Village of Lincolnshire has developed a Coyote Management Plan to maintain public safety as coyotes are known to frequent Lincolnshire and the surrounding Lake County areas. Human safety is the top priority of this management plan which outlines tactics for safe coexistence with local coyotes. This plan aligns with strategies adopted by nearby communities.

Source material for this document includes information and research from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Lake County Animal Control, the City of St. Charles and the Village of Lincolnshire.

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Coyotes are common across the state of Illinois, and generally pose little threat to humans or pets. By following a few simple steps, we can coexist peacefully with them.

General Coyote Behavior

Coyotes are territorial pack animals that are most active at night or early morning hours, and during hot summer weather. Coyotes generally will avoid humans.

Coyotes usually breed in February and March, producing litters in April and May. The average litter size is 5 to 7 pups. Coyote dens are found in hollowed out tree stumps, under rock outcrops, on a slope, in an existing burrow made by other animals, under brush, or even in open areas.

Both adult males and females within the pack hunt. Coyotes commonly hunt as singles or in pairs and will regularly hunt in the same area if food is readily available.

Commonly Asked Questions about Coyotes



Why do we have to coexist with coyotes?

Because coyotes are native to Illinois and are common across the entire state, it is important to learn to safely coexist with them. Coyotes also serve an important role in local ecosystems by keeping populations of smaller wild animals and vermin in check. Besides natural areas, they also are living in human-populated areas, near farms, in the suburbs and in cities.

Why are coyotes in Lincolnshire?

Coyotes thrive in suburban areas because food, water and shelter are abundant. They easily adapt to residential neighborhoods, parks and open spaces and prey on the rabbits, rodents, birds, cats and small dogs that live there. As opportunistic omnivores, they will also help themselves to trash can contents, pet food left outside, and the seeds and fruits of many garden and landscape plants.

I don't see coyotes all the time. Why is that?

In an effort largely to avoid humans, coyotes mainly are nocturnal. However, seeing a coyote during the day does not indicate a problem or illness. You may notice increased coyote sightings from December through spring as young coyotes leave their parents in search of mates and to establish territories of their own. The winter months also bring them out as they intensify their search for food.

Why won't the Village hunt or trap the coyotes to remove them?

Studies have shown that trapping or hunting programs are largely ineffective. Despite bounties and large-scale efforts to kill coyotes over the last 100 years, coyotes have in fact expanded their range throughout the U.S. One study even found that killing 75 percent of a coyote population every year for 50 years would still not exterminate the population. If the conditions that lured the coyotes to an area still exist, hunting or trapping will only temporarily remove them. Removal, especially lethal removal, is often controversial within communities. Trapping is equally risky in that there is no guarantee that the only things caught in the traps will be coyotes. Removal programs can also be expensive, either for residents or municipalities, and traps can occasionally capture pets. Many times household pets and other non-target animals are also caught in traps, and many sustain injuries so severe that they die or must be killed.

So how can I be safe from coyotes?

There have been no recorded coyote attacks on humans reported in the Chicagoland area or the state of Illinois. However, coyotes that have become "habituated" to humans may not show fear when encountering humans. Habituation may result from coyotes' exposure to a constant source of food in backyards or neighborhoods (whether intentional or unintentional) along with repeated exposure to humans without negative reinforcement.

One of the first lines of defense in keeping coyotes away is to **NEVER** intentionally feed coyotes. Also be sure to remove common sources of unintentional feeding:

- *Food left out for pets or feral animals*
- *Bird feeders that attract birds, squirrels and other small coyote prey*
- *Refuse containers that are not animal-proof or are overflowing*

You also can reinforce a fear of humans to discourage coyotes from coming around and establishing their territory in your neighborhood. If a coyote comes too close, discourage this behavior by:

- *Yelling at them*
- *Throwing a rock or stick at them*
- *Spraying them with a hose or water gun filled with water and vinegar.*

These tactics are called “hazing.” The response may not be immediate, but the coyote will eventually become intimidated and retreat. More hazing tips are available from the Humane Society of the United States.

Make your yard less desirable to coyotes. See the [Coyote Safety Checklist](#) at the end of this document.

How do I keep my pets safe?

According to the Urban Coyote Research Project, most metropolitan areas in the Midwest have reported an increase in the number of coyote attacks on pets.

