

To be the most livable town in Canada.

Co-existing with coyotes

Coyote Facts

- Coyotes are part of Oakville's natural environment. Usually docile, they are currently more visible in some residential areas as they are sick with mange.
- Sarcoptic mange is a type of mite that burrows under the skin of an infected coyote, causing severe itching, lethargy, immune dysfunction and eventual loss of fur. Left untreated, it is often fatal. Mange does not pose a risk to humans and is unlikely to spread to pets as it requires sustained close contact to spread.
- Coyotes with mange are more likely to come into residential neighbourhoods as they attempt to find food and stay warm. While the risk to human safety is very low, pets may be at risk as they may be seen as a food source or a threat.

What we're doing

- To address the current situation, the town is working with the Oakville Humane Society to assist in locating and treating infected coyotes. The coyote reporting system helps by locating and assessing behavioural patterns. Please report coyote sightings and activity through this system at oakville.ca.
- This system is not meant for emergencies. If there is an immediate risk to safety call 911.
- The town has had an extensive coyote awareness program since 2012, with a focus on education and preventing situations that may cause conflict. Coyotes have proven to be a very low risk to human safety, including children. Babies and very young children should not be left alone regardless of whether coyotes are in the area or not. Details on this program are available at oakville.ca.

Removal and relocation

- Relocating wildlife more than one kilometre away is prohibited by provincial legislation as it can spread disease, may transfer a problem elsewhere, and is rarely successful for the animal.
- Firearms, lethal trapping and baiting with poisoned food pose a significant risk to both people and pets in urban environments.
- When coyotes are lethally removed, their breeding rates and populations increase. Coyotes from surrounding areas will also quickly move in to fill the space, and they tend to become more aggressive as they compete for territories.
- Lethal removal is only carried out on an individual basis if a coyote is considered a significant risk (e.g. aggressively approaching people, nipping, taking pets in the presence of people).

For tips on what you can do to avoid conflicts, turn this page over

What you can do

DO NOT FEED. This includes accidental feeding (e.g. garbage, messy bird feeders, fallen fruit, etc.) or on purpose. Well-meaning residents who feel sorry for the coyotes have been leaving food out for them. Feeding causes coyotes to approach people. It is against town by-laws to feed coyotes on public or private property. There are a variety of simple things that each of us can do to co-exist and prevent human - wildlife conflicts.

If you encounter a coyote:

- Conditions such as mange make coyotes lethargic and appear tame, however never approach or touch a coyote or stray dog.
- Coyotes wearing tracking collars may be mistaken for a lost family pet. Do not approach any stray animal even if it is wearing a collar.
- Do not turn your back or run from a coyote or other wild animal. Back away slowly.
- Scare away coyotes that approach or are in inappropriate places (residential areas, sidewalks). This is a proven technique that if done consistently by the community will retrain any wayward coyote to avoid people. Make loud noises, throw objects such as tennis balls, or spray it with water. Continue until the animal leaves.
- If a coyote poses an immediate threat or danger to public safety — call 911.

How to make your property unwelcome

- You can discourage coyotes from hanging around homes by scaring them off each time they are seen on your property. Use flashing lights, motion sensors and noise makers.
- Ensure that garbage and compost is inaccessible, outdoor pet food is securely stored, fruit is picked from trees and off the ground, and rodent habitats such as neglected yards, garages or sheds are removed or kept clean.

Keeping pets safe

- Supervise dogs when outside, including washroom breaks especially if your dog is small.
- Keep dogs on a leash as per the town's by-law.
- Clean up after your dog — coyotes are attracted to dog feces.
- Do not let pets approach or chase coyotes as it could result in injuries to your pet.
- Keep cats and other small mammals inside.

If you observe an injured or dead coyote please contact the Oakville Milton Humane Society at 905-845-1551.