



Living with Louisiana Wildlife: Response to Coyotes

Melissa Collins | Jefferson Parish Council Meeting | August 8, 2023

LOUISIANA URBAN COYOTES



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PURPOSE: Provide biological information and prevention and control methods, specifically urban coyotes in Louisiana

RELEVANCE: Response to urban coyote complaints



COYOTES IN LOUISIANA

Classification: Animalia, Chordata, Mammalia, Carnivora, Canidae,
Coyote (*Canis latrans*)



- Melanistic phenotype: >crypsis in Forested habitats
- Occasional in Southeast U.S.
- Rare elsewhere
- 20-35 lbs; 31-44" length; ~2ft tall
- Yellow iris
- silvery-gray, reddish brown coat
- Pointed ears; drooping tail



COYOTES IN LOUISIANA

- **Diet:** omnivorous & opportunistic- insects, rodents, rabbits, reptiles, birds, eggs, fruits, carrion, livestock
 - OCCASIONAL/OPPORTUNISTIC-very small pets (puppies/kittens/cats/small dog breeds)
- **Reproduction:**
 - breed Jan-May; avg. litter 4-7 pups: litter size dependent upon food abundance and population density
 - pups weaned @~2 mos and disperse in fall
- **Populations:** expanded east with eradication of wolves
- **Habitat:** common throughout LA & US
- **Range:** up to 40-60 sq miles (smaller for females, solitary and urban coyotes ~2-10 sq miles)
- **Sexually dimorphic:** males slightly larger & heavier than females



NORMAL AND ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR



NORMAL BEHAVIOR

- Coyote observed during the day
- Coyote frequently observed in same area
- Coyote walking through your yard
- Presence of multiple coyotes; pups born in early spring; exit den @ ~ 6 weeks
- Coyote observed hiding or appears to be watching you
- Calling-pups, alarm
- Den-fidelic; voluntarily den during pup season
- Climbing or sleeping on tree limb or lying in open area



NORMAL BEHAVIOR



- Coyote observed climbing a crabapple tree



ABNORMAL CONDITIONS AND BEHAVIORS



COMBINATION OF SYMPTOMS/BEHAVIORS:

- Significant hair loss
- Wobbling or circling
- Seeming partially paralyzed
- Appear disorientated
- Mutilating itself
- Appear to be agitated
- Bite or snap at imaginary and real objects
- Drool excessively
- Appear tame and seem to have no fear of humans
- **CONTACT LDWF OR ANIMAL CONTROL**



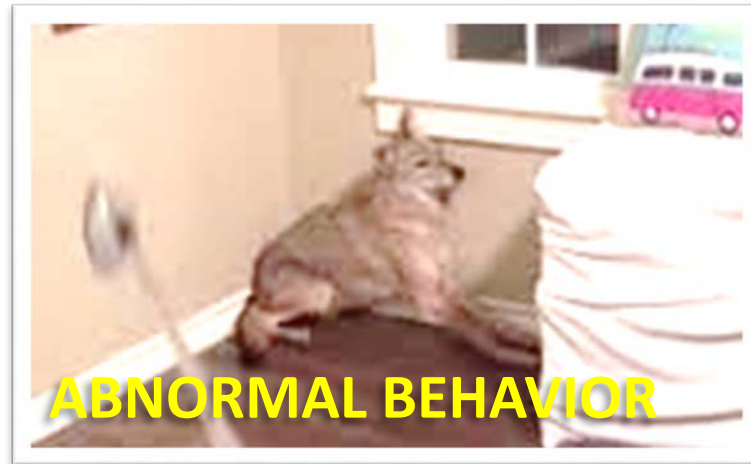
**WHAT IS NUISANCE WILDLIFE?
HOW CAN WE PREVENT, DETER, AND
CONTROL OF NUISANCE WILDLIFE?**



CONTROL OF NUISANCE WILD QUADRUPEDS REGULATIONS: PRIVATE PROPERTY

• REGULATION PURPOSE:

- Authorizes landowner to control nuisance animals **only** when they are conclusively proven to be a nuisance or causing damage to property. The burden of establishing that the animal in question is causing the property damage shall rest with the property owner.

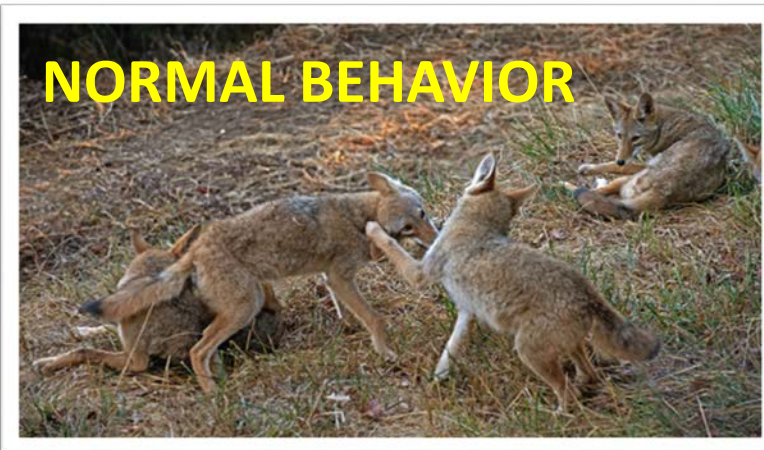


• WHAT IS NUISANCE WILDLIFE?

