



# Be a friend to COYOTES



Living safely and comfortably with coyotes is not difficult. We can benefit from the free and healthy rodent control that coyotes provide if we help them stay wild and wary.

Coyotes are at home in New Mexico, including in Albuquerque. They have lived here much longer than humans and have adapted to life in the city.

Coyotes are timid animals and pose hardly any threat to people. They live in close-knit family groups of a mother, father, and their pups. The family will defend their territory against other coyotes. This creates a natural deterrent to there being too many coyotes in a given area. If you are lucky enough to hear their

howls, it is likely the family talking to each other across the landscape and letting others know this is their home.

Coyotes play an important role in maintaining a balanced ecosystem, even in the city. They are pragmatic omnivores who will eat almost anything, but rodents are their primary prey, especially rabbits, voles, and mice. A single coyote can consume well over 1,000 rodents in a year.

## Human/coyote conflicts may increase during:

- **April — early July:** puppy season, when parents will protect their dens and pups.
- **Late November — February:** food is scarce so coyotes get more creative to survive, and young coyotes are dispersing to establish new territories.

## When YOU may encounter coyotes:

- Coyote parents are protective of their den sites. Unsupervised dogs may provoke conflicts if they approach dens or pups.
- Coyotes may be attracted to food sources in our neighborhoods, including rodents, chickens, garbage, compost, pet food, and garden fruits and vegetables.
- Coyotes may perceive small dogs and cats as prey, especially at night.

- You're most likely to see coyotes at dusk and dawn. They are nocturnal, hunting at night, but sometimes come out during the day.

## When COYOTES get harmed by us:

- Coyotes' natural diet may be poisoned: the rodents, insects, and fruit they eat may contain toxins due to our use of rodenticides (rat poison) and pesticides. These toxins can accumulate in a coyote's body and cause health problems, even death.
- Coyotes that get used to human food sources or come too close to domestic animals are at risk of getting killed for public safety reasons.
- Intentional feeding of coyotes makes them lose their natural fear of humans and can lead to persistent and even aggressive behaviors that can cost coyotes their lives.

## ACTION TIPS

Be a friend to coyotes! Here's what you can do.

### TIP #1

**Keep coyotes wild – scare them away (“haze”) if they come too close**

- Haze every time you see a coyote that's too close. Do not stop until the coyote has left the area (make sure the animal is not cornered).
- How to haze: Be big, bold, and loud. Wave your arms, a stick or jacket over your head, jump up and down, and yell. Use tools that scare with sound, light, or motion (whistle, bang on pots, wave a flashlight).
- Don't haze if you see a coyote at a comfortable distance.
- Don't haze if the coyote appears sick or injured (call the city instead) or if you're in an open space and near coyote dens. If a coyote is trying to protect its den (by vocalizing or acting assertive), calmly leave the area (don't run).

### TIP #2

**Keep your pets safe**

- Leash your dog when walking or hiking. Pick up small dogs if a coyote approaches.
- Never let your dog interact with a coyote (they may transmit diseases to each other).
- Don't feed pets outside. Pet food can attract both rodents and coyotes.
- Don't leave your dog outside at night.
- Keep your cat indoors, especially at night.

### TIP #3

**Keep coyotes safe**

- Drive carefully, especially at night, and look out for wild animals.
- Don't use rodenticides around your house, yard, and neighborhood.

### TIP #4

**Make your yard unwelcoming to coyotes**

- Install coyote-proof fencing if you keep pets or chickens in your yard.
- Install “coyote rollers” on top of your wall or fence to keep coyotes from entering your yard.
- Use motion activated lights or sprinklers to scare away coyotes.
- Seal and store garbage and compost securely.

### TIP #5

**Never feed coyotes**

A coyote habituated to feeding by even one human will start to think of all humans and human spaces as sources of food, leading to increased conflicts that don't end well for the coyote. Coyotes are very intelligent, adaptable, and resourceful foragers who do not need our help.

## NEED HELP?



**To report a sick or injured coyote**, call 311 or contact the Albuquerque Animal Welfare Department (505-768-2000).

Find out more about living with urban coyotes: [projectcoyote.org](http://projectcoyote.org)

For more information on coexisting with our Albuquerque wildlife, visit [cabq.gov/coexistwithwildlife](http://cabq.gov/coexistwithwildlife)