Coyotes are known to hunt small rodents, such as mice or voles, and small animals like rabbits. But too often coyotes attack pet cats and small dogs. This usually occurs because either food is scarce, the coyote is being territorial, or is protecting a nearby den with pups. The best way to keep your pets safe is to eliminate the risks:

- *Never leave your pet by themselves or unattended outside, especially at night*
- *Always keep your pet on a leash in public areas*
- *Leave your pet food and water inside to prevent it from attracting coyotes*
- *Use high fences around your yard*

***Coyotes won't stay in an area for long
if they can't find easy access to food
and shelter***



Coyote Safety Checklist—What You Can Do

A critical element of any coyote management plan is educating people about coyote behavior and what they can do to help deter coyotes from frequenting their neighborhoods. It's important to take the appropriate preventative actions before coyotes establish feeding patterns.

Consult this handy checklist to remove conditions that could potentially attract coyotes to your neighborhood:

1. Remove Food and Water Sources

- *NEVER intentionally feed a coyote!*
- *Do not feed feral cats, deer or other wildlife. This attracts coyotes too.*
- *Don't feed pets outdoors; store all pet food securely inside.*
- *Remove bird feeders or clean up fallen seed to reduce the presence of small mammals that coyotes prey on.*
- *Clean up fallen fruit around trees.*
- *Do not include meat or dairy among compost contents.*
- *Clean up food and grease around barbeque grills after each use.*
- *Secure all trash containers with locking lids and place curbside the morning of trash pickup.*

2. Keep Your Pets Safe

- *Never leave pets unattended outside.*
- *Never allow pets to "play" with coyotes.*
- *Fully enclose outdoor pet kennels.*
- *Walk pets on a leash that is no longer than 6 feet.*

3. Remove Favorable Den Sites

- *Trim vegetation to reduce hiding places and potential denning sites.*
- *Restrict access under decks and sheds, around woodpiles, or any other structure that can provide cover or denning sites for coyotes or their prey.*

4. Other Deterrents

- *Enclose property with a fence. Ensure that there are no gaps and that the bottom of the fence extends underground 6 inches or is fitted with a mesh apron to hinder coyotes from digging underneath.*
- *Install motion-activated lighting in your yard.*

Coyote Benefits

Coyotes serve an important ecological function in urban areas. Rodents are the number one food source of the coyote. They will keep these populations in check. Deer are overabundant in Lincolnshire. Coyotes will rarely take an adult deer, they are primarily predators of deer fawns. According to the Cook County study, coyotes killed 20% to 80% of the fawns in different populations. As a top predator, coyotes are performing an important role in the Chicago region. Increasing evidence indicates that coyotes assist with controlling deer and Canada goose populations. Canada geese have adapted to urban landscapes, much like deer, and at times become overabundant and a nuisance. The coyote will take eggs from the nest but do not take enough adult geese to reduce their population.

Coyotes – Frequently Asked Questions

- **What should I do if a coyote approaches me?**

The most successful method of frightening a coyote is to appear as large and threatening as possible. Coyotes are frightened by aggressive gestures, loud noises and large forms. Do not run away from the coyote and maintain eye contact. Using a loud, authoritative voice to frighten the animal is particularly effective. By making aggressive gestures toward the animal such as moving arms and legs, throwing rocks, sticks or other objects, the coyote will either flee or end the encounter.

- **Why are coyotes moving through my yard a lot?**

Regular sightings of coyotes in your yard maybe a result of a nearby food source, either in your yard, a neighbor's yard or a home in your development. Talk to your neighbors about identifying and removing these items. Some things to look for are pet food stored or fed outside, accessible garbage bins and compost, and fruit from fallen trees. Total cooperation among neighbors and elimination of any food source is essential.

- **What can I do to make a coyote leave my yard?**

If you see a coyote in your yard, it is important to make it aware that it is not welcome. Coyotes are frightened by aggressive gestures, loud noises and large forms. Waving sticks or brooms, clanging pots and pans, or throwing objects at the coyote will usually scare it off.

- **How do I keep my pets safe?**

Keep cats indoors permanently. Cat size or smaller dogs should be supervised at all times when outside. If your pet is off leash, make sure it is in a completely enclosed area. If you observe a coyote when walking your dog, gather your dog in your arms if possible, or keep it close to you while using some of the deterrents listed above, and continue to move toward an active area. Be sure that your dog, of any size, has immediate recall response. This will aid in eliminating potential contact or conflict with coyotes.

For More Information About Coyotes:

The Humane Society of the United States <https://www.humanesociety.org>

Lake County Animal Control Information <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/152/Animal-Care-Control>

For More Information About This Management Plan:

Village of Lincolnshire: <https://www.lincolnshireil.gov/residents/resident-tips-information/wildlife>

Sources Cited:

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/wildlife/Pages/Coyote.aspx>

The City of St. Charles

<https://www.stcharlesil.gov>

The Urban Coyote Research Project

<https://urbancoyotersearch.com>