- Wildlife affecting humans or causing damage to their property

• NUISANCE WILDLIFE IS NOT:

- Conflicts between wildlife species and other natural behaviors



CONTROL OF NUISANCE WILD QUADRUPEDS: REGULATIONS (COYOTES)



- The property owner or his designee, **with written landowner permission**, may **trap and relocate** coyotes to suitable habitat the following species-**NOT** a **preferred** method
- **Outlaw quadrupeds:** Landowners may **take** coyotes **by trapping** (*with basic trapping license during open season and a coyote trapping license outside of season*) or **year round by shot**, day or night, with a basic hunting license. Must notify the Sheriff's Office 24 hours in advance or immediately upon taking a coyote.



CONTROL OF NUISANCE WILD QUADRUPEDS: REGULATIONS (COYOTES)

- **Written permission** from the property owner where coyotes will be released with authorization in possession during transport/release.
- Animals are treated responsibly and humanely & **released within 12 hours** of capture.
- Traps shall be set to **provide the trapped animal protection from harassment from dogs and other animals and direct sun exposure.**
- **Coyotes may be so controlled** by the property owner or his designee with **written landowner permission**, to prevent further damage.
- Property owners must **comply with all additional local laws and/or municipal ordinances** governing the shooting, trapping, and release of wildlife and the discharge of firearms.
- **No animal** taken under this provision **or parts** thereof **shall be sold**. A valid trapping license is required to sell or pelt nuisance furbearers during the open trapping season.



NUISANCE ANIMAL PREVENTION METHODS

- Do not leave small pets unattended
- Do not feed wildlife, feral domesticated animals, or pets outdoors (**#1 cause of wildlife presence!!!**)
- Pen or coop all livestock especially at night: poultry, rabbits, lambs, ducks, chickens, etc.; (use metal posts)
- Do not dispose of scraps or bury dead animals in your yard
- Secure garbage cans/dumpsters, compost (or temporarily cease)
- Remove bird feeders and low lying fruit (use metal posts)
- Game Cameras to monitor actual cause of property damage

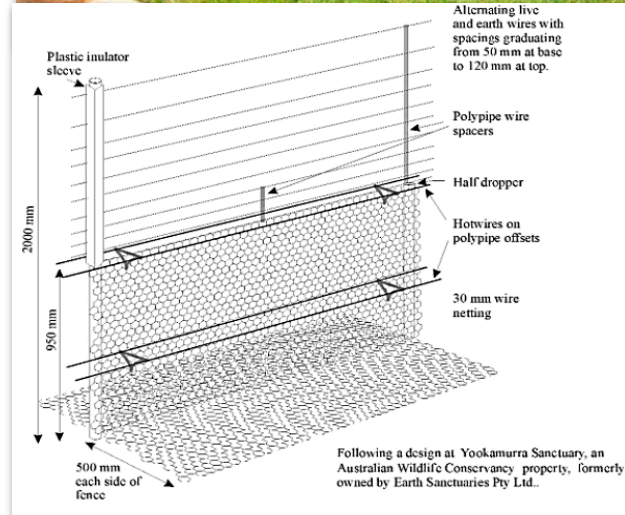


NUISANCE ANIMAL DETERRENENTS

- Install motion sensor sprinklers
- Use mesh **greater than .9mm** on pens/enclosures
- Install concrete or welded wire mesh **footings & hot wire** on the outside of all pens/enclosures –must install at base and top
- **HAZE HAZE HAZE**-wave arms, yell, throw tennis balls, use hoses or water guns

- <https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/coyote-hazing>

- <https://bearwise.org/bear-safety-tips/bear-encounter/>



NUISANCE ANIMAL CONTROL & RESPONSE

- Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators
 - private individuals/companies licensed by LDWF to control nuisance wildlife
 - <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/wildlife/nwco>
- Wildlife Rehabilitators
 - individuals licensed to rehabilitate injured or orphaned animals for their return to the wild
 - <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/rehab>
- City, Parish or Local municipal government employees
 - assigned to animal control duties are exempt from permit requirements while on duty and carrying out official business of their respective agency.



COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS



COYOTES: FAQs

- Should I be fearful?
 - You should have a healthy respect for coyotes: do not run from or corner any animal; treat them as you would an unwanted dog or bear
- How long have coyotes been in the Eastern US?
 - Since the 1900's and 1940's
- How many coyotes are there in my area?
 - Currently, there are no studies of coyotes, including urban coyote studies, in LA
 - Presumably, an area occupied by coyotes should consist of an alpha-pair, their subordinates (if any) and their pups
 - Overlap should not occur except in overlapping territories (occasional overlap) or in cases of solitary coyotes (occasional overlap)
 - There are fewer coyotes in a territory when two of the following are removed: food, water and shelter
- Why do I see coyotes so frequently if I and/or my neighbors are not feeding coyotes?
 - A survey of your entire neighborhood will likely reveal someone in your neighborhood is either directly or indirectly feeding wildlife or feral domesticated animals.
 - Major landscape changes: habitat destruction, fragmentation, human expansion and development, and increased food availability have and will continue to increase our chances of encountering wildlife



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