

How to Be Coyote Safe and Smart in Cape Coral

Coyotes are present within Cape Coral. They are brownish-gray with a light gray to reddish mammals, cream-colored belly, slender muzzle with dark eyes and a bushy tail. They are in the same family as dogs and foxes. Adult coyotes in Florida weigh between 20-35 pounds, but can appear larger due to a thick, double coat of fur and long legs. These mammals are omnivores and their diet manages the populations of rodents, insects, and other small animals, such as foxes, opossums, and raccoons, as well as eating roots and fruits. Coyotes are not invasive, they are a native North American species that has expanded their range, and they have been in SWFL for a long time.

While there has never been a reported attack in Lee County on humans coyotes can attack domestic cats and small dogs (as will other predators we have in Cape Coral) so it is very important for you to keep your pets safe! Do not ever allow pets to roam free, keep your dog on a 6-foot leash any time it is outside a fenced yard (this follow the Lee County leash law that is in effect in Cape Coral). Keep cats indoors-when they are out there is an increased risk of them being attacked by predators. Do not leave pets unattended in a lanai, garage, or tethered in an open area, and do not assume that a fence under 6 feet will keep a coyote out. Never leave pets in the yard overnight or alone at dawn or dusk and check the bottom of the fence regularly to make sure there are no gaps or holes. Before letting pets outside at night, make noise and flash lights to startle any wildlife that could be in the yard. If you walk your dog at dawn or dusk carry a flashlight, noisemaker or a whistle and be prepared to scare away coyotes and other wildlife.

City of Cape Coral and Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) do not remove coyotes. Coyote populations quickly rebound in response to trapping and removal through increased litter sizes or expansion of surrounding coyote territories into areas not previously inhabited. Eradication strategies in other areas of the country have historically been ineffective at controlling coyote populations in the long term.

FWC recommends hazing coyotes (see youtube video below) and keeping all animals on a leash or indoors. Never run from a coyote, haze it instead. And never feed coyotes-It is illegal and dangerous. This includes leaving food outside to attract wildlife. Clean up pet food, fallen fruit and seed around bird feeders – coyotes are opportunistic feeders and will be drawn to and eat all of these potential food sources. While Cape Coral residents are allowed to hire a trapper to remove coyotes on their property, it is against the law to discharge a firearm within City limits. If you are experiencing coyote problems, please contact FWC's Wildlife Alert at 888-404-3922 for assistance.

FWC coyote hazing for our website:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnSo45n3mHM>

FWC coyote deterrent video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pw1J-5ButYs&t=9s>

Homemade Coyote Shaker

<https://stanleyparkecology.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/The-Coyote-Shaker-July-2011.pdf>