



COYOTES

BENEFITS OF COYOTES

Coyotes play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems and species diversity. They are a keystone species, meaning that their presence or absence has a significant impact on the biological community.

As the top carnivore in some ecosystems, coyotes provide a number of benefits including regulating the populations of smaller predator species, such as skunks, raccoons, and foxes, which helps boost biodiversity.

NATURAL HISTORY

- Coyotes are members of the canine family. They inhabit every state in the continental United States. They prefer deserts, grasslands, and forests, but are incredibly adaptable to most habitats. For this reason, they often thrive in urban areas.
- Coyotes are omnivores, meaning they eat both plants and animals. Though they have a wide-ranging diet, they do prefer meat and hunt for small mammals, birds, mice, and snakes. In times when meat is scarce, they also eat fruits and berries.
- Coyotes are semi-social animals; they can be solitary or form traveling pairs or packs. This varies based on geographic area. Urban coyotes tend to be transient and travel alone.
- Location affects when coyotes are most active. They can be diurnal (active during the day) or crepuscular (active at dawn and dusk). However, they tend to become more nocturnal (active at night) when they live in close proximity to humans.

TIPS FOR REDUCING HUMAN–COYOTE CONFLICTS:

- **Do not feed wildlife.** This increases the chance that the animal will lose its natural fear of humans.
- **Feed dogs and cats indoors and clean up after them.** Water, pet food, and droppings can attract wildlife, including coyotes.
- **Do not leave unattended dogs and cats outdoors, especially from dusk to dawn.** Left outside at night, small pets may become prey to coyotes.
- **A leashed dog is a safer dog.** When out for a walk, keep your pet leashed to greatly reduce the chance of a negative wildlife encounter.
- **Enclose pet birds and poultry in a secure pen or house.** Properly secure domestic birds to reduce their risk of becoming prey to coyotes.
- **Tightly cover garbage and compost bins.** Open bins encourage scavenging.
- **Remove fallen fruit from yards.**