

For Immediate Release



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East Hartford Police Department's Animal Control Office Issues Coyote Advisory

East Hartford, CT— There has been a recent increase in sightings of coyotes in the area and in the region. This is a common occurrence this time of year. Coyotes are rarely a threat to humans, but can sometimes injure or kill pets. While coyotes have been a part of the natural landscape of Connecticut for decades, care should be taken to discourage their interaction with people and pets. An interesting fact about coyotes is that they do not normally mate for life, although some pairs may stay together for several years. **In Connecticut, the breeding season is from January to March**, and the gestation period is about 63 days. Although adult animals can dig their own dens, they usually enlarge an abandoned woodchuck or fox burrow. The female prepares and maintains the den site. **Pups are born in the spring (April to mid-May), and litters range in size from one to as many as 12 pups;** the average in Connecticut is seven. Both adults care for the young and will readily move them if disturbed. **Pups are weaned at about six to eight weeks and begin foraging and hunting with the adults when they are eight to 13 weeks old. The family group usually breaks up in the fall or early winter when the young disperse.** Young coyotes may travel long distances in search of new territories, giving this species a rapid potential for colonization. Although nearly full grown by their ninth month, eastern coyotes may not breed until they are nearly two years old, unlike western coyotes, which reach breeding age their first year.

Residents are advised to take the following steps in an incident they see a coyote:

Do Not Feed Coyotes! This includes leaving food for outdoor / feral cats, food scraps, and unsecured garbage bins. Clean up under bird feeders to not attract mice, squirrels, etc. which are a food source to coyotes.

Scare Them Away! Called "hazing," if you see a coyote; shout, bang pots, or shake a metal can filled with gravel or pennies. If a coyote enters your yard, throw a stick at it or spray it with a garden hose.

Keep Small Animals Inside! Cats and small dogs can become a meal for a hungry coyote. Supervise your small pet when it is outside. Consider installing exterior lighting and fencing for protection.

When Walking your leashed dog, if you see a coyote, do NOT run. Bring your dog close to your side and leave the area. Do not turn around, back away. Dogs can sometimes trigger territorial aggression in coyotes.

Rabies can be transmitted by any mammal, including coyotes. If you see any mammal that is unable to walk, is staggering, displaying extreme lethargy, or appears “drunk” call the East Hartford Police Department immediately at 860-528-4401. Healthy looking animals behaving normally seen during the day is not an indicator of rabies.

For further information regarding this advisory contact the East Hartford Animal Control at 860-291-7572.