

Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions about Coyotes

1. Do we have coyotes in this area?

Yes. Coyotes are not native to Ohio but have been here since 1919 and are now found in all 88 counties of Ohio. As settlers exterminated the coyote's main predator, the gray wolf, and altered the landscape by turning forests into agricultural and brushy areas, the coyote population exploded. Coyotes are very adaptable and intelligent animals. This enables them to make their homes almost anywhere. As long as they have shelter, food and water they can adapt to any habitat, even those close to humans.

2. Do coyotes have rabies?

Coyotes are a rabies vector species, as all mammals are. However, the state has tested coyotes for rabies annually and since 1995 none have tested positive for rabies.

3. Will coyotes attack small children?

Any animal will attack if cornered or threatened but if your children are playing outside, a coyote will likely not attack them. Coyotes are very elusive and rarely come around if humans are out and about. Although they can adapt to areas populated with humans, we are still considered a predator, so they stay away from us. Also, humans are not prey for coyotes.

4. Will coyotes attack my pet?

Dogs and cats are not a natural part of the coyote's diet. They eat small animals (voles, shrews, rabbits and mice), vegetables, nuts and carrion. However, small dogs and cats could be easy prey. Homeowners should not leave small animals unattended.

5. What are the benefits to having coyotes in Ohio?

Coyotes are one of the only large predators we have in Ohio. To keep an ecosystem balanced, predator and prey must both be present. Also, coyotes actually help farmers by killing rodents that can cause problems by digging holes and tunnels in the ground and getting into food and crops.

6. How do I distinguish a coyote from a dog?

Both coyotes and domestic dogs are from the Canidae family, so they do resemble each other in appearance. Coyotes are usually the size of a medium-sized dog, and are usually gray, (though some show a rusty, brown or off-white coloration). Most have a dark band of fur extending from neck to tail and have very bushy tails that are tipped in black, and they hold them down between their legs when they run. Coyotes stand about one-and-a-half to two-feet tall and are between 41 to 53 inches in length. They weigh between 15-45 lbs.

7. Is it unusual to see coyotes during the day?

No. Although they are mainly crepuscular (most active at dawn and dusk) animals, they will hunt and move from place to place, where they are less threatened by man. The only reason they are more active at dawn and dusk is that is when most of their prey is active as well.

8. Do coyotes hunt in packs?

Coyotes usually hunt alone or in pairs; they rarely form packs in Ohio. If you see a pair hunting together it is probably a family group hunting for food for their pups. The only time you would see a family group hunting in a large pack is if they were after a large prey item like a deer. Their smaller prey items are in such abundance in Ohio, they do not normally waste energy chasing deer.

9. Why do coyotes howl?

Howling is used for communication. It is to let others know of territory boundaries during mating season, or to locate a member of their family.

10. What if I don't want coyotes in my yard? Whom do I call?

Coyotes are considered a nuisance animal by the state of Ohio. If you need one removed call a trooper or the wildlife officer of your county. In Lake County, call 330-245-3034 or visit wildlife.ohiodnr.gov.

LAKEMETROPARKS



Penitentiary Glen Reservation
8668 Kirtland-Chardon Rd.
Kirtland, Ohio 44094
440-256-1404
lakemetroparks.com

