

FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK

PARK NOTES

Living With Coyotes

In Our City?

Coyotes are a very adaptable wildlife species that survive well in urban environments. They are able to adapt to human activities and the abundant opportunities cities offer to meet their needs like food, water, and shelter.

Coyote Behaviour

Coyote Territory - Coyotes living in a particular area will protect this territory area from other coyotes. They will also defend it against other species, including cats and dogs. This behaviour is quite natural and does not necessarily indicate that a coyote is being overly aggressive.



Photograph courtesy of Brett Sharkey

What Do They Eat? - Coyotes are opportunists and eat a variety of foods including fruits and vegetables. In urban areas, coyotes eat mice, squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, geese, ducks, garbage, and domestic pets, including cats and small dogs.

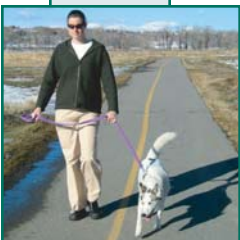
Why Are Coyotes A Risk To Pets? - Cats and small dogs can be the same size as many of the coyote's natural prey. Coyotes may also attack a large dog if they see the dog as a threat.

What About Rabies? - To-date, rabies has not been found in any Calgary coyote populations or in provincial populations since the 1970's.

When Are Coyotes Most Active? - Coyotes can be encountered any time but they are most active in early spring as they search for food to feed their new-born pups. The food requirements for nursing females and their young are very high at this time of year. Please be aware of the potential risk to your pets.

What Can I Do If Approached By A Coyote?

- **Do not run.** Predatory animals are excited by something that is running and may instinctively give chase.
- **Yell, stomp your feet, and throw objects at it (not food).** Look as big as possible, stand up and raise your hands above your head.
- **Keep your dog on a short leash and leave the area.** The coyote may follow you and your dog until you have left its territory. If your dog gets into a fight with a coyote, do not try to separate them with your hands. Use a long stick or throw something at the coyote.



For more information contact:

Fish Creek Provincial Park
15979 Bow Bottom Trail SE
Box 2780
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0Y8
Phone: (403) 297-5293
Fax: (403) 297-5284

Website: www.fish-creek.org

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What Can I Do To Co-Exist With Coyotes?

- Keep pets under control and on a leash when outside.
- If you must leave your pet unattended, provide a secure space, such as an enclosed yard.
- Never feed coyotes. The best strategy is to not habituate or cause coyotes to lose their fear of people in the first place. Keep them wild. Under Section 11(3) of the Provincial Parks Act it states: "No person shall feed wildlife in a Provincial Park or Recreation Area". This serves two purposes:
 - People should not feed coyotes and,
 - People should not feed other animals or birds which might attract coyotes.
- Coyotes are attracted to:
 - Improperly contained garbage - place garbage in hard containers such as solid metal or plastic cans.
 - Open composters containing vegetables or fruits which have fallen from trees.
 - An overflowing bird feeders (coyotes will eat the grain as well as the mice and other small mammals attracted by the bird feed).
 - Pet food, avoid feeding pets outdoors.
 - Barbeques that have not been cleaned of food odours.
- Fencing will help discourage coyotes from entering your yard. Make sure fences are flush to the ground and in good repair.

How Can I Feel More At Ease Walking On The Trails?

If you are a frequent visitor to the Park and enjoy walking the trails, but feel a little uneasy about the coyotes, you may want to build yourself a coyote shaker. This noise maker may be enough to discourage a coyote from coming too close and making your walk in the park not as enjoyable as you might have wanted.

Materials: pop can, 5 pennies or bolts, aluminium foil, duct tape

Instructions: Place pennies/bolts in the pop can. Cover opening with duct tape. Cut a piece of aluminium foil and duct tape around the pop can.

Using Shaker: Shake the pop can aggressively at the coyote using your arms full motion while shouting in a deep voice.

The shaker scares the coyote by:

- aggressive hand motion
- loud noise
- reflective light

As you are doing this, maintain eye contact and move towards a more populated area.

