

Living in Wildlife Country

The Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) wants to remind people to take precautions with their pets when living in coyote country.

The coyote (*Canis latrans*) is a member of the dog family. It resembles a small German shepherd with the exception of the long snout and bushy, black-tipped tail. Coyotes are extremely adaptable and resourceful, and can survive on whatever food is available. Outside trash cans and pet food provide an easy meal and draws coyotes into neighborhoods. In some areas, coyotes have attacked small pets – cats and dogs included- particularly when pets are allowed to roam free or left outdoors overnight. The coyote is a predator that assists in the control of rodents and to a lesser degree, Canada Geese.

People with pets need to keep them on a leash when walking them. While at home, pets should not be allowed to roam freely. Even pets in enclosed yards run the risk of predation. Remember split rail fences and invisible fences will not keep your pet safe from predators.

Remind children not to approach or feed any wildlife. If children feel threatened by the presence of coyotes or other wildlife, they should stay in a group and walk (not run) slowly to an area where adults are present. Make sure your child understands that a coyote is a wild dog and should be treated with caution. While attacks on humans are extremely rare, people should take precaution.

Tips to Remember

- * **Protect your pet.** Do not allow your pet to roam free, especially at night.
- * **Don't leave pet food outside.**
- * **Keep your garbage in a tightly sealed container.** Wash out trash cans with ammonia.

What to Do If You Meet A Coyote

- * **Stay calm.**
- * **Keep your distance** and do not approach the animal.
- * **Use a loud, authoritative voice** to frighten the animal away.
- * **Carry a plastic whistle** with you when walking.
- * **Throw rocks or sticks** to frighten it away.

Further information on Living in Coyote Country can be found on The Colorado Division of Wildlife web page (<http://wildlife.state.co.us>) or on Majestic View Nature Center's web page (www.arvada.org/nature).